

Bible Commentary on Zechariah

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Bible Commentary on Zechariah

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Introduction

This is not your typical commentary, so I'd like to give a few words of explanation before you begin. As a child I was taught to read the Word of God on a daily basis. Our goal as a family was to read through the Bible once a year, and that is what we did. When I became an adult I kept reading the Bible from cover to cover.

One day, however, I realized that I wanted something more. Reading the Bible was good, but I wanted to actually *study* it. Could I explain what each verse meant? Did I really understand what each chapter was saying? I decided to start writing daily commentary instead of just reading the Word.

This commentary was put together to help me study the Bible. I have no plans to release it, for there are far better commentaries out there that were written by much wiser men. This document is simply a tool to help me understand what the Word of God has to say.

Jon Cooper
4/14/2019

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4/7/2022

Introduction to Zechariah

This book contains the prophecies of Zechariah. The first verse of this book tells us that it began in the 2nd year of Darius. According to the timeline that I put together (see Resource 2, "Timeline"), that corresponds to 538 BC. In chapter 7 there's a prophecy that was given in the 4th year of Darius, which was two years later in 536 BC. That means these prophecies were given over the course of two years.

8/30/2018, 8/4/2019, 7/25/2022

Zechariah 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," (Zechariah 1)

What's curious about this is that Zechariah was given his prophecy at the same time as Haggai. Haggai's message began in the 2nd year of Daruis, in the 6th month, and then continued into the 7th month and 9th month. Zechariah's prophecies were being given in the 8th month, which is the same time that Haggai was commanding the people to rebuild the temple.

"2 The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers. 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." (Zechariah 1)

When this prophecy was given the people were already working on rebuilding the temple. It's a bit odd that the Lord would send them a message commanding them to repent and seek the Lord. At the time they were actively obeying Haggai and doing what the Lord said (which is something that almost never happened).

I wonder if the Lord is addressing that generation or a future one. A lot of this book is connected to end-times prophecy, after all.

"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. 5 Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? 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." (Zechariah 1)

This is strange timing. The people were already working on rebuilding the temple. They were listening to Haggai and acting in obedience. They were hard at work serving the Lord – and the Lord is telling them to repent and seek Him! That is just a strange time to send that message. It makes me wonder what generation Zechariah is actually addressing.

The previous generations were evil and God sent prophets to command them to repent. Although the prophets died (or were murdered), the words of the prophets still came true and the judgment of God did come. God is telling this

generation to not be like the previous generations.

"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," (Zechariah 1)

Do you see how the Bible keeps emphasizing the family line of Zechariah? It isn't given to us just once; it is repeated. Not only is Zechariah a prophet, but his ancestor Iddo was a prophet as well. The people ought to listen to what he has to say.

If you search for Iddo you will find a couple references to him (2 Chronicles 9:29, 12:15, 13:22). However, the fact that Iddo chronicled the acts of Solomon and Rehoboam makes me think that he lived a long time ago. If that's the case then Iddo would be one of Zechariah's more distant ancestors, and not his grandfather. (We can see this in Ezra 5:1 where where Zechariah is called the son of Iddo with no mention of Berechiah. Sometimes the Bible lists the most notable ancestor and skips the others.)

In the first verse of this book we are given the month and year of the prophecy, but here we are given the month, year, and day. This passage was given in the 11th month of the 2nd year of Darius (which was 538 BC – the same year that the 70 years of exile ended). Haggai prophesied through the 9th month of that year, so now we have reached prophecies that are beyond what we find in Haggai.

"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. 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. 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." (Zechariah 1)

Just so we are clear, this passage is saying that there was a man riding a red horse. Behind him were three other horses – a red horse, a speckled horse, and a white horse. The only rider we see is the one on the red horse.

There are a couple things here that are interesting. First, it seems that God has sent certain beings to walk through the world. It's true that God knows all things, but the Bible tells us that God often works through intermediaries. In Job 1:6-7 the Lord commanded the angels (including the fallen ones) to come before Him and tell Him what they had been doing. In verse 11 we will see that these beings give a report of what they have seen.

Do you know where else we find a white horse? In Revelation 6:2. In that chapter the white horse is the horse of conquest, and the one who rides on it is the antichrist. Do you know where we find a red horse? In Revelation 6:4. In that chapter the red horse is the horse of war.

Zechariah 1:11 tells us that the world is at peace, which means the red horse and its rider has not yet been set loose upon mankind.

"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." (Zechariah 1)

Who answered the angel of the Lord? Well, there is the man riding the red horse and the angel who was talking to Zechariah. Apparently the man who stood among the myrtle trees was the angel of the Lord. (My guess is that this time it really was just an angel, and not a preincarnate appearance of Christ.)

At this point in history the antichrist has not yet been set loose upon mankind. He is still being restrained, which is why the world is at peace. One day the Lamb will begin to open the seven seals and that will change, but we have not yet reached that time in history. The tribulation period is still to come.

"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? 13 And the Lord answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words." (Zechariah 1)

The angel wants to know the same thing Daniel did. (Interestingly, Daniel was still alive at this point and had the very same concern on his heart as well). When will God have mercy on the Jews and restore Jerusalem? It has been 70 years since Jerusalem's first conquest in 608 BC by Pharaoh Necho. When will the judgment against the Jews come to an end? We can see that the angels care about God's people. They clearly want to see them prosper.

It's interesting that the angel doesn't know what's going to happen next. Apparently the angels don't always know what God's plans are. There are some things that even the angels do

not know.

For the record, the year in which this prophecy was given (538 BC) is the same year that the Jews were set free.

"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." (Zechariah 1)

Are these the good and comfortable words that the Lord said to the angel? I think it's quite likely. Does the Lord watch over Israel and care about Jerusalem? Absolutely.

"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." (Zechariah 1)

This is something we saw in the book of Obadiah. The Lord judged Jerusalem for its sins, and then the Edomites came and made things worse. We also know from that book that God is going to punish the Edomites for what they did.

"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." (Zechariah 1)

At the very time this prophecy was given the temple was being built by the people of God. Yes, there was opposition and it took a long time, but the work had begun and it did ultimately

finish. The adversaries of the Lord did not win. In the end the temple was built and God was glorified.

"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." (Zechariah 1)

Judah did recover somewhat after the time of the Babylonian exile, although she never regained what she had in the days of David or Solomon. I suspect the ultimate fulfillment of this verse will take place during the millennium. That is when the Lord will choose Jerusalem once more and bless her with tremendous riches and glory.

Are these good and comfortable words? Yes they are.

"18 Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns. 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." (Zechariah 1)

Notice that the four horns aren't really identified. The only time we see four kingdoms is in Daniel. In that book the four kingdoms are Babylon, the Medes and Persians, Greece, and Rome (ultimately led by the antichrist).

Four great powers have come against God's people over the ages. They have ruled for a time and caused great harm, but they will not last forever. Daniel 2:44 tells us that one day God will destroy all four of these kingdoms and will replace them with His own everlasting kingdom that will never be destroyed.

"20 And the Lord shewed me four carpenters.
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."
(Zechariah 1)

God appointed four carpenters to attack the four horns. The angel wanted to know when God would bring an end to His judgment against Israel. It's true that the 70-year exile was coming to an end, but ultimately 4 kingdoms would rise up against God's people. Each of those kingdoms would have power for a time, but in the end God would put an end to them. Their reign and oppression would not last forever. God had a plan to save His people once and for all, and deliver them from all their adversaries.

8/30/2018, 8/4/2019

Zechariah 2

"1 I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand.
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." (Zechariah 2)

Why has God sent someone to measure Jerusalem? We will find the answer in the next few verses. These are good and

comfortable words, for they speak of a time of great prosperity for God's people. (Remember, these prophecies were given at a time when the Jews were still suffering greatly.)

"3 And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him, 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: 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." (Zechariah 2)

The only time the Lord will be a wall of fire around Jerusalem, and will dwell in Jerusalem and be the glory in her midst, is during the Millennium. That will indeed be a time when Jerusalem will become filled with people and be greatly enlarged! This is a reference to the prosperity that Jerusalem will find under the reign of Jesus her Messiah during the Millennial period.

I wonder if the Lord will be a literal wall of fire in those days. In Exodus 14:19-20 when the Egyptians came to attack Israel, the Lord was a wall of fire between the Israelites and Pharaoh's army. If the Lord really is going to be a literal wall of fire around the city (which I think is a reasonable interpretation), that would explain why Jerusalem is at peace and why nothing evil will enter into the city during the Millennium. (For more information see Appendix 5, "The Millennial Kingdom".)

"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. 7 Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest

with the daughter of Babylon." (Zechariah 2)

In Revelation 18:4 God commands His people to come out of Babylon. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues". These verses in Zechariah have the same sort of message, don't they? In the next verses we will see that God is bringing judgment upon those who oppressed His people. If God is going to pour out His wrath upon the lands of the north then it would make sense to flee from those lands! You don't want to be caught up in that judgment.

"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. 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." (Zechariah 2)

This is one of the major principles of the Old Testament: God blesses those who bless Israel and curses those who curse Israel (Genesis 12:3). Those who fight against Israel will not go unpunished, and those who take Israel's land will feel the wrath of God upon them. Joel 3 also talks about the time when the Lord will return from Heaven to personally fight against the armies that gathered against Israel to enslave her and steal her land. Those who touch Israel are in a great deal of trouble! This is a principle that is never going to change. (For more information about this topic see Appendix V, "God Curses Those Who Curse Israel".)

"10 Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. 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. 12 And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again." (Zechariah 2)

This is a beautiful picture of the Millennium. That is when the Lord will literally dwell in the midst of His people, and will do so forever.

In those days many nations will be joined to the Lord. The only people who will be allowed to enter into the Millennium are believers, which means that when the Millennium begins all nations will serve God! It will be an amazing time.

"13 Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation."
(Zechariah 2)

This is something we've seen many times throughout the prophets: a command to be silent before the Lord. Silence is a sign of respect, awe, and honor. The Lord is coming so the people of the Lord should be silent in His presence. (That is what it says, after all.)

Why is He raised up out of His holy habitation? I suspect it is to fulfill what it says in the previous verses – God has come to live in the midst of His people.

8/31/2018, 8/4/2019

Zechariah 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."
(Zechariah 3)

If we go back to Haggai 1:1 we will see that the high priest at this time really was a person named Joshua. Some people point out that there's actually no difference between the name "Joshua" in the Old Testament and "Jesus" in the New Testament, which means this might be talking about Jesus. The challenge is that the high priest at the time really was named Joshua, and the Messianic references in this chapter are unclear at best.

The other thing is that in verse 1 we are told that Joshua was standing before the angel of the Lord, and in verse 2 we are told that the Lord spoke to him. That means the angel of the Lord was a preincarnate Jesus – so it's unlikely that Jesus is both the angel *and* Joshua at the same time.

Notice that Satan is standing to resist him. For thousands of years Satan has been going before the Lord in Heaven and accusing the people of God (Job 1:9-11). That's why he is called the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10). The devil will continue to do this until after the rapture. At the time of the rapture the devil will try to kill everyone who was just raptured. When the Lord snatches us up and brings us to Heaven the devil will invade Heaven in order to kill us. There will then be a war in Heaven, and Satan will be cast out once and for all and will forever lose his ability to accuse the brethren. (See Revelation 12 for more details.)

"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?" (Zechariah 3)

I don't know what specific accusations Satan was making, but we can see the Lord's response. The Lord had chosen Jerusalem and He was not going to abandon that city. Jerusalem had sinned and was wicked and rebellious, but God was going to forgive her and give her hope and a future. (Has God cast off His people? No, He has not – and He never will.)

"3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. 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." (Zechariah 3)

I don't think this is talking about Jesus because the comparison doesn't make sense. Jesus was perfectly righteous and holy. He took our sin upon Himself and died in our place so that we might be saved and not suffer the wrath of God. Jesus was then raised from the dead and is now at the right hand of God. Jesus wasn't a filthy person who needed to have righteous given to Him, for He never had any iniquity. I think it's far more likely this depicts the time God will take away Israel's sins and will give the Jews everlasting righteousness. The context is the sins of Jerusalem and how God has chosen her and is going to redeem her.

In the Bible clothing is symbolic of righteousness. In order to be saved we cannot look to our own righteousness; we need the righteousness that only comes from God.

"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." (Zechariah 3)

If you look at verses 6 and 7 it becomes clear that the angel of the Lord is really the Lord (which is something we have seen in other passages in the Old Testament). That reinforces the case that this is talking about Joshua the high priest of Zechariah's day. Notice how his sins are forgiven, he is given righteousness, and he is also given a mitre (which is the official headdress of the high priest). There is a cleansing process going on here – one that God is doing. God took away his sin, God gave him new clothing, and God gave him the mitre. Joshua did not and could not save himself; it was all God. Once again we see that salvation only comes from the Lord and is not something we can attain by our own efforts.

"6 And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying, 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." (Zechariah 3)

This sounds like God is specifically addressing the high priest of Zechariah's day. If the high priest does what's right and walks in God's ways then the Lord will bless him.

"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." (Zechariah 3)

It's generally agreed that the Branch is a reference to the Messiah. This makes it even more likely that Joshua isn't Jesus, because it would be very strange if this verse was telling Jesus that He was going to bring forth His servant Jesus!

"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. 10 In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree." (Zechariah 3)

At the end of the tribulation the Lord will put an end to Israel's sin and give Israel a new heart. During the Millennium God will give great peace to the land, and people will long enjoy the work of their hands. So all of that makes sense.

What is a little strange is the stone. What's going on with this stone that has seven eyes? Well, verse 9 tells us that this stone is going to remove the iniquity of the people in a single day. In Ephesians 2:20 Jesus is called the chief corner stone. On top of that, Revelation 5:6 gives us a very interesting picture of Jesus. In that verse He is described as "a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth". That tells me that this stone is actually depicting the Messiah.

8/30/2018, 8/4/2019

Zechariah 4

"1 And the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep. 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: 3 And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof." (Zechariah 4)

The two olive trees are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord (see verses 12-14). (Did you know there are two anointed ones who stand by the Lord? I wonder what they do.) If the olive trees are the anointed ones then what is the candlestick, the bowl, the lamps, and the pipes? From what I can tell, it seems that the bowl is on top of the candlestick. The olive trees supply oil to the bowl, which then goes through the pipes to the lamps in order to keep them burning. It's an automatic system that does away with the need to manually refill the lamps (which was one of the temple duties in the Old Testament).

In the Bible oil is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. Christ once told a parable about ten virgins, five of which ran out of oil for their lamps (Matthew 25:1-12). In this system that would never be a problem because the lamps are directly connected to the source of oil and will never run out.

If the anointed ones are the trees then that makes them the source of the oil that runs the lamps. If the oil is the Holy Spirit, then that means – what, exactly? After all, the Holy Spirit is one of the three persons of the Trinity. He is not a byproduct of an angelic anointed one!

Perhaps the answer can be found in the middle of the

chapter:

Zechariah 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."

In the system of pipes and bowls and trees, the bowls have an endless supply of oil. They don't have to worry about running out because that's not an issue. They will have everything they need to keep burning.

In verse 7 God tells Zerubbabel that he will be unstoppable. The task that's facing him seems insurmountable but it won't be because God is with him. Perhaps the vision is intended to show that God is supplying him with a constant stream of grace – that God has connected him to the Source and his lamp will never run out. Zerubbabel will have everything he needs to turn the mountain into a plain (or rebuild the Temple, which was his actual goal). After all, it will be done "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit."

"4 So I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, saying, What are these, my lord?
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. 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. 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."
(Zechariah 4)

This answer makes more sense now that we know what's going on, doesn't it? This vision is telling Zerubbabel that God is going to give him a ceaseless stream of grace so he will be able to accomplish the task God commanded him to accomplish. Zerubbabel will face opposition but he will overcome it by the power of the Holy Spirit. The opposition will not be able to stop the temple from being rebuilt because the Lord will give him the victory.

"8 Moreover the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 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." (Zechariah 4)

Remember, the work on the temple ceased for years because the enemies of God gathered together and managed to put a stop to it. God is telling Zerubbabel that he was going to finish the work he started. The enemies of God weren't going to win – the Spirit of the Lord would see to that. The temple would be finished.

"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." (Zechariah 4)

Laying the foundation of the temple must have seemed like a small thing. There was still so much work to be done and

there was much opposition to it, but God was encouraging them to continue. This small step would lead to a completed temple, and that was a big deal.

"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? 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? 13 And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. 14 Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." (Zechariah 4)

I do wonder who these two anointed ones are. Who are they and what are their roles? There is still so much to learn.

8/30/2018, 8/4/2019

Zechariah 5

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

(Zechariah 5)

This flying scroll is about 30 feet by 15 feet, so it's fairly large. The curse of the flying roll may seem strange, but this isn't the only curse we find in the Bible. We know that God cursed the ground in the days of Adam (Genesis 3:17-19), which is why we have to work so hard to get food out of the ground and why the ground brings forth weeds. We know that childbirth has been cursed so it's far more painful than it was created to be (Genesis 3:16). We also know that God curses those who curse Israel (Genesis 12:3).

In this passage we find another curse. This one is a curse against those who steal and those who swear falsely by the Lord. Notice that God is very much against both of those things! Christians should not be engaged in either of these activities.

The flying scroll might be a symbolic picture, but I think the curse against stealing and swearing is very real. As we will see in the next verse, this "swearing" is not curse words but is something else.

"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." (Zechariah 5)

The Pharisees would be a good example of those who swear falsely by the Lord's name. They pretended to be righteous but their lives were full of all sorts of wickedness. Another example would be the people in the Old Testament who went into the temple to sing the Lord's praises and offer sacrifices, and then went home to worship their idols. God has a specific curse

against thieves and against all those who were only pretending to worship the Lord while their heart is truly elsewhere. This curse will remain in their house until their home is destroyed.

I think this is something we should take seriously. If God says that He is cursing certain sins and they will lead to your destruction then I wouldn't just ignore that and move on.

"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. 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." (Zechariah 5)

In this vision we have a flying unit of measurement going around. An ephah is about the size of a bushel. In the other books of the prophets God sometimes used object lessons to get His point across (as with Ezekiel) or else just said it straight out (as we saw in Obadiah). This flying ephah is pretty mysterious, though. What does that mean?

The general consensus is that this passage is talking about false religion. Specifically, it's talking about the end-times religion that will deceive the world during the tribulation. The woman that we find in the next verse is most likely the woman who rides the beast in Revelation 17:3.

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

A talent of lead is 75 pounds. As we will see in the next

verse, this lead is used as a lid to trap the woman. One day she will escape and cause great harm, but for now her evil is restrained. The time of the tribulation has not yet come.

"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." (Zechariah 5)

Since the ephah contained wickedness, the lead was cast on top of the pot to seal it shut. This would prevent the wicked religion inside it from escaping before its time.

"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." (Zechariah 5)

The wicked religion (which had been sealed away) was carried off. In verse 11 we will find out that it is being transported to Babylon. During the tribulation the pot will be unsealed and this religion will gain control over the whole world – until the Lord comes and destroys it.

"10 Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? 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." (Zechariah 5)

The pot is being carried to Babylon. The antichrist's kingdom will be based out of Babylon, so it makes sense that this wicked religion will come from there as well. Right now Babylon is more of a tourist attraction than anything else, but in the days of the antichrist it will become the seat of world power.

9/1/2018, 8/4/2019

Zechariah 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. 2 In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; 3 And in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses. 4 Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord? 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." (Zechariah 6)

Revelation 6 also has four horses but they're not quite the same. In Revelation 6 they are red, black, white, and pale. These are red, black, white, and "grisled and bay" (or spotted). What does this represent? Verse 5 gives us the answer: they are four spirits of God. What are these spirits doing? We will find out in the next verses.

One thing we can see from Zechariah is that God has a lot of spirits at His command and He sends them throughout the world to accomplish various tasks. This tells me that there's a whole unseen world out there! We can see the physical world,

but there's another world behind the scenes that drives the physical world to the place God wants it to go. We are only seeing part of history.

"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. 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. 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." (Zechariah 6)

What are these spirits doing? They are wandering through the world. It looks like they were sent to specific countries, which almost sounds like they have certain assigned territories. What function do they perform? Well, verse 8 tells us that they "quieted my spirit". I think in this context that's a good thing. These particular spirits are apparently bringing peace.

"9 And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, 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;" (Zechariah 6)

Zechariah was going to get some visitors from Babylon. When they arrived God had a task for him to accomplish. The

prophet was commanded to take these three men to the house of Josiah.

"11 Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest;" (Zechariah 6)

This is the same high priest that was mentioned in Haggai 2:2. God commands Zechariah to take silver and gold and turn it into four crowns (see verse 14), and put these crowns upon the head of Joshua (who was the son of the high priest). In this context I think that Joshua is supposed to be symbolic of Jesus the Messiah. (The next few verses makes this point clear.)

"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: 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." (Zechariah 6)

The passage of time has clarified these verses. The Branch is definitely the Messiah. Zechariah may have thought that the Messiah would build the second temple, but that is incorrect. The modern nation of Israel is expecting the Messiah to build the third temple, but that is incorrect as well. The temple that the Messiah will build is the *fourth* temple – the one that will exist during the Millennium. That is when Jesus will reign over the world from Jerusalem as a literal king (and a priest as well).

The crowning of Joshua was symbolic of crowning the

coming Messiah. It looked forward to what the Messiah would accomplish. (Joshua wasn't going to accomplish any of those things.)

As an aside, it's interesting to reflect on the fact that the people who God originally gave this prophecy to had little hope of interpreting it correctly. They probably could not have known that the Messiah would build the *fourth* temple. The things that God told them are true and will come to pass, but the Lord only gave them part of the picture.

It's easy to get prophecy wrong and difficult to get it right. There are some things we won't know for sure until they come to pass and we have the benefit of hindsight. God reveals some things to us but not everything. If He revealed everything then we would no longer need to live by faith, would we? Faith is exactly what we need when we don't have all the answers and have to trust the Lord.

"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." (Zechariah 6)

With the exception of Hen, these are the people who came from Babylon that Zechariah was told to meet. (Since there are four people, that tells me there are probably four crowns.) These were not crowns of authority; instead they were to be in the temple as a memorial to something that happened. The next verse explains what's going on.

"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."
(Zechariah 6)

Is the Messiah going to build the fourth temple? Absolutely. Is it possible that other people from "afar off" will assist in some way, and God will put a memorial in the temple to remember what they have done? That seems to be what this passage is saying.

9/1/2018, 8/4/2019, 7/25/2022

Zechariah 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;" (Zechariah 7)

Two years had gone by. Then the word of the Lord came to Zechariah in the 9th month and the 4th day. The 4th year of Darius corresponds to 536 BC. The 70 years of exile had ended 2 years earlier.

Do you see how the prophets weren't getting daily messages from God? Sometimes there were long gaps between them. Some prophets received only a few messages in their whole lives, while others received messages for decades. It all depended on what God wanted to accomplish through each prophet.

How would you feel if you were one of the prophets that God gave one message to one time, and then that was it? That seems to be what happened to Obadiah. Would you be willing to accept that? We have to realize that there were many people in the Bible who were faithful servants of God but the Lord didn't

use them to accomplish anything notable. This is *not* because of some failure on their part. It is because the body of Christ is composed of many parts, and those parts have different gifts and different functions.

What the Lord requires of us is spelled out in Micah 6:8: "He hat shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?". All the Lord requires of us is to do what is just, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. It is entirely possible that God will never use us to save entire cities. What we need to do is be content with whatever role God has given us, be it large or small. Maybe God simply wants us to live our life, do what is right, and walk with Him. People tend to think that if they don't have a big ministry then they are failing somehow, but God never says that.

"2 When they had sent unto the house of God Sherezzer and Regemmelech, and their men, to pray before the Lord, 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?" (Zechariah 7)

It seems that people were getting tired of going through the motions of serving God, and they wanted to know if they could just stop. If you have to ask this question then you are already very far from the Lord!

"4 Then came the word of the Lord of hosts unto me, saying, 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? 6 And when ye did eat, and when ye did drink, did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?" (Zechariah 7)

The Lord is not interested in people who are just going through the motions. He wants sincere worship from the heart! If you have spent years going to church to be outwardly religious, when your heart wasn't in it and your true love was elsewhere, then you have accomplished nothing. God has rejected what you have done; He sees what you're really doing and He's not impressed. God wants your heart! If your heart isn't in it then the rest doesn't matter. Don't bother fasting and praying and giving if you're just doing it for appearance's sake. Get your heart right first and love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and *then* come to serve the Lord.

That's the problem with people who decide that they want to be "more spiritual", and so they start doing outward things that they can brag about. They aren't doing it because they truly love the Lord. They're doing it for the same reason the Pharisees tithed their herb gardens – because it made them look good.

"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?" (Zechariah 7)

God told them repeatedly, through prophet after prophet, what He required of the Jews. How many more times does He

need to tell them? This isn't some deep mystery.

"8 And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying, 9 Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother: 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." (Zechariah 7)

Since they haven't been paying attention to any of the prophets who came before them, God is going to give them a history lesson. God wants two things: for people to love Him with all of their heart, and for people to love their neighbor as themselves. Everything flows from that! Execute justice – that means loving your neighbor. Show mercy and compassion to people. Don't oppress the weak and needy and don't plot evil against others. All of this is love in action. That is what God requires, and that is all of the Law and the Prophets. This will never change – God will always require this of us.

"11 But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. 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." (Zechariah 7)

When the prophets preached to the Jews they hardened their hearts. They refused to listen because they wanted to keep

oppressing and being violent and murdering one another. They wanted to continue their wicked, selfish, idolatrous lives, so they refused to listen to what God had to say. Since they wouldn't listen God sent His wrath upon them. (That's still how it works today.)

It shouldn't surprise us when wicked people refuse to hear the words of the Lord. That is how things have always been.

"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: 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." (Zechariah 7)

The Jews rejected the Lord and His Word. They did nothing until the hour of judgment came. When that hour came they did cry out to the Lord – not in repentance to ask for forgiveness, but instead asking God to save them in spite of the fact they weren't sorry and were going to keep serving their idols. So God refused to save them and scattered them throughout the world.

So, for those who were wondering if they should keep going through the same boring motions that they have done so many times before: here is your answer! If you continue your hypocrisy and refuse to serve the Lord from the heart, then God's wrath will come upon you. God did it before and God will do it again.

9/1/2018, 8/4/2019

Zechariah 8

"1 Again the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, 2 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury." (Zechariah 8)

This is why God poured out His wrath upon the Jews when they kept serving other gods. The Lord was furious with them – but that fury will not last forever.

"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. 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. 5 And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." (Zechariah 8)

I know this is unrelated to the overall message, but I'd like to point out that this passage mentions boys and girls, and *only* boys and girls. It doesn't say anything about how we shouldn't label our children "boys" and "girls" and should let them decide which of the 80 genders they want to be. No, the Bible is pretty clear that there are two genders – male and female – and you are what you are and you cannot change it. It's perfectly rational to label your children as their correct, biological gender from the moment they are born, and then to continue on with that label. God even assigned different roles to different genders! Each gender has its own responsibilities and abilities, and it is perfectly

sensible to train each gender to fulfill that role.

But that is an aside. This passage will be fulfilled in the Millennium. That is when Jerusalem will be the city of truth and God will dwell in their midst. That is when the city will be full of young and old who go about their business with fearless joy. It should be noted that during the Millennium people will live for a long time, but they won't live forever; they will still grow old and die (although those who were resurrected are obviously exempt from that).

"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." (Zechariah 8)

At this point in history it seemed impossible to the Jews that this would ever come to pass. It's true that it hasn't happened yet, but it will happen one day. It will still come to pass in its time because nothing is too hard for God.

"7 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; 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." (Zechariah 8)

The antichrist will scatter the Jews all over the world and the Lord will bring them back. God will literally dwell in the midst of His people in Jerusalem. They will be His people and He will be their God, and they will never turn away from God again. There

will indeed be truth and righteousness during the Millennium! That is when all of these things will come to pass.

"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." (Zechariah 8)

God is strengthening the people who are rebuilding the temple. He is telling them that better days are going to come. Their labor is not in vain, and one day Jerusalem will be greater than it ever was before. Their best days are not behind them! They are ahead of them, and they should press on.

The same is true for us as well. If we are saved by the grace of God then our best days aren't behind us; they are ahead of us. There are endless ages of time ahead of us in a perfect world that will never know pain or suffering or death (Revelation 21:1-4). Instead of being discouraged we should press on.

"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." (Zechariah 8)

God has the ability to bring peace, and He also has the ability to bring division. Before the Jews started rebuilding the temple He removed prosperity from the land and sent terrible hardship. He was the one who set all men against their neighbors and removed peace from the land. Why? To punish them for

their wickedness.

God can bring peace and He can bring the sword. He can bring prosperity and He can take it away.

"11 But now I will not be unto the residue of this people as in the former days, saith the Lord of hosts. 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." (Zechariah 8)

In the years after Zechariah Jerusalem did recover, but the ultimate fulfillment of this promise will happen in the Millennium. That is when the ground will be blessed beyond measure, far in excess of anything we have seen before.

"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." (Zechariah 8)

Today the Jews are still cursed among the nations; those who do not know the Lord hate them. But during the Millennium the Lord will change all that. In those days the Jews will be blessed by all nations, and the kings of the world will bring their treasures into Jerusalem.

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

This is something we should pay close attention to. There are many people today who say that God has cast off His people Israel and given their promises to the Church. But look at what this says! Yes, God did pour out His wrath upon them, but one day He is going to bless them just as assuredly as He punished them before. His wrath did come upon them, but one day His blessings would come – and those blessings would come specifically upon *Judah and Jerusalem*. Yes, God specifically singled out Judah and Jerusalem for His blessings! These Millennial promises will come to pass in the appointed time. Since they were unconditional promises that do not depend on Israel in any way, they cannot be lost or revoked.

"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:
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." (Zechariah 8)

God is very consistent in His message, isn't He? Love one another, do what's right, and don't do wrong to one another or tell lies. That is how God's people are commanded to behave.

It's a bit sad to see how many people within the church are unwilling to keep these commands. Jesus said that the world would know us by our love for one another, but that love is becoming hard to find. Where is love? Where is truth and justice? Too many people hate one another and are proud of it.

This just goes to show how many within the church are not of God at all.

"18 And the word of the Lord of hosts came unto me, saying, 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." (Zechariah 8)

Earlier in Zechariah we saw people complaining about having to fast, pray, and worship the Lord. God is telling us that during the Millennium those Jewish holidays will continue to be celebrated, but they will be celebrated with great joy. Even the Gentiles will come and observe the feast of tabernacles (Zechariah 14:16! People won't be doing it out of obligation; they will be doing it with love and gladness.

I think the Millennium will come as quite a shock to people. So many Christians aren't expecting this at all and have no idea what the Millennium will be like.

"20 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come people, and the inhabitants of many cities: 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. 22 Yea, many people and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to pray before the Lord." (Zechariah 8)

This is something we have seen repeatedly in the prophets. In the Millennium the whole world will serve the Lord, and will go to the Lord and worship Him. They will walk in His ways and listen to His commands. It won't just be the Jews who do this; it will be all peoples in all nations. Notice how this passage speaks of entire cities going to seek the Lord – not just one city, but many cities! Not only will they pray and seek the Lord, but they will go to *Jerusalem* (which is where Jesus will be reigning during the Millennium). Today this is unimaginable, but in the future it will be common. This will happen because the Lord will bring it to pass.

"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." (Zechariah 8)

In the modern world the Jews are hated and persecuted and killed. The nations have gathered against them and are trying to drive them out of their countries. During the Millennium, though, the world will honor the Jews because of their special relationship with God. That will be an amazing thing to see, won't it? This will literally come to pass, and we will see it.

9/1/2018, 8/4/2019, 7/26/2022

Zechariah 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. 2 And Hamath also shall border thereby; Tyrus, and Zidon, though it be very wise." (Zechariah 9)

This prophecy will come to pass at a time when the eyes of man be toward the Lord. Based on the rest of the chapter I suspect this is speaking of events around the time of the tribulation period (although there is other material in this chapter as well).

For the record, Alexander the Great conquered Damascus in 333 BC. He conquered Tyre the following year, in 332 BC.

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

The ancient destruction of Tyrus was accomplished by Alexander the Great. Tyrus did indeed build a stronghold (offshore in the sea, to avoid Nebuchadnezzar), and the Lord did cast her out and turn her over to her enemies.

"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. 6 And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. 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."
(Zechariah 9)

Verses 1 and 2 talk about Alexander's conquest of Damascus in 333 BC. Verses 3 and 4 talk about his conquest of Tyre in 332 BC. In that same year Alexander also conquered Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and Ashdod.

When Tyre was destroyed, these other nations would have been afraid because Tyre was strong, wealthy, and powerful. God judged Israel for her sins, but He did not leave the other nations unpunished.

Verse 7 is interesting. It seems to be saying that the remnant which survives these judgments upon the Philistines will serve the Lord.

"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." (Zechariah 9)

There is a day coming when the Lord will watch over Jerusalem and oppressors will never again enter into the city and trouble His people. That time is the Millennium. As we saw earlier in Zechariah, the Lord will be a wall of fire around Jerusalem. He will protect them from all her enemies.

"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." (Zechariah 9)

This is definitely a reference to the Messiah. Verse 9 was fulfilled on Palm Sunday, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey (Matthew 21:1-9). It's interesting that this verse is found in the midst of all these other verses that weren't fulfilled at the same time. It makes one wonder how many other things we think are connected that really aren't. Prophecy can be very tricky.

"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." (Zechariah 9)

This did *not* happen on Palm Sunday. Instead Jesus went to the cross and was crucified. He died and was resurrected and ascended into Heaven. This verse has still not come to pass, but it will be fulfilled during the Millennium. That is when Jesus will reign as king over all the world (from sea to sea and to the ends of the earth). That is when nations will no longer fight one another but will beat their swords into plowshares.

If you read this passage it sounds like verses 9 and 10 happen right next to each other, but in reality there's a gap of two thousand years between them! Verse 10 will not come to pass until the Millennium. (Do you see why prophecy can be so difficult?)

"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." (Zechariah 9)

If you have prisoners trapped in a pit that has no water, then what you have are people who are in a lot of trouble. Those prisoners need to be rescued quickly or else they're going to die. This verse tells us that God is going to rescue people and deliver them from despair and death. How is He going to do that? By the blood of His covenant. (Doesn't that sound like something we would find in the New Testament?)

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

What stronghold can we flee to in our times of trouble? Who is the rock that we must build our life upon so that it can survive the storms of life? I suspect God is telling us to flee to the Messiah, for He alone can save us. We need His blood in order to obtain forgiveness for our sins.

"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." (Zechariah 9)

Greece doesn't get a lot of mentions in the Bible; the only other mention I can find is in Acts 20:2. Notice how God says that He is going to raise up the Jews and they will defeat their Gentile enemies. The nations that persecuted and oppressed His people for so long will one day be defeated. God will not allow them to harm His chosen ones forever.

"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. 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." (Zechariah 9)

This definitely didn't happen in 70 AD, did it? I suspect this is talking about the final victory that God will give His people. The point is that God will not oppress the Jews forever. One day He will strengthen them and give them victory – and from that day on they will never be defeated or conquered again, for Jesus will be their king in Jerusalem and reign over all the world.

"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. 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." (Zechariah 9)

It should not come as a surprise that food and wine would make people cheerful! Those will be some of the blessings the Lord will give during the Millennium. Jesus will deliver them from the antichrist and give them lasting peace.

You can see how much God loves Israel, and how precious the Jews are to Him! He compares His people to the jewels in a crown. Do you see His amazing goodness? The Lord has not cast away His people. He has made many promises to them and He is going to keep them.

Notice that verse 17 says that wine is a blessing that brings joy to people. The Bible consistently teaches that drunkenness is a sin but wine is a blessing. (For more information on this topic see Appendix 1, "Wine Is A Blessing.")

9/1/2018, 8/4/2019

Zechariah 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." (Zechariah 10)

On one level we can interpret this as God saying that Israel needs to seek the Lord for rain and prosperity and help, because their idols are worthless and unable to help anyone. But I wonder if there's another level to this as well.

Who does the church look to for prosperity? Are they really looking to the Lord? Given how far churches bend over backwards to throw out the truth and appeal to the culture, I really think they're trusting their own efforts. They have little faith in God, or else they would proclaim the Word boldly from their pulpits and not be ashamed of what God has to say. Their eagerness to be liked by the world is a sign that they aren't looking to their Maker. God never commanded pragmatism! What the Lord wants is faithfulness and obedience.

"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." (Zechariah 10)

You cannot look to idols or sorcerers or false prophets to help! Our help only comes from the Lord.

People really are sheep and they really do need a shepherd. They need someone to watch over them, and lead them, and take care of them, and guard them from false teachers, and guide them to what's right. It's a great pity that many churches are completely uninterested in doing any of those things, and seeks to increase their congregation by watering down the Word of God until the world accepts it. How many pastors know what's going on in the lives of their congregation? How many even care? How many think it's their responsibility to warn about false teachers and help those in need? Have they even thought to ask these questions?

The modern church experience is pretty awful: you show up, sing some songs, listen to a sermon, and go home. That's it. The church will pressure you to give money to pay the full-time staff, which doesn't know you and isn't available to help you when you need it. The sermons are weak and watered down. They lack the full counsel of God and are just whatever the pastors think the congregation wants to hear. The church will ask you to volunteer to help them, but when does the church do to help its own members? When will it preach the sermons that people need to hear? When will it get to know the people and help them with their problems and show them how to live for the Lord?

Where is the body of Christ helping one another and bearing one another's burdens? The vast majority of people in the congregation have no opportunity to contribute in any meaningful way. All the church really wants from them is for people to show up and give money. The church isn't a body anymore; it's a few highly paid people who do everything while the congregation just sits there. The whole idea of the body is that different people have different gifts that they can use to

help others. The church isn't interested in that, though. If you want to serve you can greet people at the door, or volunteer in the nursery, or maybe play an instrument. Otherwise you can sit there quietly until it's time to go home.

Where is the shepherd? Where is the care for the sheep?

"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." (Zechariah 10)

Goats in the Bible are consistently bad. You don't want to be among the goats – nothing good comes from that! When God judges between the sheep and the goats, the sheep are saved and the goats are not (Matthew 25:32-46).

God is consistently angry at religious leaders in both the New and Old Testaments. It's easy to see why: they have completely neglected their jobs! These wicked shepherds use their position to oppress people instead of helping them.

"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. 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." (Zechariah 10)

God has strengthened Judah so they can defeat their enemies. Since God is with them they will win. Their idols are worthless and cannot help them. Only the Lord can give them

deliverance!

"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. 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." (Zechariah 10)

God punished Israel in the past, but one day He will be with them and strengthen them so they can defeat their enemies, and in that day they will rejoice in the Lord. Israel will not always be as cast down and defeated as it was in the days of Zechariah! One day the Lord will fight for Israel and deliver her.

God will always be the Lord God of Israel. Israel may have left the Lord, but God will bring her back.

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

This gathering will take place at the beginning of the

Millennium. At the time of the Babylonian exile God scattered the Jews among the nations. After the exile was over a few Jews came back to the land, but not all of them. Even today there are still many Jews who live outside the nation of Israel. When the antichrist rises to power he will scatter the Jews, but once Jesus returns in person and defeats him God will gather them back to the land one last time.

God is telling Zechariah that Israel will not remain an abandoned and desolate wilderness forever, where only a few scattered and fearful people dwell. One day all of the Jews will come home, and Israel will be a strong and prosperous place.

"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. 12 And I will strengthen them in the Lord; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord."
(Zechariah 10)

This seems like a reference to the tribulation period. Assyria brings to mind the antichrist, and the mention of Egypt makes me think of her destruction and desolation for 40 years. This passage implies that Babylon and Egypt are destroyed around the same time frame (at the end of the tribulation). Babylon and Egypt were enemies of the Jews and caused them a lot of problems. God is not going to allow them to trouble Israel forever, though. One day God will defeat them and give Israel peace and rest.

9/1/2018, 8/4/2019

Zechariah 11

"1 Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars. 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. 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." (Zechariah 11)

Just so we're clear, this is a prophecy against Israel. The last chapter looked forward to the restoration and glory of Israel. This chapter is talking about something very different.

"4 Thus saith the Lord my God; Feed the flock of the slaughter; 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. 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." (Zechariah 11)

Based on the way this chapter ends, this prophecy seems to be talking about the end times and the rise of the antichrist. Notice how God condemns the rich for oppressing the poor and caring only about themselves. God also condemns the shepherds (which is a reference to the priests) for not taking care of the people but instead boasting about how much money they have.

(Doesn't that sound like modern televangelists, who have amassed tremendous wealth by stealing from and deceiving their sheep?) In the end times Israel will be exceedingly wicked, and God will move against her for her sins.

"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." (Zechariah 11)

Based on verse 14, this staff has something to do with the unity of Israel. It seems that Zechariah had two staves ("Beauty" and "Bands") and God used them as an object lesson.

"8 Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me." (Zechariah 11)

Who were these three shepherds that died in one month? They were wicked men that the Lord abhorred, so He killed them for their sins. Their names aren't given but they seem to have died in the days of Zechariah as an object lesson about what would happen in the end times.

It's clear that God hates wicked shepherds, and they are in great danger of facing His wrath. Being a false shepherd might be a path to riches and prosperity, but in the end it will earn you everlasting destruction and damnation.

One other thing: not only did God abhor these false shepherds, but they abhorred God as well. These shepherds might honor the Lord with their lips, but their heart is far from Him. It was all an outward religious display that hid a heart that hated God.

"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." (Zechariah 11)

Because of Judah's wickedness judgment was coming upon them. God was not going to watch over them anymore and protect them from their enemies. He was going to hand them over to death.

"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 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." (Zechariah 11)

What is going on here? Well, "Beauty" seems to be related to the Messiah. Breaking "Beauty" is related to the betrayal of Jesus by Judas and the subsequent death of Christ. Zechariah broke the staff named "Beauty" in front of an audience, and they (correctly) interpreted it as a sign from God.

It's true that verse 10 says God broke the covenant He made with the people. The key question to ask is this: what covenant is being broken? The answer has to take into account all of the unconditional promises that God made. Those promises cannot be broken because no conditions were attached to them. If we read the rest of the passage we will see that it speaks of the death of the Messiah. This isn't talking about the Abrahamic covenant or taking away the future that God promised to Israel.

I think God is saying that when these things are fulfilled

He is not going to protect Israel, but will turn her over to the antichrist (who is mentioned in the final verses of this chapter). Yet we know that one day Israel will repent and call out to God, and the Lord will save her. We find this taught in Romans 11:26-27. The fact that God specified in the *New Testament* that He still hasn't cast away Israel but will one day save them tells us quite a lot about how to interpret these verses. Because Israel rejected the Messiah they will have to go through the tribulation, but they will be saved in the end.

"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. 13 And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord."
(Zechariah 11)

We all know how this was fulfilled. Judas betrayed Christ for 30 pieces of silver, and that silver was later cast back into the temple and used to buy the potter's field (Matthew 27:3-10). (It's hard to imagine that anyone who heard this prophecy in Zechariah's day would have understood what it meant or how it would be fulfilled.)

Verse 13 makes it clear that this price is being paid for the Lord. He is the one they're bargaining over! This is a clear Messianic reference. Incidentally, in verse 13 the Lord is actually mocking them. They valued the Lord, the Most High God, at only 30 pieces of silver – the price for a dead slave (Exodus 21:32).

What are these verses doing there? Well, Israel rejected their Messiah (the good shepherd), so the Lord is handing them over to another shepherd. Since they refused to accept someone

who came in the name of the Father, God is going to send them someone who will come in his own name, and they will accept him (John 5:43). This was the moment the Jews cast off the Lord and betrayed Him to His death.

"14 Then I cut asunder mine other staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel." (Zechariah 11)

Beauty seems to be connected to the Messiah, and Bands seems to be connected to Israel and Judah. As punishment for the rejection of the Messiah, God was going to "break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel". Since they rejected Him, He would send division among them. The Lord has the ability to give peace and take it away.

"15 And the Lord said unto me, Take unto thee yet the instruments of a foolish shepherd." (Zechariah 11)

This is the antichrist. Since Israel rejected the Good Shepherd, God is going to give them a very different shepherd – one they will accept, but who will cause them tremendous harm.

"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." (Zechariah 11)

The antichrist is not going to care about Israel. He's not

going to look after the young or help those who are in need. Instead he will enrich himself and tear people into pieces. He will cause great harm and help no one.

People often say that the devil is the one who's raising up the antichrist and getting him ready. Is that what this verse says? Nope – it says that *God* is the one who is raising him up and preparing him, and He is doing it to punish Israel for her rejection of the Messiah. The antichrist is going to come into power because it's the Lord's will for him to do so – and God will use him to accomplish His plans. It's ironic that the antichrist hates Israel and wants to kill all of the Jews, but in the end God is going to use him to save Israel and draw them to the Messiah.

"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."
(Zechariah 11)

People have wondered if this is a reference to the antichrist's deadly wound that was healed (Revelation 13:3). The thought is that at some point the antichrist is attacked and actually dies, and then he comes back from the dead (which terrifies the whole world). However, he is not left unscathed. It seems that his right eye goes blind and his right arm becomes useless. These will be key identifying marks of the antichrist.

9/2/2018, 8/4/2019

Zechariah 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."
(Zechariah 12)

The Bible consistently talks about God "stretching out the heavens". I think that's a very specific phrase with a very specific meaning. It sounds like God created the heavens and then stretched them out. I bet there's a scientific truth about the universe hidden in this verse.

Notice that God identifies Himself by the things He has done. He created the universe, including the planets and stars. He created this world and laid its foundations. He also created all of the plants and animals and mankind, and put life inside men and gave them the ability to reason and think. That is the breathtaking power of God – a power that's vastly above anything we can do.

"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. 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." (Zechariah 12)

Here we are definitely talking about the end times. This refers to the time at the end of the tribulation when all nations will be gathered against Jerusalem and attack the city. We have seen parts of verse 3 come to pass in our day, as nation after nation has lined up as the enemy of Israel. Nations are gathering against the Jews and are trying to take Jerusalem away from her to give it to her enemies. God has a warning for those who do

such things: those nations will be punished and cut into pieces! The nations are going to gather against Israel to destroy her, but God won't allow it. He will instead defeat all of the nations of the world – for He is the creator and has the power to do that. The antichrist is not going to win.

"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." (Zechariah 12)

When God fights for Israel, one of the things He will do is cause trouble among the enemies who are attacking Jerusalem. Their armies will cease to function properly – they will become blind and insane, and will be unable to form an effective fighting force.

"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. 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. 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." (Zechariah 12)

At the end of the tribulation when the antichrist gathers

the nations against Israel to wipe the Jews out once and for all, God is going to deliver them in a mighty way. First God is going to save Judah, and then He is going to save Jerusalem (so that Jerusalem doesn't magnify itself above Judah). The Lord will use Judah to destroy the armed forces that came against her. The enemies that surround her will be defeated.

"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." (Zechariah 12)

When this battle comes – when the antichrist makes his move to wipe them all out and make a final end to the Jews – the Lord is going to supercharge His people. Those who are feeble are going to be as mighty as David, who slew Goliath and was an amazing warrior. Those who are of the house of David will be so mighty that they are compared to the Lord Himself. The nations will find themselves battling a city that's protected by superheroes – while their own army has gone blind and insane.

"9 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." (Zechariah 12)

God is going to curse the nations that attacked Jerusalem and will seek to destroy them. Those who attack Jerusalem are attacking the apple of His eye, and God will avenge Himself for what the nations have done to His city and His people. Since all the nations of the world are going to come against Jerusalem, all the nations of the world will be destroyed.

"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."
(Zechariah 12)

Here we are at last! This is what I've been talking about for so long. This is the moment when God will give Israel a new heart, and they will finally accept the Messiah. In this moment the Jews will repent of their sins and will be bitterly sorry over their long rejection of the one God sent to save them. This is when they will change once and for all, never to rebel against God again. When the armies of the world (led by the antichrist) have gathered against them to wipe them out, that is when they will cry out to God and that is when God will save them.

Why will they cry out to God? Why will they finally accept Jesus as their Messiah? As we can see from this verse, it is because God used His Spirit to change them. It is a work that God did! These people didn't "come to their senses"; instead *God changed them*. God used His divine power to save them and give them a new heart. (Once again we see Calvinism in action.)

At the end of the tribulation God will give the Jews a new heart so they will repent and cry out to Jesus and be saved. When they do that God will then strengthen them and save them. He will empower them to be mighty against their enemies – and then He will return in person to slaughter the antichrist and cast him into the lake of fire (Revelation 19:20-21).

God will not allow the antichrist to win.

"11 In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon." (Zechariah 12)

In these verses God specifically says that He will save the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The people of Jerusalem and the house of David are going to repent. As we will see in the next verses, there are a few other groups who will repent as well.

These verses speak of a great mourning. When the Jews are finally saved, they will realize they had been rejecting the Messiah for centuries and oppressing those who believed in the Messiah. It's no wonder they will mourn over Him when they realize what they did to Him – how they rejected Him and turned Him over to His enemies. God sent them His Son and they did terrible things to Him. When they're finally saved they will mourn bitterly. This is a healthy thing; it's a part of repentance.

I sometimes wonder about people who claim to be Christians and yet are proud of their sins and brag about the terrible things they did before they are saved. If you aren't sorry about your sins then why do you think you're a Christian?

"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; 13 The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of Shimei apart, and their wives apart; 14 All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart." (Zechariah 12)

The house of David and Nathan are specifically called out.

The house of Levi and Shimei are specifically called out. Then we are told in verse 14 that all of the families that remain will mourn as well. Nathan was one of David's sons; Mary (the mother of Christ) came from that line. Shimei was the person who cursed king David. I don't know if that's the Nathan and Shimei that God is talking about here, but those are the two people who come to mind. As far as the house of Levi goes, we know how thoroughly they rejected Jesus. The day will come when even they repent and are saved.

Here we have it at last – the moment when all Israel is saved. This is one of the great turning points in history! This is when the tribulation comes to an end, the antichrist is defeated, and the Millennium begins. This is when everything changes for the better.

People who believe in replacement theology (which teaches that the church has replaced Israel) completely ignore this passage. This chapter is extremely clear about what's going to happen! If you interpret this passage using the normal rules of interpretation then it is very clear. One day the whole world will come against Israel, and God will save His people's souls and empower them to fight back against their enemies. It specifically says that they will mourn over their Messiah, whom they rejected, and be saved. This ties in perfectly with what Paul said in Romans 11, that one day all Israel will be saved. There is absolutely no reason to reject this passage and say it has been canceled out, or it somehow applies in some vague spiritual way to the church. There is no way that is true. This is a promise that God gave specifically to Israel. If Israel is mourning over rejecting and piercing the Messiah then that means this repentance is happening *after that rejection* – which means their rejection can't cancel out this promise because it was already factored in!

This will literally happen just as it's written. Those who take away the promises that God gave to the Jews and try to give them to someone else will one day find themselves greatly

ashamed. (For more information about this topic see Appendix Z, "The Theology of Covenants".)

9/2/2018, 8/4/2019

Zechariah 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."
(Zechariah 13)

On the one hand it seems clear that this is talking about the Messiah. He is the only way for anyone to obtain forgiveness for sin and to cleanse themselves of their forgiveness. Will He be available to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem? Absolutely! At the same time it's worth pointing out that during the Millennium a literal fountain of living waters will come forth out of the millennial temple (see Ezekiel 47).

"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. 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." (Zechariah 13)

Notice the implication here. The idea is that God has stopped sending prophets, so anyone who comes along and claims to be a prophet is lying! Therefore, whenever someone stands up and claims to be a prophet, that person's parents will kill them on the spot for speaking lies in the name of the Lord. One thing I've said repeatedly is that there are no prophets anymore. As Hebrews 1:1-2 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17 explains, God has stopped speaking through them because He has given us His Word, which contains everything we need. We don't need prophets, which is why God isn't sending them to us. (For more information about this topic see Appendix F, "God Is Not Giving You New Revelation".)

That means all the people today who claim to have received a vision from the Lord, or a message from God, are lying. No one is receiving new revelation from God! The modern church doesn't do much to oppose them, but the Millennium will be very different. Whenever anyone falsely claims to speak for God in those days their own parents will kill them! This will happen because people will love the Lord more than anything else, so anyone who tells lies in the name of the Lord will be killed on the spot. People will no longer say "Sure my child just murdered a hundred people, but he's still a good kid. You should give him flowers instead of punishing him." No, sin will not be tolerated in the Millennium.

In those days God is going to destroy all of the idols out of the land of Israel and they will be gone forever, never to return. Israel will never again rebel against God or turn to false gods. They will be faithful forever because God gave them a new heart.

One other thing. Do you see the mention of unclean spirits? God is going to round up all the demons and drive them out of Israel so that they can no longer cause problems or oppress people. The modern church doesn't believe in demons anymore (which is very stupid of them), but they are still real and they cause a great deal of harm. God is going to address that

problem in the Millennium.

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

Sin isn't going to be tolerated in the Millennium. In those days God will not allow lies and blasphemy to continue, and the people will not listen to false prophets or allow them to carry on their deception. The culture will not accept what they're teaching, and liars will be forced to admit their lies. Deceit will not be accepted and heretics will be rejected and punished. The Millennium will be a time when sin actually brings shame!

"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." (Zechariah 13)

In the midst of this passage that talks about the tribulation, the antichrist, and the Millennium, we have a Messianic prophecy. Jesus applied this verse to Himself in Matthew 26:31 when He spoke of His arrest and the scattering of His disciples. Yet this is a really odd place to put that verse! How could you figure out in advance what this verse was talking

about?

If you look closely, this verse doesn't mention the foolish shepherd but instead "my shepherd". It says that this shepherd is "my fellow" – in other words, He is God. This is a Messianic reference. After Jesus was killed the Jews were scattered all over the world. The Jews rejected their shepherd and they suffered for it, but one day this suffering and scattering will come to an end.

"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. 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."
(Zechariah 13)

This is important! The tribulation is the refining fire that God is speaking of here. Two thirds of the Jews will not survive this time period but will be killed. However, the last third will survive. God will use that terrible time to refine and save them, and they will be His people and He will be their God. These saved Jews are going to inhabit Jerusalem and Israel during the Millennium, and their descendants will continue to populate it throughout the centuries to come. God will save a remnant and greatly bless them.

Zechariah has some critical pieces to the end-times puzzle. It also contains some passages that are difficult to understand. The truth is that all we can know about the future is what God has revealed to us. Some things have to wait until the time comes.

9/2/2018, 8/4/2019

Zechariah 14

"1 Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. 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." (Zechariah 14)

In chapter 12 we saw that God was going to empower the people who lived in Jerusalem. When the world comes against that city at the end of the tribulation, they will fight with amazing strength against the combined armies of the entire planet. However, in spite of this great strength they will still lose. The city will fall and terrible things will happen to those who live there. Once the antichrist has conquered Jerusalem he will turn his armies to go to Petra, which is where the last Jews will be hiding in those days. Before he gets there the Jews will repent and cry out to the Messiah, who will return in person and save them. That is when the antichrist will be defeated and cast into the lake of fire:

"3 Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle." (Zechariah 14)

This is something we see in Revelation 19. When the Jews cry out to Jesus and repent of their sins and accept Him as their Messiah, the Lord will then return in person and single-handedly

defeat the combined armies of the entire world. He (and He alone) will save His people from the antichrist.

"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. 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." (Zechariah 14)

Good luck trying to spiritualize these verses and apply them to the church! Do you see how specific they are? Do you see how they talk about the geography of Israel? Do you see how these are specific actions that Jesus takes after the Jews call out to Him to save them?

It amazes me that so many within the church have casually dismissed these verses and claimed that none of this will ever happen. The truth is that they are very wrong. All of this will happen exactly as it is written, because prophecy is always fulfilled literally. These things will come to pass! Jesus will return and He will slaughter the enemies who have come against His people. He will destroy the nations that attacked Jerusalem. Once He has done those things He will stand on the mount of Olives and it will divide itself in half, becoming a great valley. The land will be rent asunder and divided, and there will be great panic. In that day the Lord Jesus Christ will be there, and He will bring with him all the saints of God. That will be a glorious thing

to see – and we will be there to see it! (For more information see Appendix 5, "The Millennial Kingdom".)

"6 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: 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." (Zechariah 14)

This is something I wondered about earlier – if the long day of Joshua was actually looking forward to the time when Jesus would return. Here we have more evidence that there will be *another* long day, which Jesus will use to avenge Himself on all of His enemies. This time, though, it may not be a result of the sun and moon remaining still; it might happen because the Light of the World has come. After all, Jesus doesn't need the sun and the moon to give light; He created light before either of those celestial bodies existed (see Genesis 1).

"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." (Zechariah 14)

I think this is definitely a reference to the living waters that are discussed in Ezekiel 47, which will flow out of the Millennial temple. It seems that these waters will flow in all seasons and bestow their miraculous healing powers upon the whole world. I suspect this is how the world will be restored and become habitable again after the judgments of the tribulation.

"9 And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one." (Zechariah 14)

If you interpret the Bible plainly then this is very easy to understand. It's not some kind of weird, arbitrary allegory; it means exactly what it says! This is all going to happen, and it will happen literally. Jesus is going to destroy all of the nations that attacked Jerusalem with the antichrist. He will return *in person* and wipe them out. The Lord is then going to heal the world with literal living waters from the fourth temple. In those days Jesus is going to establish a kingdom that will never end, which will replace the kingdoms of this world and rule over all nations (Daniel 2:44). He will be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, sitting on the throne of David and ruling with a rod of iron (Revelation 19:15). The kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and all nations will bow down to His authority. This glorious kingdom will last *forever*, and its increase will never end (Isaiah 9:7).

"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." (Zechariah 14)

The return of Christ will be accompanied by a great earthquake and huge changes in the local terrain. The world will be physically different after the Lord returns. The mountains really will melt in His presence – *literally*.

"11 And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited." (Zechariah 14)

When Jesus is king over Jerusalem and reigns over all the world, Jerusalem will be perfectly safe. No one will ever succeed in conquering her again! She will never again be destroyed. (After Satan is released from the bottomless pit he will try to attack her one last time, but he will not succeed. Fire will come down out of heaven and consume his entire army, and he will be cast into the lake of fire.) Israel will finally be safe *forever*.

Israel spent so long looking to idols for safety. One day the Jews will understand that safety can only be found in the Lord. Only their Messiah can give them what they're looking for.

"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." (Zechariah 14)

This is the effect that a nuclear weapon has on people. The reason it does this is because of its intense radiation. Jesus, as we know, is the light of the world (John 8:12). If Jesus was to reveal some of His glory – if He was to unleash some of this holy light against His enemies – then it wouldn't surprise me if it resulted in the deaths of those who saw it. There's a reason no one can see God and live!

This verse doesn't say that *Israel* will smite these people,

or that God will use Israel's nuclear arsenal against them. It says that this is what the Lord will do.

"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. 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." (Zechariah 14)

When the Lord delivers His people, the Jews will plunder their enemies and gain the wealth of those who plundered them. This is something we saw before in the exodus from Egypt. Perhaps many of those passages (although they did literally happen) were pointing toward a greater event that would take place in the future.

"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." (Zechariah 14)

It seems that the animals were going to suffer the same fate as the enemies who came against Jerusalem. I suspect these animals belonged to the enemies of God's people, and so they suffered the same fate.

"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." (Zechariah 14)

Some passages in the Bible are hard to interpret because we only have some of the prophetic pieces. However, there are a lot of passages that are only hard to understand because people don't like what they mean, and so they try to find a way to twist them to say something they like better (2 Peter 3:15-16). I think verse 16 is very easy to understand and should be interpreted literally. During the Millennium the Gentile believers who survived the tribulation will repopulate the Gentile nations, and those nations will be required to go to Jerusalem to worship the Lord. Part of this worship will be to keep the feast of tabernacles. So, yes, the whole world really is going to go to Jerusalem to celebrate this Jewish feast during the Millennium. God said that it's going to be the law, and so it's going to happen. We will live to see this come to pass and we will participate in it. The verse means what it says!

Do Christians today know that they're going to be doing this? Definitely not. Churches routinely reject all of this, but rejecting it doesn't make it go away.

"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. 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. 19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles." (Zechariah 14)

Jesus is going to rule over the nations with a rod of iron, and He will be very serious about it. If any nation chooses to rebel against the Lord and not come to the feast, the Lord will withhold His rain from that nation and send a crippling drought. If that nation continues to rebel then the Lord will smite them with the terrible plague that has the effect of a nuclear weapon. That's right: if any nation repeatedly disobeys the Lord during the Millennium then they will get nuked. Rebellion is not going to be tolerated!

Notice how God specifically singles out Egypt. Apparently they are going to be rebellious during the Millennium in spite of everything. God is warning them in advance what will happen when they go down that road. In the Millennium you will not have the option of refusing to worship the Lord. God is not going to allow idols! Those who refuse to keep the feast are refusing to worship the Lord, and those who continue rebel against Him will be severely punished.

"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. 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." (Zechariah 14)

In the Millennium Jerusalem and Judah will be saturated with the holiness of God. That whole area will be utterly holy down to the smallest details! The Lord will dwell there among His people, and those who are evil and unclean will not be able to

enter. Jerusalem will finally become a city of truth – a light to the nations. This is what is coming in the Millennium, and we will live to see it with our own eyes.

Zechariah is quite an amazing book, isn't it?

Appendix F: God Is Not Giving You New Revelation

Have you noticed how many Christians claim to have received direct, divine revelation from God Himself? It's become very common for Christians to claim that God told them to do whatever it is they're doing. People say things like "God told me to preach this message" or "God told me to phone that person" or "God told me to make that decision". In each case people claim that they were not acting of their own accord; instead God Himself ordered them to do whatever it was they did. They were acting under Divine Command.

This phenomenon greatly disturbs me because it is completely unbiblical. Whenever someone begins a sentence with "God told me..." I inwardly wince. Stop and think about it for a minute. As soon as someone claims that they are acting under the direct command of God, they make themselves unaccountable and it becomes impossible to criticize them. After all, it wasn't *their* idea; they were just doing what God told them to do! God told them to jump, so they jumped. You can't even have a rational discussion with them because any criticism of their actions becomes criticism of God. After all, if God told them to do it then who are you to question God?

However, does God actually speak to people in that manner? Does God *really* talk to people and send them Divine messages telling them what to do and when to do it? I am convinced that the answer is a resounding *no*. In this era of history God does *not* speak to us directly. He may use our consciences to convict us and He may use those around us to remind us of the truth, but God is no longer in the business of talking directly to His people. Instead He has given us the Bible, and He expects us to learn what it has to say and apply it to our lives. God wants us to guide our lives *by the Bible*.

All Means All

You see, the Bible tells us that it is all the divine revelation that we need:

2 Timothy 3:16: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

This passage says that the Scriptures have been given to us so that we can be perfect. It tells us that the material it contains within its pages is enough to *thoroughly* furnish us for *all* good works. In other words, there are no good works that are outside its scope. The Bible claims that it has 100% of the divine revelation that we need in order to live in this era. No other revelation is necessary. This means that *we do not need extra messages from God in order to live our lives and do God's will, because God has already told us everything that we need to know.*

Now, the Bible's claim to be sufficient is either true or false. If it is true then we do not need a "personal word from God". We don't need God to speak to us because the Bible already contains everything that we need to know. In other words, it means that God has *already* spoken and all we need to do is read the Word that He has given to us.

However, if God *does* speak to His people today then 2 Timothy 3:17 is a lie. It means that the Bible is *not* enough and

that we need additional information that God failed to supply. It means that the Bible does not fully equip us for life but instead leaves us unprepared for many situations, and our only hope is for God to speak to us directly and fill in the critical information that He left out of the Bible. Since this train of thought is utterly ridiculous (because every word in the Bible is true, including 2 Timothy 3:17), that means that *there are no such things as personal words from God*.

But, some may say, isn't it true that God used to speak directly to His people? Didn't God speak to men through dreams, angels, and so forth? Yes He did, but the Bible tells us that He no longer does that. His method of speaking to us has changed:

Hebrews 1:1: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;"

As you can see, things are different now. In the past God spoke to mankind in many different ways, but now God only speaks to us through His Son Jesus Christ – and Christ's teachings can be found written in the New Testament. The Bible that God gave to us is complete. He did not leave anything out.

Even In The Old Testament, God Rarely Spoke To People

I realize that people think that God has always led His people by speaking directly to them, but that is not the case. The

truth is that very few people in the Bible were *ever* spoken to by God. According to Dr. Sam Kurien:

"The only individuals who heard from God more than twice in the Old Testament are Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jacob, Aaron, Joshua, David and Solomon. These eight and no more!"

Think about what that means! People commonly assume that God has always talked to His people to tell them what to do whenever they were faced with a decision, but that is not the case. Even in Bible times it was an extremely rare thing to hear from God. The Lord simply did *not* communicate with His people on a regular basis in order to guide them through life's decisions. There are large numbers of prominent Bible characters who never heard from God *even one time*, as Gary Gilley points out:

"Below are some of the important characters found in the Old Testament who never heard directly from God as far as we know: Caleb, Esther, Mordecai, Ruth, Joab, Hezekiah, Josiah, Jehoshapat, Jonathan, most of the judges, Ezra, Nehemiah, Shadrack, Meshach and Abd-nego (although they may have been comforted by the Son in the fire). In addition whole categories of key leaders never heard from God personally, including none of Jacob's sons except Joseph, none of the kings of Judah after Solomon, none of the judges except for Gideon, none of the returning exiles and none of David's mighty men or military leaders. This is just a sampling; many more could be cited." (Gary Gilley)

On top of that, when God did speak He *never* spoke through an "impression" or "feeling". As Dr. Sam Kurien pointed

out:

"When God spoke, it was in an audible voice, or on occasions through a vision or dream. There is not a single instance of God speaking to the mind or heart inaudibly through an inner voice."

People today like to say that "God spoke to my heart", but *nowhere in the entire Bible does God ever speak to anyone in that manner.* There is zero Biblical evidence that God communicates that way. It is true that the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin and helps us understand the Scriptures, but even the Spirit is never depicted as whispering to a person's heart. There is not one case of that anywhere in the Bible.

Moreover, when God did speak He talked about big-picture issues, not personal life decisions:

"When God did speak in Scripture it almost always dealt with the big picture of what God was doing in the outworking of His redemption program or the life of His people in general. You will search in vain to find God telling people what job to take, how many donkeys to buy, or what land to purchase — except as it was related to the bigger issue of God's dealings with His people." (Gary Gilley)

Today people believe that when they are faced with a decision they can ask God what to do and God will personally tell them what choice is right. The problem with this idea is that the Bible does not support it. That type of divine advice is exceedingly rare in the Bible. There were a couple men (like King David) who had the ability to inquire of God, but few people ever had that privilege, and those who did only used it in the most extreme circumstances. It has *never* been the ordinary course of

action for the average believer.

You will simply not find any verses in the Old or New Testament that say "When you are faced with a decision, ask God about it and He will divinely impress the correct decision upon your heart." Nor will you find any verses that say "Sometimes God will impress an action on your heart, and whenever God does that you should obey it immediately." I realize how common these two beliefs are, but they are not Biblical. It is true that God guides us, but He speaks to us through His Word, *not* through "impressions" or direct revelation. It is true that God shapes our lives, but He does so by His divine power – the same power He uses to raise up nations and cast them down. God is *not* sitting in Heaven hoping that you will make the right decision so that His plans will work.

But What About The Apostles?

Some might say, weren't there times in the Bible when God guided the lives of the apostles? Yes, there are – and in each case He did so through angels or supernatural revelation, *not* through speaking to their heart:

"...all of the examples which are selected to support individual guidance are clearly instances of *supernatural revelation*. In the book of Acts, such guidance came through visions (Acts 9:10-16; 10:3-8; 10:17; 16:9-10; 18:9; 22:17-21), angelic messenger (Acts 8:26; 12:7-8; 27:23), physical miracle (Acts 8:39), an audible voice from God (8:29; 9:3-6; 10:19-20; 23:11) or a prophet who had received direct

revelation (Acts 21:10-11). Are there other recorded examples where detailed guidance was given through some means other than supernatural revelation? No. . .

"At no point in Scripture do we read of a believer asking, "What is God's individual will for me in this matter?" Much of the terminology found in presentations of the traditional view is absent, either in vocabulary or on concept, from the pages of the Bible. One does not read of the "specific will," "center of God's will," "right decision," "putting out a fleece," or even "finding God's will."

"But even more startling is the fact that no decision is ever explained on the basis that it was "God's individual will." Today we commonly hear people say, "I did thus and such because I knew it was God's will for me." Or, "I felt in my heart God wanted me to do it." The apostles often gave reasons for their decisions, but never in such terms." (Garry Friesen, *Decision Making and The Will of God*, p. 91-92)

Many people believe that God has an individual will for their lives, and it's up to them to seek that will and figure out what God wants them to do. Does God want them to go into this profession, or that one? What house does God want them to buy? What car does God want them to own? People pray about it, get an impression in their mind, and assume that their impression is God's command for their life.

Yet people ignore the fact that *no one in the entire Bible ever lived their life that way*. Gideon's fleece was a real, actual fleece and a real, actual supernatural miracle. The still small

voice that spoke to Elijah was an actual, audible voice, not an "impression" or "feeling". Even in those miraculous cases there is no evidence that either of them spent the rest of their lives living out that example. Gideon did not spend his life putting out more fleeces. No Bible character ever sought a divine word from God for every decision that they faced in life – and the reason is because *that's not how God works*. Instead God gave us His Word and He wants us to live by its principles. Sadly, the modern generation has decided that the Bible isn't good enough for them. Instead they want God to "whisper the right decision to their heart" – even though God never promised to do that. God guides our life by His power, His providence, and His Word – *not* by "impressions" or "feelings".

Do Not Reject God's Word Based On Your Personal Experiences; Instead Judge Your Experiences By God's Word

But, you might say, isn't all of this negated by the fact that these "personal words" really do exist? After all, God really does speak to people and tell them to do things! People pray for guidance and then they suddenly know what to do. Sometimes people get the urge to call someone, and lo and behold something good comes of it. Isn't that proof that God really does speak to His children today?

I'm afraid not. You see, there is an enormous difference between "I suddenly knew what to do" and "God Himself told me which choice was right". Likewise, there is a big leap between "I heard a voice" and "That voice was definitely God". In each case *you* are deciding that the voice must be from God. You are ruling out the notion that it might have been your own idea, and the

reason you are ruling it out is because of *your belief* that God talks directly to His children. Therefore, if you ask God what to do and you suddenly think of something, your belief leads you to conclude that whatever you just thought of must have come from God. *But that is not the only possible explanation.*

There is an easy way to prove that these "impressions" do not come from God. You see, God cannot lie and *God cannot be wrong*. Whenever God speaks He speaks authoritatively. In fact, the way prophets were tested was by evaluating the outcome of their predictions. If they ever got *anything* wrong then they were false prophets, and God demanded that they be executed for lying:

Deuteronomy 18:20: "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.

21 And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken?
22 When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."

That is how serious it was to claim that God spoke to you. People who stood up and said "This is what God told me" were literally putting their very life on the line. If anyone ever claimed to be speaking for God when God had not actually spoke to them, *God commanded that they be executed*. This means that whenever you stand up and say that God told you something when it wasn't God at all, you are committing a sin as serious as murder. If you are wrong about the source of your "impressions" then you are committing a *very, very serious sin*. You may take it

lightly, but *God does not*. It is a very serious business to say "God told me".

It is even worse when you realize that there is no record of God ever talking to someone through "impressions" or "feelings". People who say "God told me" have invented an entirely new method of divine revelation that has no Biblical support whatsoever. That is a very dangerous thing to do. If you are wrong and that inner voice isn't actually God then *you are in a whole lot of trouble*.

So what about these "impressions" – are they 100% accurate 100% of the time? Absolutely not! Sometimes they work out and sometimes they don't. When something good happens people use that as proof that it was from God, but when things go terribly wrong they say that they "misunderstood" – or they blame God for giving them bad advice! On top of that, there are times when one person claims the Holy Spirit told them one thing while another person claims the opposite. Is God divided? Do you really think that God is so confused that He can't even figure out His own will for people? Of course not! The truth is that God isn't speaking to anyone. He doesn't do that anymore *because He wants us to live by the Bible*.

Since these "impressions" cannot be trusted 100% of the time, that means they cannot possibly be from God. A prophet that had that kind of track record was labeled a false prophet and was to be *put to death* for the serious crime of claiming that God said something *when God had not said anything at all*. Putting words in God's mouth is *that serious* to God.

The Bible has a lot of negative things to say about these "personal words from God". It says that the Scriptures are all we need in order to thoroughly furnish us for all good works. It says that we do not need *any* other revelation. It says that God has stopped speaking to people through dreams and visions and direct revelation. It says that very few people in all of history have ever heard directly from God Himself, and that God has

never talked to *anyone* by impressing something upon their mind. It also says that anything that is not 100% accurate 100% of the time is not the voice of God.

All of this makes it crystal clear that "personal words from God" are just our attempt to dodge responsibility for our own actions. Instead of being honest and saying "I decided to do that", we claim that it was God's doing. Instead of admitting that our dream really was just a dream (and not an actual guided tour of Heaven), we claim that God is giving us extra information that He did not include in the Bible – information that we *have* to have, even though 2 Timothy 3:17 says that the Bible is enough to cover all situations that we will ever encounter.

The Bible Is A Finished Book

That last point often gets overlooked. If personal words from God exist, then the Bible is an open book that can be added to at any time by anyone who claims to have heard from God. It means that the Bible isn't finished but is a work in progress that is being constantly enlarged. After all, it's impossible for Jesus to speak with anything less than absolute authority! If Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, told someone something then whatever He said is absolute truth and we should add it to our Bibles. If Jesus gave someone a tour of Heaven and revealed all kinds of new information about it then we should add a new book to the Scriptures. After all, Jesus has spoken and every one of His words is flawless. It means that we should be busy collecting all of this new revelation and adding it to our Bibles so that everyone can know what *else* Jesus had to say.

I realize that line of reasoning is ridiculous, but that is exactly where belief in "personal words from God" leads. The

Bible simply does not support the idea that the Word is an open book that can be added to as the need arises. After all, we are told that we should contend for the faith that was *once* delivered to the saints:

Jude 1:3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was **once** delivered unto the saints."

You can search your Bible from cover to cover and you will never find any verse that says "The Scripture is a work in progress. God is going to add a lot more to this as time goes on, so stay tuned!" The Bible is a closed book; you cannot add a Book of Mormon, a Book of Tours of Heaven, or a Book of Things That Jesus Revealed To Me. I realize how popular the "God gave me a tour of Heaven" books are, but guess what: that constitutes *new revelation from God*, and God is not in the business of giving people new revelation.

This is how one person put it:

"The doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture does not imply that God cannot add any more words to those he has already spoken to his people. It rather implies that man cannot add on his own initiative any words to those that God has already spoken. Furthermore, it implies that in fact God has not spoken to mankind any more words which he requires us to believe or obey other than those which we have now in the Bible." (Grudem)

Does this mean that God will never speak to His people again? Of course not. But it does mean that for now, in this era

and in this life, the Bible is all that we need. When we crave a "personal word from God" we are telling God that His Word is not enough – that God omitted important information that we cannot live without. We are telling Him that His Word does not thoroughly equip us for all good works and that we need something more in order to get by. That does not honor God or His Word.

The truth is that God did *not* tell you to make that choice and God did *not* speak to you and give you new revelation. There are no personal words from God! The Bible is all that God has given to us, and it really is all that we need.

Appendix V: God Curses Those Who Curse Israel

In the book of Genesis the Lord promised to give the entire land of Canaan to Abraham's descendants. Now, if God had only mentioned that promise once and never spoke of it again, that would still have been enough to make His will clear. God never goes back on His word; whatever He promises will come to pass. In this case, though, the Lord actually *repeated* this promise on numerous occasions. God wanted to make it absolutely clear, beyond any possibility of doubt, that He was giving the land of Canaan to the Jews.

The first time God made this promise was when Abraham first arrived in Canaan:

Genesis 12:5: “And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

6 And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land.

7 And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.”

As we can see in verse 7, the Lord promised to give the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendents. After God made this promise, a famine arose and Abraham left Canaan and traveled to Egypt. When Abraham left Egypt and returned to Canaan the Lord repeated the promise:

Genesis 13:14: “And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:
15 For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.”

As He had done before, the Lord promised to give all of the land of Canaan – including all of the land that Abraham could see – to Abraham and to his descendents *forever*. No conditions were placed on this promise; Abraham did not have to do anything in order to keep the land. It was an unconditional promise. God was going to give the land to him *and* to his descendents, and it would belong to them forever. This promise could not be annulled or forfeited.

Some time later, after Abraham defeated the kings that had kidnapped his nephew Lot, the Lord once again repeated this promise:

Genesis 15:18: “In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:”

This is the third time that God said He was giving the land of Canaan to Abraham's descendents. However, that is not the last time. Shortly before Isaac was born, God promised the land to Abraham yet again:

Genesis 17:4: “As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.
5 Neither shall thy name any more be called

Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

As you can see, God told Abraham *four times* that He was going to give the land of Canaan to his descendents. The Lord told him on two separate occasions that the land would be theirs **forever**: once in Genesis 13:14, where He said that the land would be theirs “for ever”, and again in Genesis 17:8, where He said the land would be their “everlasting possession”. No conditions were placed on this promise; the Israelites did not have to do anything in order to keep the land. The Lord was giving it to them freely and they could never lose their right to it. It was a permanent, irrevocable gift.

Now, it's true that during the time of Moses the Lord said that if the Israelites disobeyed Him He would evict them from the land:

Deuteronomy 29:24: “Even all nations shall say, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? what meaneth the heat of this great anger?

25 Then men shall say, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers, which he made with them when he

brought them forth out of the land of Egypt:

26 For they went and served other gods, and worshipped them, gods whom they knew not, and whom he had not given unto them:

27 And the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land, to bring upon it all the curses that are written in this book:

28 And the Lord rooted them out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation, and cast them into another land, as it is this day.”

As you can see, the Lord made it clear that if the Israelites forsook Him He would curse them and root them out of the land. However, the loss of the land would not be permanent. If they repented He would bring them back:

Deuteronomy 30:1: “And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee,

2 And shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul;

3 That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee.

4 If any of thine be driven out unto the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee:

5 And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the

land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it; and he will do thee good, and multiply thee above thy fathers.”

While disobedience could get them removed from the land, even *that* would not cause them to lose the land forever. The land still belonged to them, and the Lord would never break His covenant with them or cast them away. We find this in the book of Leviticus:

Leviticus 26:42: "Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.

43 The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.

44 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God.

45 But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD."

The phrase “covenant of their ancestors” is very important. It does *not* refer to the Mosaic Law, since the Lord was currently in the process of giving that Law to Israel. The covenant God is talking about is the covenant He made with their

ancestor Abraham – the promise to bless Israel and give them the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. No matter what Israel did, the Lord would never utterly cast them away. He would never abandon them. The Jews would always be His people, just as surely as the sun shines by day and the stars shine by night:

Jeremiah 31:35: “Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name:

36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

37 Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.”

I want to be absolutely clear on this point. God gave the land of Canaan to the nation of Israel, and it is theirs and theirs alone. He gave it to them with no conditions attached; it was to be theirs forever as an everlasting possession. If Israel abandoned God then He would evict them from the land, but that eviction would not be permanent. God would remember His covenant with Abraham and would bring them back. No matter what, though, the land was theirs and it would always be theirs.

Some might argue that God placed the condition of circumcision on the covenant that He made with Abraham. It is true that He said this:

Genesis 17:11: “And ye shall circumcise the

flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and you.”

However, note that circumcision was a *token*, or sign of the covenant. Those who did not do this were “cut off” (as it says in verse 14), but it did *not* abrogate the covenant as a whole because *the covenant was unconditional*. No matter what happened, no matter what the Israelites did, “all the land of Canaan” was theirs “for an everlasting possession”.

The reason I am emphasizing this is because many Christians have no idea that Israel has any special significance to God. They think that when the Roman Empire destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD that God was finished with the Jews, and from that point on the Church became God's only special people. (This school of thought is called “replacement theology” and gets its name from the idea that the Church has “replaced” Israel.) They see no significance in the modern nation of Israel and do not believe that Israel has a right to any land in the Middle East. They incorrectly think that God has abandoned Israel forever and that the Jews are no longer God's chosen people.

This is a very great error. As we saw in Jeremiah 31, God has made it clear that there is *nothing* Israel can do to get Him to abandon them. Since His covenant with Abraham was unconditional, they will always be His people.

It is true that after the Romans destroyed Jerusalem the nation of Israel was exiled for a long time, but that long exile actually fulfills an Old Testament prophecy. In fact, not only does the Bible predict a long exile, but it even foretells the date when Israel would become a nation again. We can find all of this in Ezekiel 4:

Ezekiel 4:1: “Thou also, son of man, take thee a tile, and lay it before thee, and portray upon it the city, even Jerusalem:

2 And lay siege against it, and build a fort against it, and cast a mount against it; set the camp also against it, and set battering rams against it round about.

3 Moreover take thou unto thee an iron pan, and set it for a wall of iron between thee and the city: and set thy face against it, and it shall be besieged, and thou shalt lay siege against it. This shall be a sign to the house of Israel.

4 Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity.

5 For I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.

6 And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year.

7 Therefore thou shalt set thy face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and thine arm shall be uncovered, and thou shalt prophesy against it.

...

13 And the Lord said, Even thus shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, whither I will drive them."

Here we find that God is using Ezekiel as an object lesson. The Lord was going to punish Israel for 430 years (390 years + 40 years), and to illustrate this God commanded Ezekiel to lie on his side for 430 days. This was done as a sign to the house of Israel, but the Israelites paid no attention to the warning. Instead of repenting they hardened their hearts, and God's judgment came

upon them – exactly as Moses had forewarned in the book of Deuteronomy. Since Israel abandoned God, He removed them from the land. They were carried into captivity by the Babylonians and spent the next 70 years in exile.

Back in Deuteronomy God said that if He exiled the Israelites *and they repented* then He would regather them to the land. After the 70 years were over God kept His promise and returned Israel to the land. However, Israel still refused to repent. Because of this the Lord allowed only a small remnant of the Jews to return to Israel in 536 BC. The rest of the nation remained scattered abroad, as the Lord had threatened in verse 13.

When the Jews returned home only 70 of the appointed 430 years had taken place, which still left 360 years of punishment. However, the fact that the Israelites did not learn their lesson during the first 70 years activated this provision of the Mosaic Law:

Leviticus 26:23: “And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;
24 Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.”

This says that if God punished the Israelites and they refused to repent, God would multiply their punishment by seven. $360 \text{ years} \times 7 = 2520 \text{ years}$. Since the Bible uses 360-year days in its prophecies, that would equal 2,483.8 of our calendar years. (The math: $2520 \text{ years} * 360 \text{ days} = 907,200 \text{ days}$. $907,200 \text{ days} / 365.25 \text{ days per year} = 2,484 \text{ years}$.) So, if you add 2,484 years to the spring of 536 BC (keeping into account there was no year 0, only 1 BC and then 1 AD), you get 1948. (Math: $1948 + 536 = 2484$.)

When did Israel become a nation again? On May 14,

1948. This time, however, more than just a small remnant returned to the land; there are now millions of Jews living in Israel, and more continue to move there as time goes on. This process will only accelerate as the time of Christ's return draws near. The Lord is calling His people back to their promised land.

On top of this, Israel became a nation in a *single day*, just as the Lord foretold through Isaiah:

Isaiah 66:7: “Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.

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.

9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? Saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? Saith thy God.”

It seemed very unlikely that Israel would become a nation again in a single day, but that is exactly what happened. The modern regathering of the Jews to Israel is not a random historical event; it is the fulfillment of prophecy. In fact, when God said that He would disperse the Jews He also said that He would regather them a *second time*:

Isaiah 11:11: “And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.”

The Israelites have been dispersed twice: once when they were deported to Babylon and once when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. The first time they were regathered was in 536 BC, after spending 70 years in Babylon; the second time was in the modern era. The modern nation of Israel, therefore, represents the *second time* God has regathered them. God promised to bring His people back to the land and He has done so.

The Bible goes on to say that the nation of Israel will never be destroyed again:

Amos 9:15: “I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land **which I have given them**, saith the Lord thy God.”

The reason God has regathered them is to save them and turn their hearts to Him, and He will accomplish exactly that:

Hosea 3:4: “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:
5 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.”

Do you see what this is saying? Israel did “abide many days” without a king, or sacrifice, or even a country. Now they have returned “in the latter days”. The phrase “David their king” refers to the Messiah. The passage is saying that when Israel is regathered they will seek the Lord, and ultimately the Messiah as well.

What I want to focus on is that the land of Israel belongs to the Israelites. It does *not* belong to anyone else. God made

that promise to Abraham and He later confirmed that promise to Jacob – thus making it clear that the land was being given to *the Jews*:

Genesis 35:11: “And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;
12 And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.”

God was very specific when it came to the ownership of the land. The Arabs are the descendents of Abraham's son Ishmael, but the land was not given to them. The Palestinians are the descendents of Isaac's son Esau, but the land was not given to them. The land was given only to Jacob's offspring, the Jews. Even the city of Jerusalem was given to the Jews:

Zechariah 8:7-8: “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 in righteousness.”

There is one other point that needs to be brought out. The land promise was not the only promise that God made to Abraham; there was something else as well. We can find it in Genesis 12:

Genesis 12:3: “And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

As Christians we know that Jesus is the descendant of Abraham that God used to bless the entire world. In Him all the families of the world are blessed indeed! However, we often overlook the rest of the verse. God was not just talking about Abraham here; He promised to bless those who blessed the Jews *and to curse those who cursed them*. God has some very harsh words for those who would try to harm Israel:

Zechariah 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.”

Later in Zechariah God elaborates on this theme. He makes it clear that He is going to destroy all nations that seek to harm Israel:

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

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.”

These verses are describing a time when Israel (the “house of David”) will finally realize that Jesus is the Messiah and will repent as a nation. It says they will “look upon me whom they have pierced”, which is a reference to Jesus. We know this day is drawing near because verse 10 says that when this happens the Israelites will possess the city of Jerusalem, and the Jews regained control over Jerusalem in 1967. (The Jews will

actually repent at the very end of the Tribulation, but that is a topic for another time.)

The key point that I want to emphasize here is verse 9, where God says that He will seek to destroy “all the nations that come against Jerusalem”. God takes attacks on Israel *personally*.

God makes this even more clear in the book of Joel:

Joel 3:1: “For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,

2 I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.”

Here God says that when He has returned Israel to their land and has given Jerusalem back to her, that He would gather all nations and judge them. The reason God is angry with the nations is because they have scattered the Jews and have “parted my land”. In other words, God is angry with the world because they have *taken land away from Israel*. Taking land away from Israel *really* upsets God.

The fulfillment of these verses is not far off. In recent history God did indeed “bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem”. On top of that, over the past few decades the nations of the world have tried very hard to divide Israel (especially Jerusalem!) and take away her land. Things that God foretold centuries *before* the birth of Christ are happening in our lifetime.

Zechariah expounds on this a little further and points out something very important:

Zechariah 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.

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

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.”

In verse 2 we see the same language as in Joel 3:2. However, a very important detail is added: on the day that the Lord gathers all nations to Jerusalem so He can judge them, the Lord will fight against them *in person*. Verse 4 says that “his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives”. This event is quite famous; people usually call it the Second Coming. When Jesus Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation, the nations of the world will have gathered around Jerusalem and attacked it. In response Jesus will come back to Earth, destroy those nations, and put an end to all those who threatened Israel. To put it another way, at the Second Coming Jesus returns *to defend Jerusalem on Israel's behalf*. He comes back so He can (among other things) *personally* kill all those who have dared to come against Israel and take what God has given to her.

God makes one point very clear: the land of Israel belongs to the Jews, and God gets *very upset* when people try to take that land away from her. The Lord said “He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye”, and He meant it. In fact, the day will come when God will get so upset at what people are doing to Israel that He will return *in person* with the armies of Heaven in

order to destroy all those that have come against her. (You *know* a nation has crossed the line in a big way when God leaves Heaven so He can *personally* destroy it!)

The point I'm trying to make is that taking land away from Israel is a *really big deal* in God's sight. He hates it. He gave that land to Israel and it belongs to them. Those who try to take it away from her do so at their peril.

This peril is not merely theoretical. I believe that God has actively pursued what He said in Genesis 12:3 throughout history. Those nations that have blessed Israel have been blessed, and those nations that have cursed Israel (or have tried to take away her land) have been cursed.

For example:

October 30, 1991: President Bush announced a new Middle East peace plan, in which Israel would be forced to surrender parts of its land in return for peace – including parts of Jerusalem.

October 30, 1991: A powerful storm suddenly developed off the coast of Nova Scotia, which quickly reached hurricane strength. The next day the storm (which by now was hundreds of miles wide) smashed into New England, then traveled down the East Coast into the Carolinas. It caused millions of dollars in damage and was nicknamed “The Perfect Storm”. (The storm was so significant that a book and a movie were written about it, both named *The Perfect Storm*.)

President Bush owned a home in Kennebunkport, Maine, that was heavily damaged in the storm. The storm hit his home on the same day that the President initiated the Madrid Peace Conference, in which Israel was pressured to give up land.

August 24, 1992: The Madrid Peace Conference was moved to Washington, D.C., making it the first time that conference was

held on American soil. Not only was Israel going to be pressured into giving up more land, but the Palestinians were going to be governing the land that Israel would have to give up.

August 24, 1992: Hurricane Andrew hit Florida and became the worst natural disaster ever hit to America (up to that time). \$30 billion in damage was done. The hurricane struck just a few hours before the Madrid peace conference began.

September 13, 1993: In Washington, DC Israel signed an agreement with Yasser Arafat, surrendering Gaza, Jericho, and the West Bank to Palestinians.

September 13, 1993: Hurricane Emily hit North Carolina, doing \$1 billion in damage.

January 16, 1994: President Clinton met with Syria's dictator, President Hafez Assad. They talk about making peace with Israel, and the agreement they came up with included Israel surrendering the Golan Heights to Syria.

January 17, 1994: A 6.8 magnitude earthquake hit Los Angeles, causing \$25 billion in damage. This happened less than 24 hours after President Clinton pressured Israel to give up more land.

September 27, 1998: Secretary of State Madeline Albright met with Arafat in New York City, to finalize an agreement in which Israel would surrender 13% of its land in exchange for peace.

September 27, 1998: Hurricane Georges hit the Gulf Coast, doing extensive damage to Mississippi and Florida. The hurricane then

stalled, causing severe flooding. The total damage came to \$5.9 billion.

There are many more examples I could give, but in the interest of time I'll limit it to one more. In April 2005 President Bush met with Israeli Prime Minister Sharon in order to set a timetable for Israel's withdrawal from 25 Jewish settlements. The process was started on August 16 and was completed on **August 23, 2005**. Approximately ten thousand Jews were forcibly evicted from their land. The reason this happened is because President Bush put enormous pressure on Israel to evict them and give that land to the Palestinians. In fact, the United States offered to give Israel \$1.2 billion in order to relocate the settlers. (In other words, the United States was actually *paying the bill* to make this happen.) This was the first step in evicting all Jews from Gaza in order to further Bush's plan to establish a Palestinian state.

The eviction of these settlers was not a minor task. Thousands of people lived there. The area was a major agricultural center of Israel and produced about 15% of Israel's vegetables. It took 40,000 troops to force the settlers to leave. After they were evicted the army demolished their homes and destroyed their settlements. The last settler was removed on August 23, and on that date President Bush praised Prime Minister Sharon for his "courageous decision to withdraw from Gaza and parts of the West Bank."

One might ask: what else happened on **August 23, 2005**? A tropical depression formed over the Bahamas, which grew into Hurricane Katrina. I don't think I have to tell you what happened when Hurricane Katrina hit the United States. The total damages from that storm came to a staggering \$81 billion.

Some might say that it's just a coincidence that every time America forces Israel to give up her land, something terrible happens. If so, it's really an amazing string of coincidences! This

phenomenon doesn't just apply to the United States; it can also be seen in other countries. For example:

March 9, 2011: Japan announces that they are sending the Palestinians millions of dollars so that they can create a state with Jerusalem as its capitol. (To do this, of course, Jerusalem will have to be taken away from the Jews.)

March 11, 2011: Japan is hit by a 9.0 magnitude earthquake – the worst it has ever experienced in its history. The damage from that earthquake was estimated to be *\$300 billion*.

July 21, 2011: Norway's prime minister goes to an island that is home to a youth camp. He announces that Norway is going to support a Palestinian state and will help the Palestinians take land away from Israel. The youth in the camp are excited about this and shout that they, too, want to help destroy Israel.

July 22, 2011: Anders Breivik just happens to travel to that very same island in Norway and just happens to open fire on those very same young people. 69 people are killed and 110 are injured. It was the deadliest attack in Norway since World War II. 25% of Norwegians knew someone who was affected by the attacks.

If all of this is just a just a coincidence then it's the most amazing set of coincidences in history. These things happen like clockwork: whenever a nation decides that it's going to try to take away Israel's land, something bad happens to them. You don't have to take my word for it, though: just wait until the next time the President tries to force Israel to give away her land to her enemies, and see what happens.

I believe that God is fulfilling His promise to trouble those

who trouble Israel, and I think this phenomenon will continue to occur. As America and other nations continue to force Israel to give up her land, you can expect even more breathtaking disasters. God is not a respecter of persons.

Now, I am *not* saying that every natural disaster that happens is God's punishment. There are many things that happen simply because we live in a fallen world. However, God has been known to judge nations that have transgressed His laws (remember Sodom and Gomorrah?), and I believe He continues to do so today. After all, *God does not change*. I think it is incredibly foolish to say "Sure, God used to judge nations and destroy them because of their sin, but God's gotten over that. He now gives nations a free pass to do whatever they want. There's no reason to be concerned about judgment or any of that nonsense. God would never punish a nation."

The final judgment, though, is still ahead of us. One day the nations of the world will gather against Jerusalem in order to destroy her and her people. They will think they have won, but Jesus will suddenly return in person and destroy them all. He will put a final end to all those who seek to trouble His people.

Appendix Z: The Theology of Covenants

As we saw during our study of Abraham, the Lord made a covenant with him on several different occasions. The very first time was when the Lord commanded Abraham to leave his home:

Genesis 12:1: “Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.”

This is what God promised:

- To make Abraham a great nation
- To bless Abraham
- To make Abraham's name great
- To make Abraham a blessing
- To bless those who blessed Abraham
- To curse those who cursed Abraham
- That in Abraham all the families of the Earth would be blessed

Later on, God made another covenant with Abraham. It was quite similar to the one in chapter 12 but it contained some additional promises:

Genesis 17:1: “And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

2 And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

3 And Abram fell on his face: and God talked with him, saying,

4 As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

5 Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

6 And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

8 And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

As we can see, there is a lot of information there. (It should be noted that these promises do not cancel out the earlier ones; rather, this *adds to* what God had said before.) This is what God promised:

- To make a covenant with Abraham
- To give Abraham many descendents
- To make Abraham the father of many nations
- To make an everlasting covenant between Himself and

Abraham, *and* between Himself and Abraham's descendents

- To be a God to both Abraham and Abraham's descendents
- To give to both Abraham and his descendents all the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession

Those are the promises that God made to Abraham in what theologians call the “Abrahamic Covenant”. On the surface this looks pretty straightforward; there isn't a lot of complexity here. Despite the simple nature of the passage, however, there are two entirely different schools of thought that have arisen to interpret these promises. One method of interpretation is called **Covenant Theology**, and the other is called **Dispensationalism**. These two approaches are entirely different, and they are as opposed to each other as they can possibly be.

It is vital that we understand both systems because they impact the way the rest of the Bible is interpreted. The system that you follow will determine how you view Israel and how you view the study of end-times. It is an important area of study that is all-too-often neglected.

The names of these two systems are very misleading. Covenant Theology does *not* mean that you are interpreting the Bible as a series of covenants, and Dispensationalism does *not* mean that you are interpreting the Bible as a series of dispensations. Everyone agrees that there are covenants in the Bible; the Abrahamic covenant is one of many. (The word “covenant” appears in the King James Bible an astonishing 280 times!) Likewise, everyone agrees that the Bible speaks of something called “dispensations”. For example:

Ephesians 1:9: “Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

10 That in the **dispensation** of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:"

The dictionary defines a dispensation as a "divinely appointed order or age". For example, there was one order of doing things before the Fall in the Garden of Eden, and one afterward; there was one way of doing things before the Flood, and one afterward; there was one way of doing things before Christ died and rose again (in other words, before the Church Age), and one afterward. Those are examples of dispensations.

So, then, the dispute is *not* about whether Bible has covenants and dispensations, because the Bible clearly has both. Instead the issue comes down to this: what is the correct method for interpreting these covenants?

The cornerstone of **Covenant Theology** (which is a system I utterly *reject*) is the idea that the Church has replaced Israel as God's chosen people. (This is why Covenant Theology is often called Replacement Theology.) It teaches that when Israel rejected Jesus as their Messiah, God rejected Israel and replaced them with the Church. The only people who are special to God are those in the Church, because the Jews have lost their special position. God no longer has a plan for them and they are no more special to Him than any other nation or people.

This has a lot of implications. First of all, covenant theologians teach that Israel has no right to any land in the Middle East. When the Jews rejected Jesus they lost whatever rights they might have had. This is why churches that believe in covenant theology are hostile toward Israel and often side with the Palestinians: they believe that Israel is an enemy of God and that Israel ought to be defeated and her land taken away and given to the Arabs. It is not at all uncommon to see such churches boycott Israel or speak up on behalf of those who are

attacking her.

Because they believe that the Church has replaced Israel, they believe that God's promises to Israel have been transferred to the Church. The many covenants in the Bible (like the Abrahamic Covenant) are re-interpreted in spiritual and symbolic ways. Instead of blessing the Jews, God now blesses the Church. All Scripture in the Old Testament that spoke of Israel is reinterpreted as speaking to the Church.

Since they believe that God has rejected Israel, they also believe that Israel will never reign over the entire world during a literal millennium. Instead they interpret Revelation as speaking of the Church Age and interpret the millennium symbolically. Covenant theologians always become amillennial because the millennium deals with Israel and they believe God has rejected Israel. No covenant theologian could ever accept an interpretation of Revelation that included a literal Israel ruling over the entire world.

So, then, Covenant Theology teaches:

- That the Church has replaced Israel
- That God has taken His promises away from Israel and has given them to the Church
- That Israel is not special in God's sight
- That the modern nation of Israel has no right to exist and is not any more special to God than any other nation
- That Revelation should be interpreted symbolically
- That the millennium is purely symbolic, and not literal
- That prophecies and covenants should be understood spiritually, symbolically, and allegorically, *not* literally

For the record, this definition of Covenant Theology is exactly what any of the major covenant theologians will tell you. If you read men such as Charles Hodge in *Systematic Theology* or R. J. Rushdoony in *Thy Kingdom Come*, this is what you will see. If

you attend a church that believes Covenant Theology (as I did for a number of years) you will hear all of these things said with great boldness and pride. This is where they stand.

The points of Covenant Theology are not arbitrary; they all logically follow from the idea that the Church has replaced Israel. Its entire system of interpretation comes from that point. For example:

- God made Israel certain promises – promises that have not been fulfilled. If the Church has replaced Israel and Israel is no longer special to God, then those promises *must* be transferred to the Church. Otherwise God would have broken His word.
- Many of the promises in the Old Testament are very specific, and there is simply no way they could be transferred to the Church. (For example, no one believes that the Church has a right to the land of Canaan.) Therefore, the only way to make the system work is to interpret the prophecies “spiritually”, or allegorically. If you interpret them literally then you end up with Dispensationalism, which Covenant Theology despises. Covenant Theology forces you to interpret the Old Testament in a very non-literal way, because any other method of interpretation would disprove Covenant Theology.
- If God has rejected Israel and God's promises to Israel no longer apply to Israel, then Israel has lost its right to the land of Canaan. Therefore, the Jews are occupying land that does not belong to them – and on top of that, they are enemies of the gospel since they have rejected Christ. Therefore, churches who believe in Covenant Theology are hostile toward Israel, often boycotting Israel, speaking against them, and so forth. They do this because their theology demands it.

- If you interpret Old Testament prophecies and the book of Revelation literally, they will tell you that God has set aside 7 years for chastising Israel, after which Israel will be saved, Jesus will return as Israel's king, and Israel (with Jesus as King) will rule over the whole world for 1000 years. However, if you believe that God has rejected Israel, then God can't possibly have set aside a time that is specifically aimed at Israel; therefore they interpret prophecy symbolically, since a literal interpretation will yield a result that they do not like.

The point I am making is that Covenant Theology will lead people to reject Israel, to interpret the Bible in a very non-literal manner, and to become amillennial. That is where the system invariably leads. The more you study it the more you will be drawn to those ends. It is simply inescapable.

Covenant Theology also teaches that people in the Old Testament were saved by believing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is despite the fact that the Bible did not reveal *any* of those things until the time of Isaiah, and no one actually understood what Isaiah was talking about until after Christ died and rose again. They insist that people have always been saved in exactly the same manner, by believing in exactly the same thing.

Frankly, this idea is ridiculous. While Adam and Eve did know that a Messiah was coming, mankind was not told that the Messiah would die and rise again until *thousands of years later*. How could they possibly have believed something that they were not told? How could Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob believe in a gospel that had not yet been revealed to mankind? It simply doesn't make sense.

Dispensationalists agree that mankind has always been saved by grace through faith alone; the difference is that they teach that the *content* of that faith has changed from one

dispensation to the next. The Bible tells us that Abraham believed God and it was credited to him for righteousness. God did not tell Abraham everything that He has told us; however, Abraham believed what he *had* been told and God accepted that. People in the Old Testament were saved by *believing what God had revealed* – not by believing something they could not possibly have known.

As I said earlier, I reject the system of Covenant Theology; the evidence against it is simply too great. I believe that Dispensationalism is a much better system.

Has the Church replaced Israel?

If the Church has replaced Israel and is now the “true Israel” then you would expect that fact to be mentioned somewhere in the Bible. However, that is not the case. There are no verses that say the Church has replaced Israel as God's special people. Moreover, the Bible never refers to the Church as “Israel” (or vice versa). In every single case, the word “Israel” refers to Israel and the word “Church” refers to the Church. The two words are used separately and distinctly and are never used in place of each other.

What the Bible actually says about this matter is quite different from what Covenant Theology teaches. The Church has not replaced Israel; instead, we have been grafted in:

Romans 11:17: “And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;”

The Bible says that some of the original branches of the tree – meaning Israel – were broken off, while we Gentiles were grafted in. That, however, does *not* mean that we have replaced Israel, as the chapter takes great pains to point out:

Romans 11:11: “I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?”

Israel has fallen but they have *not* been replaced. Through their fall salvation has come to the Gentiles. However, God has not forsaken Israel. Our salvation is intended to provoke them to jealousy. One day they will be saved and will be grafted back in:

Romans 11:23: “And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again.

24 For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

26 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:

27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

28 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father's sakes.

29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

Notice that last verse – the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. What that means is that when God makes a promise He will not go back on it. God made a covenant to take away Israel's sins and that is exactly what He will do. God chose Israel as His own and they will forever remain exactly that. For a time Israel has been blinded and hardened, but that is not because God has rejected Israel; it is so that we Gentiles might be saved. After God has finished obtaining a people among the Gentiles He will take away that blindness and all Israel shall be saved.

God cannot and *will never* cast away His people. Not only does Romans 11 make this clear, but the Old Testament does as well:

Jeremiah 31:35: “Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name:

36 If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever.

37 Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the

seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.”

There is simply nothing that Israel can do to forfeit the promises that God made to them. He will never cast them off. The apostle Paul said that all Israel shall be saved, and they will be. The Old Testament speaks of a time when their hearts will change:

Hosea 3:4: “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:

5 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.”

Hosea tells us that “in the latter days” the Israelites will return and fear the Lord. Zechariah tells us the same thing:

Zechariah 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.”

Before Jesus was crucified He said that Israel would not see Him again until they accepted Him as their Messiah. Zechariah looked forward to the day when that would happen – when Israel would look upon their Messiah, whom they have

pierced, and would mourn for Him and repent of what they had done. The day is coming when Israel will repent and be saved, just as the Old Testament prophets foretold. That, in fact, is what the Tribulation is all about – it is a time God has set aside not just to punish the world for its wickedness, but to finish the trials of Israel and finally bring them to salvation. At the end of the Tribulation the Israelites will repent and be saved, and Jesus will return and rescue them – but that is a topic for another time.

The point is that God has *not* abandoned Israel and has *not* cast her off forever. Israel has been blinded for a time so that we Gentiles might be saved, but that blindness is only temporary. As both the Old and New Testaments tell us, one day Israel will be saved.

People who are dispensational believe that God has not *replaced* Israel with the Church, but instead *both* are His people. Israel and the Church are two separate things. (There are some Jews who are saved and are a part of the Church, but Israel and the Church are still different – just as France and the Church are different. There may be Frenchmen who are in the Church, but that doesn't turn the Church into France.) They believe that God still loves Israel and has a plan to save them.

Has God Taken His Promises Away From Israel?

Of course not! As Romans 11:23 said *when talking about this very subject*, the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. There are no Scriptures anywhere that say that God has taken away His promises and given them to the Church instead. It simply doesn't say anything like that.

Besides, if you look at the promises that God made to Israel it becomes very apparent that they can never apply to the Church. For example, take a look at the promises that God made

to Abraham:

Genesis 17:8: “And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

Here God promised Abraham, unconditionally, to give him and his descendents all of the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession. Notice the phrase *everlasting*. That means that, no matter what, for the rest of time, the land of Canaan would always be theirs. God may remove Israel from the land for a time due to their obedience, but *the land would always be theirs*.

Covenant Theology teaches that, due to Israel's disobedience, they have forfeited this promise and no longer have a right to the land. But look at what the verse says! The land was given to them as an everlasting possession. If they lost the land then it wouldn't be an everlasting possession anymore, would it? It would mean that God had broken His promise.

Covenant Theology also teaches that all of God's promises to Israel have been transferred to the Church. Does that mean that the Church now has a right to the entire land of Canaan? Nobody actually believes that, so covenant theologians have “spiritualized” this verse to talk about some vague spiritual blessings. Does the Bible ever interpret this verse in that manner? No, it doesn't. Nowhere in the Old or New Testament is this verse interpreted in any way other than literally.

The problem is that when this verse is interpreted literally it contradicts Covenant Theology – so covenant theologians have invented new ways to interpret these very straightforward verses (ways that have no Scriptural backing whatsoever). They are not interpreting the Bible with the Bible or reading it in a normal, straightforward fashion; instead they are imposing their own interpretation on these verses *in spite* of what the verses actually

have to say.

If you interpret the Bible in a normal, straightforward manner then you will arrive at Dispensationalism. People who are dispensational believe that God has not rejected Israel, and they believe this because the Bible says that God has not rejected Israel. They believe that Israel has an everlasting right to the land of Canaan because that is what God promised Abraham. It is not complicated; they simply take God at His Word and do not invent symbolic, allegorical interpretations that have no Scriptural basis.

Has God Taken Canaan Away From Israel?

This is something that I have talked about extensively in an earlier lesson, so I will not dwell on it here. The Old Testament makes it quite clear that God would evict Israel from the land for their disobedience, but that He would also gather them back again. Covenant Theologians like to claim that the modern nation of Israel has no Biblical significance whatsoever, but they are wrong. As I explained in a previous lesson, the Bible foretold the Jews' long absence from the land, the rebirth of Israel in 1948, the rebirth of the nation in a single day, and a great deal more. Modern Israel is actually fulfilling Bible prophecy. If Israel has lost their right to the land in the Middle East then why did God promise to give it back to them? Why did He promise to regather them to their land? Why did He promise to give them Jerusalem again? Why did He make so many promises to them regarding giving them the land “in the latter days”? It simply makes no sense.

The reason Dispensationalists believe that modern Israel is a fulfillment of Bible prophecy is because they can point to a long list of specific Bible prophecies that modern Israel has

fulfilled. Since we have talked about this earlier I will not repeat it here. The point is that despite what Covenant Theology teaches, modern Israel *is* a fulfillment of Bible prophecy. The reason they once again live in the land of Canaan is because God regathered them to the land and has protected them, exactly as He promised. Israel really does have a right to the land that God gave them as an “everlasting possession”, and covenant theologians are treading on very dangerous ground when they try to take that land away from them.

Is The Millennium Purely Symbolic?

Covenant Theology teaches that Israel is not special to God and that Israel has no right to any land in the Middle East. Because of this they reject the idea that Israel will one day rule over the world during the Millennium. Since they cannot accept a straightforward, literal interpretation of those verses, they instead teach that those verses should be interpreted symbolically. Covenant theologians argue that the Millennium is symbolic of the Church Age – the age we are living in now. They teach that at this very moment, Satan is bound and the Church is reigning triumphant over the world through the gospel. This interpretation is known as amillennialism.

There are two big problems with amillennialism. First, it is obvious to everyone that Satan is *not* bound, and second, it is equally obvious that the Church is *not* reigning triumphant. Revelation makes it clear that when Satan is bound he is unable to cause any more harm:

Revelation 20:1: “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

3 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.”

Notice the great pains the passage takes to make sure we understand that Satan has been utterly removed from the scene. He can no longer deceive anyone, cause any harm, or oppose the Church. In fact, Satan can't even go anywhere anymore; he has been cast into the bottomless pit and imprisoned. His days of causing harm are over for an entire millennium.

Does this accurately describe the Church age? No, it certainly does not. The New Testament warns us repeatedly that Satan is actively attacking the Church and that we must be on our guard:

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

Notice how the passage says not only that Satan is “seeking whom he may devour”, but that he is walking around! Someone who is locked in the bottomless pit can't possibly be *walking around the Earth*. If Satan was truly bound then he would be unable to seek and devour. After all, if he can still kill and destroy while being bound then then being bound loses all meaning. It should be emphasized that this verse was written during the Church Age – the very age in which covenant theologians teach that Satan has been rendered utterly harmless. The Bible contradicts them and warns us to put on the armor of

God, for we are in a very real battle against the forces of darkness:

Ephesians 6:11: “Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

Who does Paul want us to stand against? *The devil*. If Satan was bound and could no longer cause any harm then the devil wouldn't be a problem, would he? But both Peter and Paul believed that Satan was *not* bound. They believed that he was still roaming around and was capable of causing great harm. The Bible simply does *not* support the idea that Satan is currently bound; instead it teaches exactly the opposite.

The Bible also does *not* teach that the Church is reigning triumphant in this age. In fact, it says quite the opposite. The Bible teaches that the world hates the Church and persecutes it. We are not reigning over the world; instead we are beaten down, hated, despised, and rejected. All over the world Christians are hunted, imprisoned, and executed. Paul went so far as to say this:

I Corinthians 15:19: “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”

What Paul was saying is that if Christianity was only good for this life and had no value or reward in the next, then we are the most miserable of all men. Why? Because in this life Christians are faced with terrible persecution. Jesus told us this would happen:

John 15:18: “If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.”

John 16:33: “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

Did Jesus say that the Church would reign triumphant over the world during this age? Absolutely not! Instead He said that we would be hated, despised, hunted down, and executed – and that is exactly what happened. It is utterly ridiculous to think that we are now reigning with Christ.

But there is another problem. Take a look at what else the disputed passage in Revelation actually says:

Revelation 20:4: “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.”

Who lives and reigns with Christ? *The martyrs*. The passage clearly says that the martyrs are *resurrected* and live and reign with Christ. They were dead, but they lived again.

Has this already happened? Have the martyrs been resurrected from the dead and do they now reign over the Earth? Of course not! That is utterly ridiculous. Satan has not been bound, the Church does not reign, and the martyrs have not been raised from the dead. These things simply have not happened. Therefore, the idea that the Millennium is symbolic of the Church Age is entirely, conclusively wrong. Amillennialism is a false doctrine.

Revelation 20 should be interpreted in a normal, straightforward way, which is exactly how dispensationalists interpret it. They teach that one day in the future Satan will be bound and will be unable to deceive the nations any longer. The dead martyrs will be raised back to life and they will live and reign with Christ for a literal thousand years. It is not complicated, and it will play out exactly as the Bible foretold.

Should Prophecy Be Interpreted Symbolically?

Covenant Theology teaches that prophecy should be interpreted symbolically. It claims that the Millennium is symbolic of the age we live in now, and teaches that Revelation is just a symbolic look at the struggle between good and evil. It does not interpret prophecy literally.

There are many problems with this approach to interpreting the Bible. First of all, while it is true that the Bible contains symbolism, the proper way to interpret the Bible's symbolism is *to use the Bible itself*. The Bible always interprets its own symbols. If you want to know what a symbol means, all you

have to do is look it up in the Bible and see how the Bible defines it.

For example, take this verse from Revelation:

Revelation 1:12: “And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;”

How should the seven golden candlesticks be interpreted? The answer is *not* to decide for ourselves what we think they mean; that is a very great error. No prophecy is of any private interpretation; we do not have the right to assign our own meanings to prophecies. Instead we must believe the interpretation that the Bible provides, which can be found a few verses later:

Revelation 1:20: “The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.”

What are the seven candlesticks? They are the seven churches. We know this because that is what the Bible tells us. *This is how you interpret the symbolism in the Bible.* This is the only way it can be done.

Covenant Theology, however, does not take this approach. Instead, covenant theologians decide *for themselves* what they think a passage might mean, based on nothing more than their own ideas. They do not use the Bible to interpret prophecy because *the Bible does not support their system of interpretation.* There simply are no Bible passages that offer a symbolic interpretation of prophecies. Therefore, they invent

their own.

It is very telling that Covenant Theology's system of interpretation has proven to be a dismal failure. The Bible has a great many prophecies about the *first* coming of Christ. Do you know how many of them were fulfilled literally? *All of them*. Do you know how many the Bible interprets symbolically? *None of them*. Every single fulfilled prophecy in the entire Bible – and there are hundreds of them – *has been fulfilled literally*. Not a single one has ever been fulfilled symbolically.

The same can be said for all of the prophecies that have been fulfilled since the time of Christ. The prophecy that Israel would become a nation again in a single day was widely mocked by covenant theologians – right up until 1948 when it was *literally fulfilled*. The prophecy that the Jews would regain Jerusalem was also widely mocked, until it actually happened. All of the prophecies that covenant theologians have tried to interpret allegorically *are being fulfilled literally*. That tells me that there is something badly wrong with their system of interpretation: their predictions have failed over and over again, while the predictions of dispensationalists have been proven right time and time again.

Prophecy has *always* been fulfilled literally, and there is no reason to believe that will ever change. For example, let's take a look at the 70 weeks of Daniel:

Daniel 9:24: “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.”

As you can see in verse 24, the angel Gabriel told Daniel

that seventy “weeks” had been set aside. This is one of those times where our translations of the Bible are in error. The word in verse 24 is not the Hebrew word for week, which is *shavuot*. The verse instead uses the word *shavuim*, which simply means “sevens”. It does not refer to seven *days*, but seven of *something*. It is like the English word “dozen”. When someone says “a dozen” it tells you that they are speaking of twelve of something, but without more information that is all you know. A better translation of verse 24 would be 70 *sevens*. In this context the item being counted is years. 70 sevens therefore refers to 70 periods of seven years, or 490 years.

Notice that these 490 years have been set aside *for Israel and for Jerusalem*. Notice also that this time period is being set aside *to make an end of sins*. This is God's 490-year plan to save Israel and end their rebellion. At the end of these 490 years Israel will repent and believe in Jesus as their Messiah. This goes along with what Paul said in Romans – one day all Israel shall be saved. The 70 weeks is God's plan to make that happen.

The Bible goes on to give more detail about those weeks:

Daniel 9:25: “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.”

This verse says that the Messiah will appear 483 years (that's 69 periods of 7 years each) after the decree goes out to rebuild Jerusalem. This period of time broken into two parts: there is a period of 49 years and a period of 434 years. It should be noted that after the decree to rebuild Jerusalem was issued, it took 49 years to rebuild that city. Then, 434 years after Jerusalem

was rebuilt, the Messiah was crucified. There were exactly 483 years from the time the decree was issued to rebuild Jerusalem until the death of Christ on the cross. In other words, *the first 69 weeks were fulfilled literally.*

When Christ died the Jews had two options. One option was to accept Him as their Messiah. If they had done that then Christ would still have died, but history would have taken a very different course. The Tribulation would have started immediately after His crucifixion, and 7 years later the Millennial Kingdom would have begun. There would never have been a Church Age at all.

However, the Jews instead rejected Him. Because of their disobedience the last 7 years were put on hold and the Church Age came into being. As long as the Church is here the end will not come. At some point, however, the Rapture will occur and take the Church out of the world. After the Church is gone the antichrist will rise to power and the last 7 years will begin, and the final of the 70 weeks will be fulfilled.

It is simply not reasonable to think that the first 69 weeks are literal and that the last week is symbolic. Prophecy is *always* fulfilled literally. Since the first 69 weeks were fulfilled literally, it only makes sense to believe that the last week will be fulfilled literally as well. Dispensationalism looks forward to a literal fulfillment of prophecy.

My point in all of this is simple: Covenant Theology (also known as Replacement Theology) is wrong. It is a failed system. God has not cast off Israel, Satan has not been bound, and prophecy should not be interpreted allegorically. The Jews really *have* been given the entire land of Canaan as an everlasting possession, and their temporary rejection of their Messiah has not caused them to forfeit the land. God really will bless those who bless Israel and will curse those who curse Israel – and will bring great woe upon those who try to take land away from His

people.

That last point is, perhaps, the greatest danger with Covenant Theology. Many churches that believe in Covenant Theology are actively trying to cause Israel harm – by preaching against them, boycotting them, and even aiding Israel's enemies. As we saw earlier in the course, this is a terrible error. God has promised to judge those who try to cause Israel harm, and that is exactly what He has done throughout history. If you set yourself up as the enemy of Israel then God will judge you for it, just as He promised time and time again. Those who fight Israel are actually fighting God, and they will come to discover that God cannot be defeated. Those who insist on taking that road will be judged for it.

Appendix 1: Wine Is A Blessing

Every church that I've ever attended has condemned the consumption of alcohol. Some of those churches even had church covenants posted in the foyer that explicitly required all members to "abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drink as a beverage". In other words, if you drank alcohol then you weren't welcome. Each church has consistently depicted alcohol as an evil thing that should *never* be consumed by Christians under any circumstances. That's why whenever those churches serve communion it's always with grape juice and never with wine.

I think it would be a good idea to take some time and explore what the Bible says about alcohol. After studying the Bible I've become convinced that what it teaches is very different from what Christians have been told. I suspect that many Christians would be shocked to find out that Isaiah 65:8 actually calls wine a *blessing* – but we're getting ahead of ourselves.

Drunkenness Is Prohibited

The first point I want to make is that the Bible strongly and repeatedly condemns drunkenness. For example, consider this passage:

Proverbs 23:29-35: "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it

moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yeah, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again."

This person is so drunk that other people are literally *beating him* and he doesn't feel it! He has no idea what's going on or what he's doing. He is heavily addicted to alcohol to such a degree that it's utterly ruined his life. This sort of drunkenness is *strongly* condemned.

Here's another verse that speaks against drunkenness:

Proverbs 20:1: "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

This verse tells us that those who are "deceived" by strong drink (meaning, those who get drunk) are not wise. Getting drunk is a terrible thing. In fact, the book of Proverbs says that kings shouldn't drink wine because of what might happen if they get drunk:

Proverbs 31:4-6: "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts. Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more."

The kings of the ancient world had absolute power. For that reason it was critical for them to be sober at all times. If they were drunk then they might use their power to do something terrible. That's why it was better to give wine to those who were poor. To them wine would be comforting because it would temporarily cause them to forget their poverty and misery. (How much wine do you think you have to drink before you forget something like that?)

I've never heard a pastor mention the second half of this passage, and I'm pretty sure I never will. Yet it's there in the Bible! Since poverty is harsh and miserable, it's actually a good thing for the poor to drink wine so they can forget their suffering for a while and achieve some level of happiness. I realize this is a shocking thing to say. You can go back and read the text if you want, but that's really what it says.

This is our first clue that the Bible's stance on wine is more complicated than "no one should ever drink wine under any circumstances, period".

Christ Drank Wine

The next point is a critical one. The Bible establishes beyond a doubt that Christ drank wine. Anyone who tells you otherwise is being dishonest with the text. For example:

Matthew 11:18-19: "For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children."

Jesus pointed out that the Pharisees condemned John the Baptist for *not* drinking wine, and they condemned Jesus *for* drinking wine. That's the only possible interpretation of this passage. John the Baptist didn't drink alcohol but Jesus did. Since Jesus never sinned, that means drinking alcohol can't be a sin. The sin is *getting drunk*.

We know for a fact that Jesus drank wine because that's what He served at the last supper when he celebrated communion with His disciples. In fact, in 1 Corinthians 11:21 the apostle Paul once condemned the way the Corinthians were celebrating communion because some people were getting drunk! I've never seen anyone get drunk on grape juice. The fact that people were getting drunk means the church was serving wine.

I find it interesting that when Paul confronted the Corinthian church, he didn't tell them that it was wrong to serve wine and they ought to be using grape juice instead. Instead he told them to treat communion in a holy manner and stop getting drunk. Paul could easily have told them to start serving grape juice but he didn't. Paul also didn't say "Since some people in the congregation are tempted by wine, it's best to not use wine at all." Every church that I've ever attended has used that excuse, but Paul didn't. Even though some people in the Corinthian church were literally *getting drunk during the service*, Paul *still* didn't use that excuse!

There's also the fact that in Christ's first miracle He turned water into wine. In fact, the wine that Christ made was of an exceptionally high quality:

John 2:9-10: "When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast

called the bridegroom, and saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now."

Why do people set out the good wine first? Because after the guests have been drinking for days (which is what happened at wedding feasts) the quality of the wine stopped mattering. Jesus literally gave more wine to people who were already pretty inebriated! I can't think of any church that would bring more wine to a group that had been drinking for days, but that's what Jesus did.

As an aside, let's not pretend that Jesus made grape juice. There is a perfectly good word for grape juice and it's not used in any of these passages. Claiming that Jesus supplied the wedding guests with grape juice is dishonest. That's not what the text says.

Turning Tithes Into Wine

But that's not all. In the book of Deuteronomy there's a very interesting passage that tells the Israelites what to do if they're too far away from the tabernacle to bring their tithes there. What it says is very relevant to this topic:

Deuteronomy 14:24-26: "And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou art not able to carry it; or if the place be too far from thee, which the Lord thy God shall choose to set his name there, when the Lord thy God hath blessed thee: Then shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the

money in thine hand, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose: and thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after, for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine, or for strong drink, or for whatsoever thy soul desireth: and thou shalt eat there before the Lord thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou, and thine household,"

Under the Mosaic law the tithe was to be paid in crops and livestock. However, if you lived far away then it might not be practical to transport your animals to the tabernacle. In that case you were allowed to turn your tithe into money and use it to throw a big feast for your household. The passage specifically says that you can spend it on *wine or strong drink*.

If it was a sin to drink wine then I'm pretty sure the Mosaic Law wouldn't have told people to use their tithe money to buy "strong drink" for their household! God clearly thought that it was fine so long as people didn't abuse wine and get drunk.

You may be thinking that perhaps this wine had been heavily watered down. The reason we know that's not the case is because the book of Isaiah says that mixing water with wine actually *pollutes* it and makes it worse:

Isaiah 1:21: "How is the faithful city become an harlot! It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers. Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water: thy princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them."

Remember, when Jesus turned water into wine the lord of the feast said that the water that Christ had made was the best wine that had been served so far. That rules out wine that had been watered down!

Wine Is A Blessing

There are a number of times in the Bible where God says that wine is actually a blessing that He gives to people. For example:

Proverbs 3:10: "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

Isaiah 65:8: "Thus saith the Lord, as the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all."

As you can see, God said that wine was a blessing. There are also times when God curses people by *withholding* wine:

Joel 1:10: "The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth."

Isaiah 24:7: "The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh."

God even promised that one of the blessings of life in the

millennial kingdom will be an abundance of wine:

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 out of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim."

Why would God do this? Because wine is a blessing as long as it's not abused:

Psalm 4:7: "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased."

Psalm 104:15: "And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart."

Zechariah 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."

Once again, there's a perfectly good word for grape juice that could have been used if that's what these passages were talking about. However, that word wasn't used. These passages mean exactly what they say.

What's Going On?

In order to understand what's going on I think it's best to

compare it to sex. The Bible *strongly* condemns having sex outside of marriage. In fact, under the Mosaic Law adultery was punished by death. That's how serious it was! The New Testament tells us that fornicators will not inherit the kingdom of God. Abusing sex by having it outside of marriage is a terrible sin.

However, there's nothing wrong with having sex *within* marriage. Hebrews 13:4 says "marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." In fact, in 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 the apostle Paul said that if one person in a marriage denies sex to the other then that person is committing the sin of fraud. He went on to say that couples should limit the time they spend fasting and praying so that they can have time for sex (so they don't become tempted to have sex *outside* of marriage). There are many passages in Proverbs that condemn having sex outside of marriage. There's also the Song of Solomon, which talks about what a blessing it is to have sex *within* marriage.

In other words, sex can either be a blessing or a terrible sin depending on how it's used. If it's used within the boundaries that God has set then it's a great thing. If it's used wickedly then it can damage your health (through disease), destroy your life (in many ways), and even drag your soul down to Hell (if you never repent). It may seem like the safest thing to do is just forbid everyone from ever having sex. However, those who forbid marriage and say that everyone must be celibate are teaching heresy. 1 Timothy 4:1 calls that a doctrine of devils! Yet those who have no interest in marriage and would rather pursue a different path aren't doing anything wrong. The choice about whether to pursue marriage is left up to each individual.

Wine works the same way. It's a terrible sin to abuse wine, just as it's a terrible sin to abuse sex. However, if wine is used within the limits that God has set (meaning, don't get drunk) then the Bible calls it a blessing. It's something God has given to gladden the heart of mankind. Condemning all use of

alcohol on the grounds that some people might abuse it is no different from demanding lifelong celibacy from everyone because some people are fornicators and adulterers. That's going way too far.

There are some people who aren't interested in getting married, and willingly choose a path of celibacy because that's what they prefer. There's nothing wrong with that. Likewise, there are some people who don't drink wine because they have no interest in it. That's fine as well. However, it's *not* fine when people who are celibate stand up and condemn those who chose to get married. That's a doctrine of devils. Likewise, it's not fine when those who don't drink condemn those who drink responsibly. It's a sin to engage in drunkenness *but not to drink*. Likewise, it's a sin to commit adultery but not to have sex with your wife. Churches should condemn only what the Bible condemns, and not go any further.

I've seen many churches that have church covenants on their wall which condemns those who drink wine or distribute it to others. Those covenants horrify me because they actually exclude Jesus from the church. After all, He both drank wine and distributed it to others! Under the terms of that covenant the Lord Jesus Christ would not be welcome, would He?

Appendix 5: The Millennial Kingdom

In Revelation 20 we're told that in the future the Lord Jesus Christ is going to rule over the nations for a thousand years:

Revelation 20:4: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

This period is usually referred to as the Millennial Kingdom.

The Literal Reality of the Kingdom

There are some people who reject the idea of a literal Millennial Kingdom. They teach that it's a purely spiritual kingdom, and say that Jesus Christ isn't *really* going to physically return to this world and rule over the nations as a king. I believe that those people are wrong. The Bible claims in numerous places that the coming Kingdom isn't symbolic or spiritual but is *literal*.

One place where this can be seen is the book of Daniel. In chapter 2 of that book we're told that when King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that disturbed him, he demanded that his magicians tell him what he had dreamed and how to

interpret it. Daniel did exactly that:

Daniel 2:31-35: "Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. 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. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

Daniel told the king what he had dreamed and then provided the interpretation. The statue represented four kingdoms that would control the world from the time of Nebuchadnezzar until the end of days. The fourth kingdom, however, wouldn't last forever. Instead it would be broken into pieces by God Himself and replaced with an eternal kingdom that would never be destroyed:

Daniel 2:44-45: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain

without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

The eternal kingdom which God Himself establishes will *replace* all of the kingdoms that came before it! It's not going to coexist alongside them as some sort of spiritual kingdom. This final kingdom is going to rule over the Earth just as the previous four kingdoms did. That means the Kingdom of God *cannot* be a purely spiritual kingdom. After all, it *violently destroys and replaces all the kingdoms of the world!* The book of Daniel describes it as a physical kingdom, not a spiritual one.

The Binding of Satan

Revelation 20 tells us that at the beginning of the millennium an angel will bind the devil with a great chain. The angel will then cast the devil into the bottomless pit for a thousand years, where he will be unable to deceive the nations any more:

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."

People who are amillennial don't believe in a literal millennium, so they interpret these verses symbolically. They claim that this passage refers to the death of Christ on the cross, which is when Satan was bound. They teach that the millennium is simply the age that we're living in right now, and the phrase "thousand years" is just symbolic for a long span of time.

I think their explanation is wrong. First of all, the passage says that an *unnamed angel* bound Satan, not the Lamb that was slain! If Jesus is the one who bound Satan then why doesn't Revelation 20:1 say that? Why does Revelation give the glory for this incredibly important act to someone else?

Second, I find it *impossible* to believe that Satan is currently bound and unable to deceive or harm anyone. That's the opposite of what the New Testament teaches! Look at what the apostle Peter wrote:

I Peter 5:8-9: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."

Did Peter say that the devil had been bound by Christ's death and was unable to deceive anyone? Did he teach that we don't need to worry about Satan because his days of deceiving people are over? Absolutely not! Peter warned us to be sober and vigilant, for the devil was "seeking whom he may devour". Peter was certainly not under the impression that the devil had been bound and rendered harmless. James echoed Peter's

concern:

James 4:7: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

You don't see James saying "Don't worry about the devil – he's incapable of doing any harm". Revelation 20:2 specifically says that Satan is *bound*, and yet 1 Peter 5:8 says that he "walketh about". If Satan "walketh about" then he's *not* currently bound, which means Revelation 20:1-3 hasn't happened yet.

There are also chronological reasons for believing that the binding of Satan is still in the future. In Revelation 4 the apostle John is told this:

Revelation 4:1: "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter."

John was told that he was about to see things "which must be hereafter". That means the angel was showing him *things that hadn't happened yet in his day*. Part of his vision included the binding of Satan. That means the binding of Satan couldn't have happened at the cross because when John was given this vision (which was more than 50 years after the crucifixion and resurrection), Satan had not yet been bound.

It's worth noting that a great many things happen between Revelation 4 and Revelation 20. Those events take place in chronological order. For example, in Revelation 6 the first seal is opened, and then the second seal is opened, and so forth. Revelation 7 starts with the phrase "and after these things". One event follows after another. There's a progression as the two

witnesses preach and are killed, only to rise again (see Revelation 11); as the beast rises to power and prevails against the saints (see Revelation 13); and as Babylon falls (see Revelation 18). Revelation 20 takes place *after* all of those things. If Satan was bound at the cross then that would mean Revelation 4 through 19 all happened *before* the crucifixion, which is silly. At that point John wouldn't have been seeing things "which must be hereafter"; instead he would have been seeing things that happened more than 50 earlier. It makes much more sense to put the binding of Satan in the future instead of the past.

I've heard people say that this passage must be symbolic because it's impossible to bind Satan with a chain, but I don't find that argument convincing. This isn't the first time the Bible refers to binding fallen angels with chains. There's this passage as well:

Jude 1:6: "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

In this verse Jude tells us that certain fallen angels have been put in prison and are held captive *in chains* until Judgment Day. (Not all fallen angels are free to wander this world as demons; some have been imprisoned. Why some are imprisoned and others aren't is beyond the scope of this discussion.) In Revelation 20 we're told that Satan will receive the same treatment as the fallen angels in Jude 1:6: he will be bound in chains. It seems appear that it *is* possible to bind angels with chains after all.

Is Satan currently bound, unable to cause any harm? Of course not! Even the apostles didn't believe that. It doesn't fit with the chronology of Revelation or the world that we see around us. The claim that Satan is bound and unable to cause

any more trouble is simply wrong. The binding of Satan is a future event, not a past one.

The Marriage of the Lamb

There's another reason to believe that the Millennium is a literal event which will take place in the future. Revelation 19 says that the "marriage of the Lamb" has finally come:

Revelation 19:7-8: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

All throughout the New Testament the church is called the Bride of Christ and Jesus is called the bridegroom. In Revelation 19 we're told that the long-awaited marriage will take place in Heaven at the end of the seven-year tribulation period. After the marriage takes place the Lord Jesus Christ will return to this world with the armies of Heaven:

Revelation 19:11-20: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white

horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. ... And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."

This passage says that the Lord will return to judge the world *after* the "marriage of the Lamb" has taken place. Chapter 19 is immediately followed by chapter 20, which tells us that Satan is bound in the aftermath of Christ's victory over His enemies on Earth. That means Satan is bound *after* the Bride of Christ becomes the Wife of Christ. It's important to remember that the New Testament calls the church a *bride*, not a *wife*. The church can only be called the bride if the marriage hasn't happened yet! That means all of these events *must* still be in the future.

If Revelation 20:1-3 is talking about the crucifixion of Christ then that would mean the "marriage of the Lamb" must have occurred *before* the church even existed! How is that possible? How could the bride be dressed in the righteous acts of the saints *before the saints even existed and performed any righteous acts*? It doesn't make any sense. If that was true then the New Testament should have referred to the church as the wife of Christ (just like the Old Testament referred to Israel as the wife of Jehovah), but that never happened.

I believe Revelation 20 should be interpreted literally. After the Marriage of the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ will return to this world and defeat the army of the antichrist. Satan will then be bound for a thousand years, and during that time he will

be unable to deceive the nations or do any harm. The devil will be completely removed from the scene for the duration of the Millennium.

A Thousand Years

Some people have argued that the thousand years should be interpreted symbolically. They base that on this verse:

2 Peter 3:8: "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

The problem is that this passage uses symbolic language, while Revelation 20 doesn't. 2 Peter 3:8 clearly says that one day with the Lord is *as* a thousand years. Revelation 20 contains no such symbolic language! The book of Revelation repeatedly says that this period will last *a thousand years*. It doesn't say that it will *seem like* a thousand years, or that it will be *as* a thousand years. Instead it repeatedly says that it will last *one thousand years*:

Revelation 20:2-3: "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."

In both verses it clearly says "a thousand years". There's no hint that this time period is symbolic. But there's more:

Revelation 20:4-7: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,"

In the span of six verses the phrase "thousand years" occurs *six times*. I don't see how Revelation 20 could have made it any plainer that this is a literal period of time! If the duration of the Millennium was meant to be taken symbolically then it would have been easy to say "as a thousand years" or "was like a thousand years", *but it doesn't say that*. However, if the thousand-year period is meant to be taken literally then how could the chapter have been any more clear?

I believe that the thousand year period should be interpreted as a literal thousand year period. The reason it's said to last for a thousand years is *because it lasts for one thousand years*. I see no reason to interpret it any differently.

Thy Kingdom Come

Revelation 20 tells us that after Satan is bound, the martyrs of the tribulation period will be resurrected to reign with Christ over the world:

Revelation 20:4-6: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Not only does Christ reign for a thousand years ("they lived and *reigned with Christ* a thousand years"), but the martyrs do as well. Verse 5 specifically states that these people were *raised from the dead* so they could reign with Jesus. If the millennium is symbolic of the church age then this makes no sense. Have the martyrs been resurrected so they can reign with Christ during this age? Definitely not! Since the resurrection of the martyrs is still in the future, the fulfillment of this passage must be in the future as well.

The martyrs aren't the only ones who are reigning with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom. Earlier in Revelation there's a

promise that the 24 elders will reign with Christ as well:

Revelation 5:8-10: "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

I believe that the 24 elders are symbolic of the entire church. These elders identify themselves in verse 9: they're those who were *redeemed by the blood of the Lamb*. Their members come from *every nation*. What term does the Bible use to describe the leaders of the church? "Elders". How do we know that they represent the whole church? Well, in 1 Chronicles 24 the priests are divided into 24 different divisions that represent the whole priesthood. That's why scholars believe that when the number 24 is used symbolically it represents an entire group. (As an aside, some translations say "redeemed them" instead of "redeemed us" in verse 9. I believe the manuscript evidence supports the use of "us" over "them". These elders are claiming that *they* were redeemed, not someone else.)

Notice what these elders (who are symbolic of the entire church) are saying: God has made them kings and priests and they will reign *on the Earth*. Not "reign on the New Earth that will be created after Judgment Day", but reign on the Earth itself! God will one day turn His church into a nation of kings, and during the millennium we will reign with Jesus over the nations.

When the Lord returns He will put this world under *His* management. Our assignment will be to reign with Him.

Many people believe that the idea that Christ will reign as an earthly king is shocking and unbiblical. To them the idea seems too strange to be true. Some people teach that Revelation 20 *must* be symbolic because the very idea of Christ reigning on the Earth as a king is just too bizarre – and yet this idea can be found throughout the Bible! For example, the Lord's prayer hints at it:

Matthew 6:9-10: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

The Lord specifically commanded His disciples to pray that His kingdom would come *to Earth* so that His will would be done *on Earth*. That sounds a lot like a plea for Jesus to return and reign as King! After all, the Lord did make this promise:

Matthew 5:5: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."

That verse echoes a passage from Psalms:

Psalm 37:10-11: "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

Ask yourself: when is this going to happen? When will the meek inherit the Earth as Jesus promised? After all, this world is ultimately going to be destroyed:

2 Peter 3:12: "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

Revelation 20:11: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them."

Revelation 21:1: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

I don't believe that the promise that Jesus gave to the meek in the book of Matthew is talking about the New Earth which He will create after the Great White Throne judgment. Psalms 37:11 doesn't say "the meek will inherit a different earth" or "God will one day make a new planet for the meek to live on". Both Psalm 37 and Matthew 5 are talking about *this* world – so when are the meek going to inherit it? They certainly haven't inherited it yet!

The Millennial Kingdom is the perfect time for this promise to finally be fulfilled. When will the meek inherit the earth and delight themselves in the abundance of peace? Right after Satan is bound and Jesus reigns as King of Kings over the nations. That's when His promise will be fulfilled.

The Restoration of Israel

There are many other verses that talk about this millennial kingdom. For example, look at what Christ told His disciples:

Luke 22:28-30: "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Jesus promised His disciples that they would reign with Him. Specifically, they would sit on thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel. This goes right along with Revelation 5:10 and Revelation 20:6. Jesus promised to give His disciples "a kingdom". If this kingdom was purely spiritual then this would have been a great place for Jesus to explain that to His disciples, but He didn't. It's true that Jesus told Pontius Pilate "my kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36), but I believe there's a great deal of Scripture that teaches that one day His kingdom will reign *over* this world. All things will be put under the dominion of Christ.

How do we know this? Well, right before the Lord ascended into Heaven He was asked a question:

Acts 1:6: "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"

When the Lord was asked this question He didn't say "No, no, you misunderstand. My kingdom isn't physical – it's purely

spiritual. You've got it all wrong." Instead He said this:

Acts 1:7: "And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."

Jesus actually confirmed that He would one day "restore again the kingdom", but He told His disciples that it wasn't for them to know when that would happen. The reason the disciples asked Jesus about this is because the coming kingdom was talked about frequently in the Old Testament. For example:

Isaiah 60:9-12: "Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually: they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."

Has this happened yet? Do all the nations of the world serve Israel, as it says in verse 12? Has God destroyed the nations that wouldn't serve her? Absolutely not! Israel is currently *oppressed* of all nations. She's despised and surrounded by nations that wish to see her completely and utterly destroyed. The fulfillment of this passage must be still in the future, and the Millennial Kingdom is an excellent candidate for its fulfillment.

The passage doesn't stop there:

Isaiah 60:14-15: "The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations."

None of this has happened yet. Israel is despised and hated in this age, not loved and adored. What the Lord speaks of in Isaiah 60:15 hasn't been fulfilled yet.

But there's more! Not only did God promise Israel great honor, but He also promised her great wealth and peace:

Isaiah 60:17-18: "For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine exactors righteousness. Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise."

Is the modern nation of Israel a place where violence is unheard-of? Absolutely not – but one day that will be the case.

Lest we think that this prophecy will happen before the Lord returns, He added something astonishing:

Isaiah 60:19-22: "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: but the Lord shall be

unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified. A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time."

In the coming kingdom the sun and the moon won't be needed to provide light to the land of Israel because *the Lord* will be the source of light. That means *the Lord Himself will be dwelling in the land of Israel!* Therefore, all of these verses must be fulfilled *after* the Second Coming – which makes perfect sense if the Millennium is taken literally. After Christ returns He will grant Israel honor, wealth, and peace.

I realize that this passage has strong parallels to the New Heaven and Earth which are mentioned in Revelation 21, but I don't think that's what it's talking about. Verse 12 speaks of the Lord crushing all nations that won't serve Israel, and verse 14 talks about forcing those who despised Israel to bow at her feet. The reason this is important is because in the New Heaven and Earth there won't be any more death, sorrow, pain, or evil. That means there wouldn't be anyone left to despise Israel or refuse to serve God! Since there are still some rebellious nations when this promise is fulfilled then that means this must take place *before* the Great White Throne judgment, which is before the New Heaven and Earth are created. I believe Isaiah 60 is a picture of what the Millennial Kingdom will be like.

But there's more. Isaiah 65 says this:

Isaiah 65:17-25: "For, behold, I create new heaven and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come to mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create: for, behold I create Jerusalem rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. 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 a hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; 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 bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."

At first glance this passage seems to be talking about the New Heaven and Earth which are mentioned in Revelation 21, but I don't believe that's the case. I think this is actually a picture of the Millennial Kingdom because verse 20 clearly says that *people will still die*. This passage illustrates how long people will

live by saying that someone who dies at the age of a hundred will be considered a child. That means these promises come to pass at a time *before* death has been done away with forever. However, Revelation 21:4 says that in the New Heaven and Earth *there is no more death* (or sinners, for that matter). Therefore Isaiah 65 must be talking about a different era.

If this isn't speaking of the New Heaven and Earth of Revelation 21 then when does it take place? It's certainly not happening right now! I think this is another picture of the Millennial Kingdom.

Here's another passage that talks about the Millennium:

Micah 4:1-7: "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever. In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her

that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted;
And I will make her that halteth a remnant, and
her that was cast far off a strong nation; and the
Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion from
henceforth, even forever."

Here we have more promises that haven't been fulfilled yet. It's hard to imagine that this world will ever become a place where nations will no longer wage war with one other, but that's the future God has planned for us! This passage speaks of a time when "the Lord shall reign over them in mount Zion" – in other words, a time when the Lord reigns as King in Israel! He will "rebuke strong nations afar off", put an end to war, and bring lasting peace.

I don't think this is talking about the New Heaven and Earth of Revelation 21 because in verse 3 the Lord rebukes sinful nations. After the Great White Throne judgment all evil, sin, and death will be done away with forever. Once the final judgment has taken place there will no longer be a need to rebuke anyone because everything that was evil was cast into the lake of fire. I believe this passage is speaking of the Millennial Kingdom.

Another chapter that gives us a glimpse into the Millennium is Isaiah chapter 11. That chapter tells us that just as there will be peace among nations, there will also be peace in the animal kingdom:

Isaiah 11:6-9: "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

In the church age the animal kingdom is full of predators and prey. It's common for one species to hunt, kill, and eat other species – but during the Millennium that will change. Animals that used to be carnivores will become herbivores and "eat straw like the ox". Lions and bears will stop hunting and eat plants. Animals will no longer hunt man, and children will be able to play with deadly serpents and not be harmed. Life will be radically different from the way it is now.

Another important fact is that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea". This will be a time when the world is *saturated* with the knowledge of the Lord! In the church age very few people know the Lord or walk in His ways. During the Millennium, however, things will be different. In that day the knowledge of the Lord will be everywhere, and the nations will keep His commands.

But that's not all that the Bible has to say about the Millennium. The book of Zechariah also has some things to tell us. Much of that book discusses the events that take place during the "Day of the Lord" (which the New Testament refers to as the tribulation), but Zechariah does mention the Millennium. One thing we're told is that before the Millennium begins the Lord will return to this world, stand on the mount of Olives, and tear the mountain in two:

Zechariah 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."

That means the Mount of Olives will be torn in half and replaced by a large valley. Israel will then undergo a series of dramatic topographical changes:

Zechariah 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."

These changes are necessary because the Temple Mount isn't big enough to contain the Millennial temple that's described in Ezekiel (and which will be located on top of a mountain). As we can see, some pretty dramatic landscape work will need to take place before the Millennial temple can be built! This passage describes some of those changes.

There will also be a stream of living water:

Zechariah 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."

Most importantly, however, the Lord will assume the throne and will reign over the nations:

Zechariah 14:9: "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one

Lord, and his name one."

Every year the nations of the world will be required to come before the Lord and worship the King:

Zechariah 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."

Not only will the nations be required to travel to Jerusalem to worship God, but they will also be required to *keep the feast of tabernacles*, which is one of the feasts mentioned in the Mosaic Law. The Gentile nations will be required to come to Jerusalem *in order to keep one of the Jewish feasts!* That's remarkable. Every year during the Millennium the *entire planet* will make a journey to Jerusalem!

The Lord is quite clear that everyone is required to attend. Any nations that refuse to come will be punished:

Zechariah 14:17-19: "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. 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. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles."

This is another reminder that sin will still exist during the Millennium. Even though Jesus Christ will be reigning from

Jerusalem in all His glory, there will still be those who refuse to come and worship Him. In this age the Lord is patient and longsuffering, and gives people an opportunity to repent. During the Millennium, however, He will reign with a rod of iron. All those who refuse to come worship Him will be punished, and the nations that won't obey Him will be sent a terrible drought. Jesus won't accept rebellion during His reign.

There's something else that Zechariah has to say about the Millennium:

Zechariah 14:20-21: "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. 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."

This passage is saying that during the Millennium there will be a tremendous manifestation of holiness. The Lord God will dwell in His temple and His holiness will saturate Jerusalem and Judah. Even the smallest and most minor things will be as holy as the vessels on the altar! The entire nation of Israel will be saturated with holiness. It will be everywhere.

Zechariah has more to say about the Millennium:

Zechariah 2:4-5: "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: 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."

The city of Jerusalem has had walls since ancient times. Those walls were created for its protection – but they won't be needed in the Millennium. In those days the city will have so many people and cattle that they will overflow the walls. In fact, the walls won't even be needed because the Lord will be a wall of fire around the city! (That will be an amazing sight, won't it?)

As you can see, the coming reign of Christ on Earth is a major topic that can be found throughout the Old Testament. In fact, nearly all of the prophets had something to say about it. It's not a crazy idea that suddenly appeared out of nowhere at the end of Revelation.

The Millennial Temple

One of the major topics of the Old Testament is that in the Millennial Kingdom there will be a new temple. In that era all nations will go to this temple to worship the Lord and learn His ways:

Isaiah 2:1-4: "The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and 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. And

he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

This short passage contains a great deal of information. First of all, during the Millennium the temple of the Lord will be established in the top of the mountains. It will be a centerpiece of the whole earth! All nations will visit it. People from all over the world will go to the temple to learn God's ways, and they will obey His words.

During this era the Lord Jesus Christ will reign from Jerusalem. Verse 4 tells us that He will judge the nations and rebuke "many people". In the Millennium the nations will no longer fight each other. Instead they'll turn their weapons into farming equipment and they'll no longer learn the art of war. The Millennium will be a time of amazing peace.

The Lord's temple is going to be one of the most prominent features of the Millennium. The book of Ezekiel spends 9 chapters talking about it! First, Ezekiel tells us that God will establish His sanctuary in their midst:

Ezekiel 37:26-28: "Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore."

The amount of detail that God provides concerning this coming temple is staggering. I'm not going to repeat it all here, or even attempt to summarize it. Instead I'll just mention a few of the key details.

First of all, the Ark of the Covenant will be missing. The Ark wasn't included in Herod's Temple (which is the one that existed at the time of Christ), and it won't be in this one either. We're told this in the book of Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 3:16: "And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more"

The time of the Ark of the Covenant is over. It won't be in the millennial temple because it's served its purpose and is no longer needed. The new temple won't return Israel to the old way of doing things; instead it represents something new.

One of the surprising things about this temple is the fact that sacrifices will be offered there. However, this doesn't mean Israel is returning to the Law of Moses. This sacrificial system will have different rules from the old one. I realize it seems very strange that sacrifices will be offered after the return of Christ, but the book of Ezekiel is very clear about this:

Ezekiel 43:18-21: "And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord God; These are the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and to sprinkle blood thereon. And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister

unto me, saith the Lord God, a young bullock for a sin offering. And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it. Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin offering, and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house, without the sanctuary."

This passage clearly describes burnt offerings which will be offered in the millennial Temple! There are other passages that have even more to say about millennial sacrifices. So what's going on here? What possible reason could there be for resuming animal sacrifices? After all, the New Testament teaches that the time of making offerings for sin is over:

Hebrews 10:18: "Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin."

The sacrificial system which will exist during the Millennium will have a different purpose from the one that's found in the Mosaic Law. This can be seen from the fact that the two systems have different offerings, different rules, different holy days, and different procedures (all of which are outside the scope of this discussion). The sacrifices which are offered during the Millennium aren't focused on the forgiveness of sins, but on removing ceremonial uncleanness. Why would that be needed? Perhaps so that unholy and sinful mortals (such as the people who are born during the Millennium) can enter the holy presence of the Lord Jesus in His temple.

This is how one scholar put it:

"Critics of future millennial sacrifices seem to assume that all sacrifices, past and future,

always depict Christ's final sacrifice for sin. They do not! There were various purposes for sacrifices in the Bible. An overwhelming majority of sacrifices under the Mosaic system were for purification of the priests and objects used in various rites. This is why atonement can be said in the past to be effective, yet still need Christ's future sacrifice, because many of the sacrifices did atone ceremonially, cleansing participants and objects in Temple ritual. Just as we never finish the task of washing clothes, ceremonial cleansing was an ongoing need. The same is clearly the case in Ezekiel. In Ezekiel 43:20 and 26, the atonement is specifically directed at cleansing the altar in order to make it ritually fit for sacrifice. The only other uses of atonement also refer to cleansing objects so that ritual purity may be maintained for proper function of further worship. . ."

"Since all the sacrifices of Ezekiel relate to purification of the priests for Temple service, they do not specifically depict or represent Christ's atoning sacrifice. The presence and purpose of sacrifices neither diminishes the finished work of Christ nor violates the normal and "literal" interpretation of the prophetic passages. Nothing in Ezekiel 40-48 conflicts with the death of Christ or New Testament teaching at any point. The supposed contradictions between a literal understanding of Ezekiel and New Testament doctrine evaporate when examined specifically." (Dr. Thomas Ice, *Pre-Trip Perspectives*, June 2000, pg. 4-5)

The sacrifices in the Millennial Temple aren't about obtaining forgiveness. Instead they will be used to maintain ceremonial cleanliness and keep the temple and its contents from being defiled. The reason this is important is because during the Millennial Kingdom God Himself will be dwelling on Earth, and His glory will be manifested in the temple. Since a holy God is dwelling in a sinful world among sinful people, there's an urgent need for a way to maintain ceremonial cleanliness. That seems to be the purpose of the Millennial sacrificial system.

The Last Battle

After the thousand years are over we're told that Satan "must be loosed a little season":

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, God 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 forever and ever."

Here we see the final end of Satan. After the thousand

years "are expired" Satan will be set free. He will travel all over the world and deceive the nations so he can launch a rebellion against King Jesus. The devil will deceive many people, form a massive army, and use it to surround Jerusalem. However, that army doesn't stand a chance. Fire will come down out of Heaven and consume everyone. Satan will then be cast into the Lake of Fire, which will put a final end to his wickedness.

It's amazing to me that Satan will be able to gather such a large army. At this point King Jesus will have ruled over the world for a thousand years! There had been an entire millennium of peace, joy, and harmony. The kingdom of Jesus will be filled with many resurrected immortals, including the church, the Old Testament saints, and the tribulation saints. All of those people will provide enormous evidence that the teachings of the Bible are true – and yet when the devil is released, a great multitude will join him in rebellion.

Who will rebel against Jesus after the Millennium? Well, many people will survive the seven-year tribulation period and enter into the Millennium as mortals. Those people will have children, and the human race will continue to grow. Those children will live in a world that's populated by the saints from the Old and New Testament. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and many others will all be living in the kingdom, and Jesus will be reigning as the King of Kings from Zion! That means the children of the millennium will be able to see many things that we must take on faith. Today we live in a world that's full of fear and doubt, but the Millennial Kingdom will be nothing like that.

In spite of all these amazing blessings, at the end of the thousand years an enormous number of mortals will rebel against King Jesus and attempt to destroy Jerusalem – a city that's inhabited by *immortals* and reigned over by *God Himself!* That's madness. Why would they do that?

I think it's a testament to the evil heart of mankind. Even

living in a perfect world isn't enough to turn sinful people into righteous saints. The environment can't remove evil from our heart – only Christ can do that. Apart from Him we can do nothing. Given the chance, a great many mortals will fall away from God and join the devil, and will be killed in the last battle.

The Great White Throne Judgment

After the last battle, Satan will be defeated and thrown into the lake of fire to be tormented forever. That event is followed by the final judgment. Now, the resurrected saints have nothing to fear from this judgment. The only people who will be judged at this time are "the dead". Since the church, the Old Testament saints, and the tribulation saints were all resurrected long before this judgment, they won't be included in it. The only people who will be judged at that time are all of the wicked who have ever lived, along with everyone who died during the Millennium.

Here is what Revelation 20 says about the judgment:

Revelation 20:11-15: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man

according to their works. And death and hell we cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

The criteria for surviving the Great White Throne judgment is simple: if your name was written in the Lamb's Book of Life then you'll be freed and will enter into everlasting life. If your name is *not* found in it then you'll be cast into the lake of fire and tormented day and night forever and ever.

This is the moment when death itself will be done away with forever. After this judgment no one else will ever die. The reign of death will be put to an end.

It should be noted that Hell is *not* the final resting place of the unrighteous. Revelation 20 tells us that Hell will be emptied for this judgment. In fact, Hell itself is actually cast into the lake of fire (verse 14). Those whose sins are not covered by the blood of the Lamb won't be cast back into Hell; instead they'll be cast into the lake of fire (verse 15). That means *no one will spend eternity in Hell*. Instead the wicked will spend eternity in the lake of fire, where they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Why will this terrible thing happen to them? It's because they never repented of their sins and put their faith in Jesus alone for salvation. The Lord will pardon all those who come to Him, but those who died in their sins never did that. All those whose sins are not forgiven will face His everlasting wrath. That's why it's so important to repent and believe now, while there's still time.

Summary of Events

The story doesn't end here! Revelation 21 talks about a new Heaven and Earth that Jesus will create after the final judgment. In that new realm (which theologians call the "eternal state"), all suffering and pain will be done away with forever. But that's a topic for another time.

This is how I believe events will play out:

- One day the Lord will return for His Church. All Christians who died between Pentecost (when the church began) and the moment of the rapture will be resurrected, and all living Christians will be translated so that they will never see death. The Lord will then take us with Him to Heaven.
- At some point after the rapture, the tribulation will begin. This will be a terrible seven-year period of judgment. The Lord will pour out His wrath upon a wicked world, and will use those judgments to bring Israel back to Him. (One of the key purposes of the tribulation is to turn Israel's heart back to God.)
- During the tribulation the Marriage of the Lamb will take place in Heaven. The Bride of Christ will become the Wife of Christ.
- At the end of the seven-year tribulation the Lord will return with the armies of Heaven and put an end to the antichrist's kingdom. Satan will be bound for a thousand years, and during that time he will be unable to deceive the nations. The Lord will establish His kingdom on Earth and reign from Zion. The tribulation saints and the Old Testament saints will be resurrected.
- During the tribulation more than half of the world's

population was killed by judgments and war. In the Millennial Kingdom the world will be repopulated by those who survived the tribulation. Jesus Christ will live in Israel, and the church and the resurrected tribulation saints will reign with Him.

- After the thousand years are over Satan will be set free. He will deceive the nations into launching a final attack against God. When the devil brings his armies to Jerusalem, fire will come out of Heaven and consume them. Satan will then be cast into the Lake of Fire, where he will be tormented for all of eternity.
- The Great White Throne judgment will take place. Only the dead will be judged. The only people who will be dead at this point in history are those who died during the Millennial Kingdom, along with all the wicked who have ever lived. Everyone whose names aren't found in the Lamb's Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire. Death itself will be done away with.
- Since the current Heaven and Earth were destroyed at the beginning of the Great White Throne judgment, the Lord will create new ones. In that new Heaven and Earth there will never be any death, pain, or suffering. That new creation will be perfect and will last forever. The Lord will reign over all things forever, and will make His dwelling place with men. (That's where the righteous will spend eternity: on Earth, as subjects of King Jesus.)

We have a great deal to look forward to! The Second Coming isn't the end of time but is actually the start of an exciting new chapter. The world won't always be a place that's filled with doubt and evil, because a King is coming who will put everything right. One day the meek will inherit the earth and

delight themselves in an abundance of peace. I am very much looking forward to that day.

Resource 1: Chapter Summary

Zechariah

Zechariah 1

- IN DARIUS' 2ND YEAR, GOD'S WORD CAME TO ZECHARIAH
- TURN TO ME AND I WILL TURN TO YOU
- VISION OF THE MAN RIDING UPON A RED HORSE
- THE ANGEL OF THE LORD ASKS: HOW LONG WILL YOU NOT HAVE MERCY ON JERUSALEM?
- VISION OF THE FOUR HORNS, AND OF THE FOUR CARPENTERS

Zechariah 2

- VISION OF THE MAN WITH A MEASURING LINE
- JERUSALEM WILL BECOME SO POPULOUS THAT IT WILL BE INHABITED AS A TOWN WITHOUT WALLS
- THE LORD WILL BE THE GLORY IN THE MIDST OF HER
- HE WHO TOUCHES YOU TOUCHES THE APPLE OF HIS EYE
- IN THAT DAY MANY NATIONS WILL BE JOINED TO THE LORD AND WILL BE MY PEOPLE; I WILL DWELL IN THE MIDST OF YOU

Zechariah 3

- JOSHUA THE HIGH PRIEST IS STANDING BEFORE THE ANGEL OF THE LORD, AND SATAN IS AT HIS RIGHT HAND RESISTING HIM
- THE LORD REBUKES SATAN
- JOSHUA'S FILTHY GARMENTS ARE TAKEN AWAY AND HE IS GIVEN NEW GARMENTS AND A MITRE

Zechariah 4

- THE VISION OF THE CANDLESTICK, THE BOWL, AND THE SEVEN LAMPS
- THIS IS THE WORD OF THE LORD TO ZERUBBABEL: NOT BY MIGHT OR POWER BUT BY MY SPIRIT
- THE HANDS OF ZERUBBABEL HAVE LAID THE FOUNDATION, AND HIS HANDS SHALL ALSO FINISH IT

Zechariah 5

- VISION OF THE FLYING ROLL, OF THE EPHAH, AND OF THE TWO WOMEN WITH WINGS

Zechariah 6

- VISION OF THE FOUR CHARIOTS
- GOD SAYS TO MAKE CROWNS AND SET THEM UPON JOSHUA'S HEAD, AND TELL HIM THAT THE MAN WHOSE NAME IS "THE BRANCH" WILL BUILD THE LORD'S TEMPLE AND RULE UPON HIS THRONE

Zechariah 7

- WHEN YOU FASTED, DID YOU FAST TO ME OR FOR YOURSELVES?
- EXECUTE TRUE JUDGMENT AND SHOW MERCY AND COMPASSION – BUT THEY REFUSED TO HEAR, SO I SCATTERED THEM AMONG THE NATIONS

Zechariah 8

- THE OLD WILL ONCE AGAIN LIVE IN JERUSALEM, AND THE STREETS WILL BE FULL OF PLAYING CHILDREN
- I WILL SAVE YOU, AND YOU WILL BE A BLESSING
- LET EVERY MAN SPEAK TRUTH TO HIS NEIGHBOR AND NOT IMAGINE EVIL AGAINST HIM

- MANY PEOPLE AND NATIONS WILL COME TO SEEK THE LORD IN JERUSALEM AND TO PRAY BEFORE HIM

Zechariah 9

- TYRUS BUILT HERSELF A STRONGHOLD, BUT SHE SHALL BE DEVoured WITH FIRE
- I WILL CUT OFF THE PRIDE OF THE PHILISTINES
- REJOICE, O DAUGHTER OF JERUSALEM, FOR YOUR KING COMES; HE IS LOWLY, RIDING UPON AN ASS
- THE LORD WILL BLOW THE TRUMPET; HE WILL DEFEND THEM AND SAVE THEM IN THAT DAY

Zechariah 10

- THE DIVINERS HAVE TOLD FALSE DREAMS
- I WILL STRENGTHEN JUDAH'S HOUSE AND HAVE MERCY UPON THEM
- THE PRIDE OF ASSYRIA WILL BE BROUGHT DOWN, AND THE SCEPTER OF EGYPT WILL DEPART

Zechariah 11

- THE MIGHTY ARE SPOILED
- I WILL NO MORE PITY THE INHABITANTS OF THE LAND, BUT WILL DELIVER EVERYONE INTO HIS NEIGHBOR'S HAND
- I TOOK TWO STAVES – BEAUTY AND BANDS – AND I FED THE FLOCK
- I TOOK THE STAFF "BEAUTY" AND CUT IT ASUNDER, AND IT WAS BROKEN; THEN THE PEOPLE KNEW THAT IT WAS THE WORD OF GOD
- WHEN THEY GAVE HIM 30 PIECES OF SILVER, GOD TOLD HIM TO CAST IT TO THE POTTER AND HE DID SO
- HE THEN CUT ASUNDER THE STAFF "BANDS"

- THE LORD SAID HE WOULD RAISE UP AN EVIL SHEPHERD; HIS ARM WOULD BE DRIED UP AND HIS RIGHT EYE WOULD BE DARKENED

Zechariah 12

- I WILL MAKE JERUSALEM A CUP OF TREMBLING AND A BURDENSOME STONE FOR ALL PEOPLE; ALL WHO BURDEN THEMSELVES WITH IT SHALL BE CUT IN PIECES
- THE GOVERNORS OF JUDAH WILL DEVOUR ALL THE PEOPLE ROUND ABOUT, AND JERUSALEM WILL BE INHABITED AGAIN IN HER OWN PLACE
- THE LORD WILL DEFEND JERUSALEM AND WILL SEEK TO DESTROY ALL THE NATIONS THAT COME AGAINST HER
- I WILL POUR THE SPIRIT OF GRACE UPON THE HOUSE OF DAVID, AND THEY WILL LOOK UPON ME WHOM THEY HAVE PIERCED, AND WILL MOURN FOR HIM AND BE IN BITTERNESS FOR HIM

Zechariah 13

- IN THAT DAY I WILL CUT OFF THE NAMES OF THE IDOLS AND THEY WILL BE REMEMBERED NO MORE
- THE FALSE PROPHETS WILL BE ASHAMED AND CONFESS THAT THEY ARE NOT PROPHETS
- SMITE THE SHEPHERD AND THE SHEEP SHALL BE SCATTERED
- TWO PARTS WILL BE CUT OFF AND DIE, BUT THE THIRD PART WILL BE LEFT; I WILL BRING THEM THROUGH THE FIRE AND REFINE THEM

Zechariah 14

- THE DAY OF THE LORD COMES
- I WILL GATHER ALL NATIONS TO JERUSALEM; THE CITY WILL BE TAKEN

- THEN THE LORD WILL GO FORTH AND FIGHT AGAINST THE NATIONS; HIS FEET WILL STAND UPON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, AND THE MOUNTAIN WILL CLEAVE IN TWO AND BECOME A GREAT VALLEY
- YOU WILL FLEE TO THE VALLEY, AND THE LORD WILL COME WITH ALL THE SAINTS
- IN THE EVENING IT WILL BE LIGHT
- LIVING WATERS WILL GO OUT OF JERUSALEM
- THE LORD WILL BE KING OVER ALL THE EARTH
- JERUSALEM WILL BE SAFELY INHABITED
- GOD WILL SMITE THOSE WHO HAVE FOUGHT AGAINST JERUSALEM: THEIR FLESH WILL CONSUME AWAY WHILE THEY STAND ON THEIR FEET
- EVERYONE WHO IS LEFT OF THE NATIONS WILL COME UP EVERY YEAR TO WORSHIP THE KING AND KEEP THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Resource 3: The Teachings Of The Bible

Zechariah 1

- Zechariah was a prophet (v1)
- Zechariah was the descendant of Berechiah (v1)
- Zechariah was a male (v1)
- Zechariah was the descendant of Iddo (v1)
- Iddo was a prophet (v1)
- The word of the Lord came to Zechariah in the eighth month of the year (v1)
- The word of the Lord came to Zechariah during the second year of the reign of Darius; (that means this prophecy was given after the fall of Jerusalem, while the Israelites were still captives in Babylon) (v1)
- The words in this book are the words of the Lord; these prophecies came from God (v1)
- God was very displeased with the Israelites (v2)
- There are times when God is displeased with nations (v2)
- God commanded the Israelites to turn back to Him (v3)
- God is the God of armies (v3)
- If the Israelites turned back to God then God would turn

to them (v3)

- Even though Jerusalem had been destroyed and the Israelites were captives in Babylon, the people had still not turned back to God; God was commanding them to repent because they had still not repented even after all that had happened to them (v3)
- God wants us to turn to Him (v3)
- The ancestors of the current generation of Israelites were commanded to repent (v4)
- The ancestors of the current generation of Israelites refused to repent (v4)
- The ancestors of the current generation of Israelites refused to listen to God (v4)
- The ancestors of the current generation of Israelites were evil (v4)
- God commanded the current generation of Israelites to not be like their ancestors, who sinned and refused to repent (v4)
- We must turn away from our evil ways (v4)
- We must listen to God (v4)
- We must do as God says (v4)
- The prophets prophesied to the ancestors of the current generation of Israelites; they commanded them to repent, but they refused to repent (v4)
- God used the prophets to command the Israelites to repent; they preached repentance (v4)
- The ancestors of the current generation of Israelites were

dead (v5)

- The prophets who prophesied to the ancestors of the Israelites were dead (v5)
- The ancestors of the Israelites were no longer around, and the prophets who prophesied to them were no longer around, but the words of God were still around; they endured, and what God said would happen is exactly what happened (v6)
- People come and go, but the word of God endure forever (v6)
- The prophets were the servants of God (v6)
- God did exactly what He said He would do; His words came to pass (v6)
- The ancestors of the Israelites admitted that God did exactly what He said He was going to do (v6)
- God treated the ancestors of the Israelites in accordance with their wickedness (v6)
- God has given us His words (v6)
- God has given us His statutes (v6)
- We must listen to the words of God, for they will come to pass (v6)
- We must obey the commandments of God, for God will hold us accountable (v6)
- The word of God came to Zechariah on the 24th day (v7)
- The word of God came to Zechariah in the 11th month (v7)

- The 11th month is the month Sebat (v7)
- The word of God came to Zechariah in the second year of the reign of Darius (v7)
- Zechariah received this vision at night (v8)
- Zechariah saw a man riding on a red horse (v8)
- Zechariah saw a man stand among myrtle trees (v8)
- Zechariah saw red horses (v8)
- Zechariah saw speckled horses (v8)
- Zechariah saw white horses (v8)
- Zechariah asked the meaning of what he was seeing (v9)
- Zechariah saw the vision but he did not understand it (v9)
- When Zechariah saw these things there was an angel standing by (v9)
- Zechariah talked to the angel (v9)
- The angel responded to Zechariah (v9)
- The angel told Zechariah that he would explain the meaning of the vision (v9)
- It seems that some angels understand the meaning of visions (v9)
- The prophets had to be told the meaning of the visions that God gave them; they could not interpret them until they were given the interpretation (v9)
- The proper interpretation of prophecy is something that comes from God; we cannot discover it on our own (v9)
- The angel stood among the myrtle trees (v10)

- The man and the horses were sent from God (v10)
- God sent the man and the horses to walk throughout the earth (v10)
- There are some beings whose job is to wander throughout the world (v10)
- The horses talked to the angel (v11)
- The horses said they had walked through the earth (v11)
- The horses said that the earth was at rest, and all was still (v11)
- There are times when the earth is at rest (v11)
- The angel asked God how long it would be until He had mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah (v12)
- At this point (in the second year of Darius) it had been 70 years since God poured out His indignation upon Jerusalem (v12)
- The angel wanted God to have mercy on Judah (v12)
- Up to this point God had not had mercy on Jerusalem or the cities of Judah (v12)
- The destruction of Jerusalem was the judgment of God; those things happened because God was pouring out His wrath upon Judah as punishment for the sins of the people (v12)
- Angels do not know everything; there are some things that they do not know (v12)
- God answered the angel (v13)
- God answered the angel with good and comfortable

words; (however, we are not told what those words were) (v13)

- There are times when angels ask God questions, and God gives them answers (v13)
- The angel told Zechariah to cry out and speak (v14)
- God was jealous over Jerusalem and Zion (v14)
- God is a jealous God (v14)
- God cares about Jerusalem; that city is very important to Him (v14)
- God was very angry with the pagan nations (v15)
- At this time the pagan nations were at ease, but God was angry with them (v15)
- There are times when God is angry with a nation, but the nation is at ease and things are going well for that nation (v15)
- God was a little angry with Judah, but the pagan nations made things even worse; they afflicted Judah above that which God wanted (v15)
- The pagan nations afflicted Judah (v15)
- God was angry with the pagan nations for afflicting Judah (v15)
- It angers God when nations afflict the Israelites, for He is jealous over them (v15)
- Nations should not afflict the Israelites (v15)
- God returned to Jerusalem with mercies; He was going to be merciful to Jerusalem (v16)

- The temple in Jerusalem would be rebuilt (v16)
- The city of Jerusalem would be rebuilt (v16)
- God would bring the Israelites back to Judah (v17)
- The cities of Judah would once again be prosperous (v17)
- There would once again be cities throughout Judah (v17)
- God was going to comfort Zion (v17)
- God was going to choose Jerusalem (v17)
- Zechariah saw four horns (v18)
- Zechariah did not understand the vision of the four horns (v19)
- Zechariah asked the angel what the vision meant (v19)
- The angel understood the vision (v19)
- The angel explained the vision to Zechariah (v19)
- The horns represented the nations that had scattered Israel and Judah (v19)
- The horns represented the nations that had destroyed Jerusalem (v19)
- God showed Zechariah four carpenters (v20)
- Zechariah did not understand the vision of the four carpenters (v21)
- Zechariah asked the angel what the vision meant (v21)
- The angel understood the vision (v21)
- The angel explained the vision to Zechariah (v21)

- The four horns had scattered the Israelites and oppressed them (v21)
- God was going to use the four carpenters to cast out the horns (v21)
- The four horns were four Gentile nations (v21)

[Last updated 7/28/2023]

Zechariah 2

- Zechariah saw a man (v1)
- The man that Zechariah saw had a measuring line in his hand (v1)
- Zechariah asked the man where he was going (v2)
- The man said that he was going to measure Jerusalem (v2)
- The man wanted to know how wide Jerusalem was (v2)
- The man wanted to know how long Jerusalem was (v2)
- In ancient times things were measured with a line (v2)
- The angel that Zechariah talked to in his previous vision was present for this vision as well (v3)
- The angel that Zechariah had previously talked with was approached by a different angel (v3)
- Zechariah saw multiple angels at the same time (v3)
- There were angels present in Zechariah's visions (v3)

- There were times when angels were involved in delivering prophetic information to the prophets (v3)
- It seems that the man who was going to measure Jerusalem with a line was just a man, and not an angel (v4)
- In the future Jerusalem was going to have so many people that it would be inhabited as a city that didn't have walls at all; (this prophecy was given at a time when Jerusalem had been destroyed and was an uninhabited ruin) (v4)
- In the future Jerusalem would be filled with people (v4)
- In the future Jerusalem would be home to many cattle as well (v4)
- The angel explained the meaning of this vision to Zechariah by telling one angel to relay a message to the man who had the line; the message explained the meaning of the vision (v4)
- God said that He would be a wall of fire around Jerusalem; (this seems to be a reference to the Millennium) (v5)
- God said that He would be the glory in the midst of Jerusalem; (this seems to be a reference to the Millennium) (v5)
- One day Jerusalem will be surrounded by a wall of fire (v5)
- One day Jerusalem will be filled with the glory of God (v5)
- In the context of prophecies regarding the end times, God commanded the Jews to flee from the land of the north

(v6)

- In the end times the Jews will be in the land of the north (v6)
- In the end times the Jews will be scattered all over the world (v6)
- This prophecy speaks of the four winds of the heaven (v6)
- God is the one who spread the Jews all over the world (v6)
- In the context of end-times prophecy, God commanded the Jews to deliver themselves; the meaning is they are to deliver themselves from danger by fleeing from the land of the north (v7)
- In the context of end-times prophecy, God said the Jews were dwelling with the daughter of Babylon; it seems that the Babylon that will exist in the end times, and rule over the world, is the daughter of the Babylon that existed in the days of Zechariah; it also seems that in the end times the Jews will be dwelling in that Babylon - but they are commanded to flee out of her in order to save themselves (v7)
- In the context of end-times prophecy, God said He would move against the nations that looted the Jews (v8)
- Those who touch the Jews are touching "the apple of their eye"; they are touching something that is very precious to God, and something that God defends with great fierceness (v8)
- It is very bad to harm the Jews (v8)
- We should not harm the Jews, because God loves them

and is jealous for them (v8)

- In the end times, multiple nations will move against the Jews and spoil them, greatly angering God (v8)
- In the end times, God is going to shake His hand upon the nations that oppressed the Jews (v9)
- In the end times, God is going to spoil the nations that spoiled the Jews (v9)
- In the end times, God is going to move against the nations that spoiled the Jews; He will turn those nations over to their servants, who will spoil them (v9)
- When these things come to pass, people will know that the Messiah was sent by God (v9)
- God was the one who called Zechariah to be a prophet (v9)
- God was the one who sent Zechariah (v9)
- God commanded the Jews to sing (v10)
- God commanded the Jews to rejoice (v10)
- It is good to sing about the great things that God will do for us in the future, even though they haven't happened yet (v10)
- It is good to rejoice in the great things that God will do for us in the future, even though they haven't happened yet (v10)
- God is going to come to the Jews (v10)
- God is going to dwell in the midst of the Jews; (this seems to be a reference to the Millennium) (v10)

- In the end times, many nations will be joined to the Lord (v11)
- In the end times, many nations will become the people of God; in those days the people of God will consist of more than just the Jews (v11)
- In the end times, God will dwell in the midst of the Jews (v11)
- When these things come to pass, people will know that the Messiah was sent by God (v11)
- In the end times, God will inherit Judah as His portion (v12)
- In the end times, the land of Israel will once again be the holy land (v12)
- In the end times, God will choose Jerusalem (v12)
- Jerusalem and Judah have a bright future, for God has made many promises that He will bring to pass (v12)
- All flesh should be silent before the Lord when He raises up (v13)
- The day is coming when God will raise up out of His holy habitation; when that day comes we must be silent before Him (v13)
- The place where God dwells is holy (v13)

[Last updated 7/29/2023]

Zechariah 3

- The Lord showed another vision to Zechariah (v1)
- Zechariah saw Joshua the high priest; (the Hebrew name Joshua is apparently identical to the Greek name Jesus) (v1)
- Joshua was standing before the angel of the Lord (v1)
- Satan was standing at the right hand of Joshua, in order to resist him (v1)
- In the days of Zechariah, the devil still had access to Heaven and was still using that access to oppress the people of God (v1)
- The devil is actively resisting the people of God (v1)
- In the past the devil fought against the high priest (v1)
- The devil is our enemy (v1)
- The Lord rebuked the devil twice for resisting the high priest (v2)
- God has chosen Jerusalem (v2)
- God called Jerusalem a brand that was plucked out of the fire (v2)
- Joshua was clothed with filthy garments; (in the Bible clothing is symbolic of righteousness; filthy garments are symbolic of unrighteousness) (v3)
- Joshua stood before the angel (v3)
- God commanded that Joshua's filthy garments be taken away from him (v4)

- Joshua's filthy garments were symbolic of iniquity (v4)
- God took away Joshua's iniquity (v4)
- God said that He would give Joshua new clothing (v4)
- Our righteousness comes from God and is a gift from God; it does not come from ourselves, and it is not something that we earn (v4)
- The only way we can ever obtain righteousness is for God to give it to us (v4)
- Zechariah said that a mitre (the headdress of the high priest) should be put upon Joshua's head (v5)
- A mitre was put upon the head of Joshua (v5)
- Joshua was clothed with new garments (v5)
- The angel of the Lord stood near Joshua (v5)
- The angel of the Lord spoke to Joshua (v6)
- The Lord told Joshua that if he walked in God's ways then he would judge the Lord's house (v7)
- The Lord told Joshua that if he walked in God's ways then he would walk among the angels (v7)
- The high priest must walk in the ways of God (v7)
- The Lord has a house (v7)
- The Lord has courts (v7)
- The one who judges the house of the Lord must be righteous (v7)
- The one who judges the house of the Lord must obey the Lord and walk in His ways (v7)

- The one who keeps the courts of the Lord must be righteous (v7)
- The one who keeps the courts of the Lord must obey the Lord and walk in His ways (v7)
- Those who walk among the angels must be righteous (v7)
- Those who walk among the angels must obey the Lord and walk in His ways (v7)
- God had a message for Joshua (v8)
- God had a message for those who were with Joshua (v8)
- God said that He would bring forth His servant (v8)
- The servant that God would bring forth was named the BRANCH (v8)
- God laid a stone before Joshua (v9)
- The stone would have seven eyes (v9)
- God was going to engrave something upon the stone (v9)
- God was going to remove the iniquity of the land (v9)
- The iniquity would be removed in a single day (v9)
- There was sin in the land that needed to be removed (v9)
- The only one who can remove iniquity is God (v9)
- The day in which God will remove iniquity from the land is the millennium (v10)
- God is the God of armies (v10)
- In the millennium, people will have their own vine (v10)
- In the millennium, people will have their own fig tree

(v10)

- In the millennium, there will be peace (v10)
- In the millennium, there will be neighbors (v10)
- In the millennium, neighbors will call out to one another (v10)
- In the millennium, there will be the private ownership of property (v10)
- In the millennium, people will enjoy the fruits of their labor (v10)

[Last updated 7/30/2023]

Zechariah 4

- Zechariah received another vision from the Lord (v1)
- God used an angel to help give this vision to Zechariah (v1)
- The angel woke up Zechariah (v1)
- Zechariah had to be woken up before he could see this vision (v1)
- God used an angel to wake up Zechariah (v1)
- The angel asked Zechariah what he saw (v2)
- Zechariah saw a candlestick made of gold (v2)
- The candlestick had a bowl on top of it (v2)
- The candlestick had seven lamps (v2)

- Each one of the lamps had its own pipe, for a total of seven pipes (v2)
- The lamps were on top of the pipes (v2)
- It seems that the candlestick has seven lamps, which were fed by a central bowl that carried oil to the lamps through pipes; this means the seven lamps were all fed from the same source, and were all part of the same candlestick (v2)
- There were two olive trees beside the bowl (v3)
- There was one olive tree on the right (v3)
- There was one olive tree on the left (v3)
- It seems that the bowl was supplied with olive oil, which then supplied the lamps so that they could give light (v3)
- Zechariah spoke to the angel (v4)
- Zechariah asked the angel to explain the vision to him (v4)
- The angel spoke to Zechariah (v5)
- The angel asked Zechariah if he understood the vision (v5)
- Zechariah said that he did not understand the vision (v5)
- Zechariah needed someone to explain the vision to him before he could understand it; he was unable to understand it without an explanation from God (v5)
- The vision that Zechariah saw was a message to Zerubbabel (who God had tasked with rebuilding the temple) (v6)

- The vision was a message that the work that God had given Zerubbabel to do would not be done by might (v6)
- The vision was a message that the work that God had given Zerubbabel to do would not be done by power (v6)
- The vision was a message that the work that God had given Zerubbabel to do would be done by the spirit of God; (in the Bible oil is symbolic of the Spirit, so a candlestick with seven lamps that were all fed from the same oil-filled bowl symbolized light shining by the power of the Holy Spirit) (v6)
- We cannot accomplish the work of God by our own might, or by our own power; instead the work of God can only be accomplished by the Spirit of God (v6)
- The vision was a message that the work that God had given Zerubbabel would not be stopped; the mountains that stood in his way would become a plain (v7)
- The vision was a message that Zerubbabel would succeed in rebuilding the temple; he would bring forth its headstone with shouting while crying "Grace, grace unto it" (v7)
- God would give Zerubbabel His Spirit, which would enable him to accomplish the rebuilding of the temple; it would not be done by Zerubbabel's power or might (v7)
- God would be with Zerubbabel as he rebuilt the temple; this was an act of grace (v7)
- Zechariah was given another word from the Lord (v8)
- Zerubbabel laid the foundation of the temple of God (v9)
- Zerubbabel would also finish the temple of God (v9)

- When Zerubbabel finished rebuilding the temple, the people would know that the message had come from the Lord (because it came to pass) (v9)
- The seven eyes that were mentioned previously are the seven eyes of the Lord (v10)
- The seven eyes of the Lord are looking around the entire world; God is watching this world and the things that are done in it (v10)
- It is not good to despise the day of small things; small things should not be despised simply because they are small (v10)
- The people would rejoice when the temple was rebuilt (v10)
- There are times when God uses small things to accomplish His will (v10)
- There are times when small things eventually lead to bigger and more important things; sometimes big things have small beginnings (v10)
- Zechariah asked the angel for the meaning of the two olive trees that were on the left and right of the candlestick (v11)
- Zechariah did not understand the meaning of the two olive trees (v11)
- When Zechariah did not understand the meaning of what he saw, he asked for its interpretation (v11)
- Zechariah was only given the interpretation when he asked for an explanation (v11)
- It seems the angel did not answer Zechariah's question

the first time he asked it, so he asked his question a second time (v12)

- Zechariah was persistent; when he did not receive an answer the first time, he asked again; he kept persisting to find the answer (v12)
- The olive trees were supplying the oil that went through the pipes (which was the fuel for the lamps) (v12)
- The pipes were made of gold (v12)
- The oil was the color of gold (v12)
- The angel asked Zechariah if he understood what the two olive trees were (v13)
- Zechariah said that he did not know what the two olive trees were (v13)
- Zechariah did not understand the meaning of what he saw (v13)
- Zechariah did not hide his lack of understanding; instead he asked what was going on so that he could understand what it meant (v13)
- The two olive trees were the two anointed ones (v14)
- The two anointed ones stand by the Lord (v14)
- God is the Lord of the whole earth (v14)

[Last updated 7/31/2023]

Zechariah 5

- Zechariah saw a flying roll (v1)
- The angel asked Zechariah what he saw (v2)
- Zechariah said that he saw a flying scroll that was 20 cubits long and 10 cubits high; (this is 30 feet by 15 feet) (v2)
- Instead of simply telling Zechariah what was going on, God showed him strange things and then explained the meaning of what he saw (v2)
- There is a curse that goes over the whole world (v3)
- God has placed a curse on this world (v3)
- The curse will cut off everyone who steals (v3)
- The curse will cut off everyone that swears (v3)
- One side of the roll was a message against those who stole things (v3)
- One side of the roll was a message against those who swore (v3)
- God hates stealing (v3)
- God hates swearing (v3)
- We must not steal (v3)
- We must not swear (v3)
- Those who steal are cursed (v3)
- Those who swear are cursed (v3)
- God is the one who sent the curse into the world (v4)

- God is the God of armies; God has a mighty army (v4)
- God will send the curse into the house of the thief (v4)
- God will send the curse into the house of those who swear falsely by His name (v4)
- The curse will remain in the house of the thief (v4)
- The curse will remain in the house of those who swear falsely by His name (v4)
- The curse will consume whatever house it is in, and will utterly destroy that house (v4)
- God is against those who steal (v4)
- God is against those who swear falsely by His name (v4)
- God will destroy the house of those who steal (v4)
- God will destroy the house of those who swear falsely by His name (v4)
- We must not steal (v4)
- We must not swear falsely by God's name (v4)
- The angel told Zechariah to lift up his eyes and see a new vision (v5)
- Zechariah did not understand what he saw (v6)
- Zechariah asked the angel what he was looking at (v6)
- The angel told Zechariah that he was looking at an ephah (a unit of measure of roughly a bushel, or 35 liters) (v6)
- A talent of lead was lifted up; (a talent is about 75 pounds) (v7)
- A woman was sitting in the midst of the ephah (v7)

- The angel said that the vision symbolized wickedness (v8)
- It seems that the ephah was some sort of container (v8)
- The ephah cast the lead into the mouth of the ephah (the container) (v8)
- It seems that the woman was sitting inside the container; this means the angel cast the lead inside the container, along with the woman (v8)
- Zechariah lifted up his eyes and saw two women (v9)
- The two women had wings like a stork (v9)
- The two women lifted up the ephah into the air (v9)
- Zechariah asked the angel where they were taking the ephah (the container that contained both the woman and the lead) (v10)
- Zechariah wanted to know where the wickedness was being taken to (v10)
- The ephah was being taken to the land of Shinar; this means the wickedness was being taken to Babylon (v11)
- Once the ephah was brought there it would be established; this means that wickedness would be established in Babylon (v11)
- A house was going to be built in Babylon for this wickedness; (this indicates some sort of pagan temple, with possibly an idol made out of lead) (v11)

[Last updated 7/31/2023]

Zechariah 6

- God gave another vision to Zechariah (v1)
- Zechariah saw four chariots (v1)
- The four chariots came out from between two mountains (v1)
- The mountains were made of brass (v1)
- The first chariot was pulled by red horses (v2)
- The second chariot was pulled by black horses (v2)
- The third chariot was pulled by white horses (v3)
- The fourth chariot was pulled by "bay" (brown) horses (v3)
- Zechariah did not understand the vision (v4)
- Zechariah needed someone to interpret the vision for him so that he could understand it (v4)
- There was an angel standing nearby when Zechariah saw this vision (v4)
- Zechariah asked the angel for the meaning of the vision (v4)
- The four chariots were the four spirits of the heavens (v5)
- The four spirits once stood before the Lord (v5)
- The four spirits were sent to this world (v5)
- God is the God of all the earth (v5)
- God is still the Lord of all the world, even if people do not acknowledge Him or serve Him (v5)

- There are four spirits of the heavens (v5)
- The black horses went into the north country (v6)
- The white horses followed the black horses into the north country (v6)
- The bay (brown) horses went toward the south country (v6)
- The brown horses sought permission to walk throughout the world (v7)
- God gave His permission for the brown horses to walk throughout the world (v7)
- There are times when the four spirits of the heavens walk throughout the world (v7)
- After God gave His permission, the brown horses walked throughout the world (v7)
- The devil is not the only one who walks throughout the world; the spirits of God do as well (v7)
- God has spirits that serve Him (v7)
- The spirits of God obtain God's permission before taking action (v7)
- When the brown horses went into the north country, they quieted God's spirit in the north country; (this seems to have been a good thing) (v8)
- It seems that these horses bring peace (whereas the four horses of the apocalypse, found in Revelation, take away peace) (v8)
- God sent His word to Zechariah (v9)

- God commanded Zechariah to take Heldai to the house of Josiah (v10)
- Heldai had journeyed to Zechariah from Babylon (v10)
- It seems that Zechariah was not in Babylon when this was written (v10)
- God commanded Zechariah to take Tobijah to the house of Josiah (v10)
- Tobijah had journeyed to Zechariah from Babylon (v10)
- God commanded Zechariah to take Jedaiah to the house of Josiah (v10)
- Jedaiah had journeyed to Zechariah from Babylon (v10)
- Zechariah was to take three people with him to the house of Josiah (v10)
- Josiah was the son of Zephaniah (v10)
- God commanded Zechariah to take silver and gold and make crowns (v11)
- Zechariah was to set the crowns upon the head of Joshua (v11)
- Joshua was the son of Josedech (v11)
- Josedech was the high priest (v11)
- There was a high priest in those days (v11)
- It seems that Zechariah had access to silver and gold (v11)
- It seems that Zechariah had access to someone who knew how to turn silver and gold into crowns (v11)

- It seems that Josedech the high priest was in the house of Josiah (v11)
- God commanded Zechariah to give a message to Joshua (v12)
- The message was about the BRANCH (the coming Messiah) (v12)
- The Messiah would grow up out of his place (v12)
- The Messiah would build the temple of the Lord; (this may be a reference to the millennial temple) (v12)
- God repeated that the Messiah would build the temple of the Lord (v13)
- The Messiah would bear the glory; He would be glorified (v13)
- The Messiah would sit on the throne (v13)
- The Messiah would rule from His throne (v13)
- The Messiah would be a priest (v13)
- The Messiah would be both a king and a priest (v13)
- The counsel of the Messiah would be the counsel of peace (v13)
- One crown would be given to Helem (v14)
- One crown would be given to Tobijah (v14)
- One crown would be given to Jedaiah (v14)
- One crown would be given to Hen (v14)
- Zechariah was to make five crowns (v14)
- The crowns would be for a memorial in the temple of the

Lord (v14)

- Those who were far away from Israel would come and build the temple of the Lord (v15)
- Although the Messiah will build the temple, it seems that one of the ways He will build it is by working through people who were far away (v15)
- When the Messiah comes and builds the temple of God, the people would know that this prophecy came from the Lord, and God had sent Zechariah (v15)
- All of these things would come to pass if the people diligently obeyed the voice of God (v15)
- The Lord was the God of Israel (v15)

[Last updated 8/1/2023]

Zechariah 7

- God sent His word to Zechariah in the fourth year of Darius (v1)
- Darius was king (v1)
- God sent His word to Zechariah in the ninth month (v1)
- God sent His word to Zechariah in the fourth day of the month (v1)
- God sent His word to Zechariah after Sherezer was sent to pray before the Lord (v2)
- God sent His word to Zechariah after Regemmelech was

sent to pray before the Lord (v2)

- God sent His word to Zechariah after the men of Sherezer and Regemmelech were sent to pray before the Lord (v2)
- Sherezer and Regemmelech asked the priests if they should weep in the fifth month (v3)
- Sherezer and Regemmelech asked the prophets if they should weep in the fifth month (v3)
- The people had been weeping in the fifth month for many years (v3)
- The people had been separating themselves in the fifth month for many years (v3)
- After Sherezer and Regemmelech asked the priest and the prophets if they should weep in the fifth month, God sent His word to Zechariah (v4)
- The message that God gave Zechariah was for all the people of the land (v5)
- The message that God gave Zechariah was also for the priests (v5)
- The people had been fasting in the fifth month (v5)
- The people had been mourning in the fifth month (v5)
- The people had been fasting in the seventh month (v5)
- The people had been fasting mourning in the seventh month (v5)
- The people had been fasting and mourning in the fifth and seventh month for seventy years (v5)
- Although the people had been fasting and mourning for

seventy years, they had not been doing that for God; God was not impressed by what they had been doing because they had not been doing it for Him (v5)

- The motive of why we are fasting and mourning matters to God; if we are not doing it for God then there is no point in doing it at all (v5)
- When the people ate, they ate for themselves (v6)
- When the people drank, they drank for themselves (v6)
- God does not want us to live for ourselves; instead He wants us to live for Him; this includes our eating and drinking and the activities of our life (v6)
- In the past, Jerusalem was inhabited (v7)
- In the past, Jerusalem was prosperous (v7)
- In the past, the cities around Jerusalem were inhabited (v7)
- In the past, people lived south of Jerusalem (v7)
- In the past, people lived in the plains near Jerusalem (v7)
- Things were better and more prosperous in the past than they were in the days of Zechariah (v7)
- In the past, when Jerusalem was prosperous, God sent prophets to cry out to the people (v7)
- God did not want people to fast for themselves; instead He wanted them to hear the words of the prophets that He had sent back in the days when Jerusalem was prosperous (v7)
- God wants us to hear the words of the prophets (v7)

- We should listen to what the prophets have to say (v7)
- The things that the prophets said were the words of God; He cried out to the people through them (v7)
- As long as the people ignored the words of the prophets, their fasting and mourning would not do any good (v7)
- God sent His word to Zechariah (v8)
- God is the God of armies; (He has an angelic army of great power) (v9)
- God commanded the people to execute true judgment (v9)
- God commanded the people to show mercy (v9)
- God commanded the people to show compassion on one another (v9)
- God did not want the people to fast and mourn for themselves; instead He wanted them to listen to the prophets, to do what was right, and to be merciful and compassionate to one another (v9)
- Fasting and mourning does not do any good if it is accompanied by a life of cruelty and wickedness (v9)
- We must execute true judgment (v9)
- We must show mercy (v9)
- We must show compassion on one another (v9)
- God commanded the people to not oppress widows (v10)
- God commanded the people to not oppress those who do not have a father (v10)
- Those who do not have a father are at a great

disadvantage in life (v10)

- Children need a father (v10)
- God commanded the people to not oppress the poor (v10)
- God commanded the people to not imagine evil things against other people; even the act of imagining evil is wrong (v10)
- Our thoughts can be sinful even if we never act on them (v10)
- We must learn to control our thoughts so that they honor God (v10)
- We must not oppress widows (v10)
- We must not oppress those who do not have a father (v10)
- We must not oppress the poor (v10)
- We must not imagine evil against other people (v10)
- God commanded the people to not oppress strangers (v10)
- We must not oppress strangers (v10)
- God sent His prophets to cry out to the people in the days when Jerusalem was prosperous, but the people would not listen to Him (v11)
- The people refused to execute true judgment (v11)
- The people refused to show mercy (v11)
- The people refused to show compassion (v11)

- The people refused to stop oppressing widows (v11)
- The people refused to stop oppressing the fatherless (v11)
- The people refused to stop oppressing strangers (v11)
- The people refused to stop oppressing the poor (v11)
- The people refused to stop imagining evil against others (v11)
- The people, who were living in a time of prosperity, refused to repent of their sins and refused to listen to God; instead they continued to live exceedingly wicked lives (v11)
- The people hardened their own hearts (v12)
- The people had a heart of stone (v12)
- The people refused to listen to the law of God (v12)
- The people refused to listen to the words of God, which He sent by His spirit through the prophets (v12)
- Since the people hardened their hearts, and refused to obey the law of God, and refused to hear the words of the prophets, God sent His great wrath upon the people (v12)
- There are times when God sends His wrath upon nations that are very wicked, and which harden their hearts against Him and refuse to listen (v12)
- God cried out to the people and commanded them to hear, but the people hardened their hearts and refused to listen to Him (v13)
- Since the people refused to listen to God when He cried

out to them, God refused to listen to them when they cried out to Him (v13)

- God punished the people for not listening to Him by not listening to them (v13)
- There are times when God refuses to listen to the cries of a nation, but instead deliberately ignores them (v13)
- God scattered the Jews throughout all nations (v14)
- God scattered the Jews through nations that they did not know (v14)
- God made the land of Israel desolate (v14)
- God emptied the land of Israel of people (v14)
- The reason that God scattered the Jews throughout all nations was because they hardened their heart and would not listen to God (v14)
- The reason that God made the land of Israel desolate was because the Jews hardened their heart and would not listen to God (v14)
- It is a terrible thing for a nation to refuse to listen to God (v14)
- The land of Israel had been a pleasant land before God made it desolate (v14)
- For a long time no one returned to the land of Israel, for God had made the land empty and desolate (v14)

[Last updated 8/1/2023]

Zechariah 8

- God once again sent His word to Zechariah (v1)
- God is the God of armies (v1)
- There were specific times and instances when God spoke to Zechariah (v1)
- The prophecies in this book come from the Lord; they are the word of God, which was given to Zechariah (v1)
- This book was written by Zechariah; it is a firsthand account of the word that he received from God (v1)
- God is called the "LORD of hosts" twice in two verses" (v2)
- God was very jealous over Zion (v2)
- The reason that God was filled with wrath over Zion is because He was very jealous for her; (because the Jews left him and worshiped other gods) (v2)
- There are times when God is jealous (v2)
- There are times when God is full of fury (v2)
- God can be jealous over nations (v2)
- God can be furious with nations (v2)
- God had returned to Zion (v3)
- God said that He would dwell in the midst of Jerusalem (v3)
- In the future Jerusalem would be called a city of truth; (this is most likely a reference to the millennium) (v3)

- In the future the mountain of the Lord would be a holy mountain (v3)
- In the future the city of Jerusalem would have old men (v4)
- In the future the city of Jerusalem would have old women (v4)
- It is a blessing when a city has old people in it; (if a city contains no old people then something is very wrong) (v4)
- In the future people would dwell in Jerusalem (v4)
- In the future the city of Jerusalem would be a safe place to live (v4)
- In ancient times, old people had staffs to help them walk and get around (v4)
- In the future boys would play in the streets of Jerusalem (v5)
- In the future girls would play in the streets of Jerusalem (v5)
- In ancient times children played in the streets of cities (v5)
- In the future Jerusalem would be a safe place for children to run around and play (v5)
- It is a blessing when a city has children in it; (if a city contains no children then something is very wrong) (v5)
- It seems that the people of Zechariah's time found it hard to believe that Jerusalem would be a safe place to live, that there would be old people living in it, and that one

day children would play in its streets; people doubted this promise from God and lacked faith (v6)

- God keeps His promises and does what He says He will do; even promises that seem impossible or unlikely are not difficult for God (v6)
- This section of Zechariah repeatedly calls God "the LORD of hosts", as if to remind people of God's immense power and might (v6)
- God is not limited by our circumstances; He is able to keep His promises no matter what the situation is, and He always keeps His promises (v6)
- God will rescue His people from the east country (v7)
- God will rescue His people from the west country (v7)
- God's people were captive in the east country (v7)
- God's people were captive in the west country (v7)
- God would free His captive people and bring them back to the promised land (v8)
- God's people would once again dwell in Jerusalem (v8)
- The people of Israel would be God's people (v8)
- God would be the God of Israel (v8)
- There would be truth in Israel (v8)
- There would be righteousness in Israel (v8)
- Israel would not always be rebellious and wicked; one day the land would be filled with truth and righteousness (v8)
- This prophecy was given the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid (v9)

- God commanded His people to be strong as they rebuilt the temple; He wanted them to continue working on the temple and to finish it (v9)
- Before the Jews started rebuilding the temple, there were no jobs available for anyone (man or animal) (v10)
- Before the Jews started rebuilding the temple, there was no peace for those who left their home or went back to their home; there was no peace in the land (v10)
- Before the Jews started rebuilding the temple, the people were greatly afflicted (v10)
- The reason the people were greatly afflicted was because God afflicted them; God stirred up people and set everyone against everyone else, so that they would fight and be hostile to one another (v10)
- There are times when God afflicts people (v10)
- There are times when God removes peace from a city (v10)
- There are times when God stirs up a city so that it is at war with itself (v10)
- God has the ability to send peace, and to remove peace (v10)
- Peace is a gift from God (v10)
- Jobs are a gift from God (v10)
- The Jews started laying the foundation of the temple at a time when there was no peace and the people were greatly afflicted (v10)
- The Jews had to step out on faith and lay the foundation

of the temple in spite of their terrible circumstances; they did not lay the foundation of the temple in good and prosperous times (v10)

- Only a remnant of the Jews were left; (this seems to be talking about the remnant that lived in Judah) (v11)
- Since the people had laid the foundation of the temple, God was going to treat them differently (v11)
- God afflicted the Jews until they started rebuilding His temple (v11)
- The Jews had to start rebuilding the temple before their circumstances would change; they first had to obey the Lord (v11)
- In the future, seeds would prosper and grow (v12)
- In the future, vines would yield fruit (v12)
- In the future, plants would grow (v12)
- In the future, there would be dew on the ground (v12)
- In the future, God would bless the remnant that remained (v12)
- God has the power to cause plants to grow and yield their fruit; He can also withhold it (v12)
- God has the power to water the ground; He can also withhold water (v12)
- There are times when God causes plants to grow, and there are times when God prevents plants from growing (v12)
- There are times when God waters the ground, and there are times when God withholds water (v12)

- One of the ways that God curses nations is by withholding His blessings from crops (v12)
- One of the ways that God blesses nations is by blessing their crops (v12)
- God has control over a nation's food supply (v12)
- In the past, the nations cursed the Jews (v13)
- In the past, the house of Judah was cursed (v13)
- In the past, the house of Israel was cursed (v13)
- In the future, God would save the Jews; He would save the house of Judah and the house of Israel (v13)
- In the future, the Jews would be a blessing to the nations (v13)
- God commanded the Jews to not be afraid, but to be strong and to continue working on the temple (v13)
- God blessed the Jews when they were obedient, and cursed them when they were not (just as He said He would in the Mosaic law) (v13)
- In the past, the Jews provoked God (v14)
- When the Jews provoked God with their wickedness and their hardness of heart, God became angry (v14)
- In the past, God punished the Jews for their wickedness (v14)
- God did not change His mind and decide to not punish the Jews; instead He punished them for their evil, just as He said He would (v14)
- In the future, God would bless the city of Jerusalem (v15)

- In the future, God would bless the house of Judah (v15)
- God commanded the Jews to not be afraid (v15)
- God commanded the Jews to speak the truth to one another (v16)
- God commanded the Jews to execute true judgment (v16)
- God commanded the Jews to be at peace (v16)
- We must speak the truth to one another (v16)
- We must execute true judgment (v16)
- We must be at peace with one another (v16)
- It is wrong to lie to one another (v16)
- It is wrong to wage war with one another without cause (v16)
- It is wrong to corrupt justice and be unjust (v16)
- God commanded the Jews to not plot evil against one another (v17)
- It is wrong for us to imagine evil against others, or to plot evil (v17)
- God commanded the Jews to not love false oaths (v17)
- It is wrong for us to swear falsely, and to make an oath of lies (v17)
- God hates lies (v17)
- God hates injustice (v17)
- God hates those who wage unjust wars (v17)

- God hates those who imagine evil plans against others (v17)
- God hates those who make lying oaths (v17)
- We must not do things that God hates (v17)
- We must learn what things God hates so that we do not do them (v17)
- God once again sent His word to Zechariah (v18)
- The Jews fasted in the fourth month (v19)
- The Jews fasted in the fifth month (v19)
- The Jews fasted in the seventh month (v19)
- The Jews fasted in the tenth month (v19)
- In the future the fast in the fourth month was to be an occasion of joy, gladness, and cheerfulness; it would become a cheerful feast instead of a fast (v19)
- In the future the fast in the fifth month was to be an occasion of joy, gladness, and cheerfulness; it would become a cheerful feast instead of a fast (v19)
- In the future the fast in the seventh month was to be an occasion of joy, gladness, and cheerfulness; it would become a cheerful feast instead of a fast (v19)
- In the future the fast in the tenth month was to be an occasion of joy, gladness, and cheerfulness; it would become a cheerful feast instead of a fast (v19)
- The Jews held a national fast four times a year (v19)
- God commanded the Jews to love truth (v19)
- God commanded the Jews to love peace (v19)

- We must love truth (v19)
- We must love peace (v19)
- God was going to turn their times of fasting into times of feasting and joy (v19)
- In the future, people would return to the land of Judah (v20)
- In the future, people would inhabit many cities in the land of Judah (v20)
- In the future, people would go before the Lord and pray (v21)
- In the future, people would seek the Lord (v21)
- In the future, the inhabitants of one city would go to another city and ask that city to join them to go before the Lord and pray and seek Him (v21)
- In the future, the cities of Judah would seek the Lord (v21)
- In the future there would be strong nations (v22)
- In the future, many people from outside of Israel would go to Jerusalem to seek the Lord and to pray before Him (v22)
- In the future, many strong nations would go to Jerusalem to seek the Lord and to pray before Him (v22)
- In the future, both people and nations would travel to Jerusalem to seek the Lord and to pray before Him (v22)
- In the future, both Jews and Gentiles would seek the Lord (v22)
- In the future, different nations would still speak different

languages (v23)

- In the future, people would grab the Jews so that they could go with them to Jerusalem, because they knew that God was with the Jews (v23)
- In the future, the Gentile nations would seek God (v23)
- In the future, the Gentile nations would know that God was with the Jews (v23)

[Last updated 8/2/2023]

Zechariah 9

- The prophecy in this chapter is called a burden (v1)
- The prophecy in this chapter came from the Lord; it was the word of the Lord (v1)
- The prophecy in this chapter is about Hadrach and Damascus; (Hadrach was the king of Damascus) (v1)
- There are times when God gives prophecies regarding Gentile nations (v1)
- This will take place when the eyes of man are toward the Lord (v1)
- This will take place when the eyes of all of the tribes of Israel are toward the Lord (v1)
- When this prophecy takes place, Hamath will be nearby; (Hamath was a city north of Damascus in Syria) (v2)
- When this prophecy takes place, Tyrus will have a

reputation for wisdom (v2)

- When this prophecy takes place, Zidon will have a reputation for wisdom (v2)
- This prophecy involves Damascus, Hamath, Tyrus, and Zidon (v2)
- When this prophecy takes place, the city of Tyrus will have turned itself into a stronghold (v3)
- When this prophecy takes place, the city of Tyrus will have an abundance of silver (v3)
- When this prophecy takes place, the city of Tyrus will have an abundance of gold (v3)
- When this prophecy takes place, the city of Tyrus will be exceedingly wealthy (v3)
- The Lord is going to destroy the city of Tyrus (v4)
- The wealth of Tyrus will not save the city from the wrath of God; its riches, its silver, and its gold will be unable to deliver it (v4)
- Riches cannot save you from the wrath of God (v4)
- Silver and gold cannot save you from the wrath of God (v4)
- The Lord is going to smite the power of Tyrus in the sea (v4)
- The city of Tyrus will be by the sea (v4)
- The city of Tyrus will be devoured with fire (v4)
- The prosperity of Tyrus did not mean that God approved of the city or was favorable toward it; instead God was

angry with the city and was going to devour it with fire (v4)

- Just because a city is prosperous does not mean God is favorable toward that city (v4)
- There are times when God pours out His wrath upon cities and destroys them (v4)
- The wrath of God may come during a time of great prosperity (v4)
- Ashkelon will see the destruction of Tyrus and become afraid; (Ashkelon was a Philistine city) (v5)
- Gaza will see the destruction of Tyrus and become sad; (Gaza was a Philistine city) (v5)
- Ekron will see the destruction of Tyrus and be ashamed; (Ekron was a Philistine city) (v5)
- When Tyrus is destroyed, the Philistine government will be destroyed as well; the king of Gaza will perish (v5)
- When Tyrus is destroyed, the Philistine city of Ashkelon will be destroyed as well; it will no longer be inhabited (v5)
- There are times when other cities see the wrath that God has poured out on someone else, and become afraid (v5)
- There are times when other cities see the wrath that God has poured out on someone else, and become sorrowful (v5)
- There are times when other cities see the wrath that God has poured out on someone else, and become ashamed (v5)

- When this prophecy takes place, the cities of the Philistines will have a relationship with the city of Tyrus (v5)
- When this prophecy takes place, a bastard will live in Ashdod (v6)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will cut off the pride of the Philistines (v6)
- This judgment will impact both Tyrus and the cities of the Philistines (v6)
- There are times when God pours out His wrath upon the Gentiles (v6)
- There are times when God pours out His wrath upon nations that do not have a covenant relationship with him (v6)
- When this prophecy takes place, the Philistines will be a bloody people (v7)
- When this prophecy takes place, the Philistines will be guilty of abominations (v7)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will put an end to the wicked behavior of the Philistines (v7)
- When this prophecy takes place, those who remain will worship the Lord and serve Him (v7)
- God compares those who survive this judgment to the governor of Judah (v7)
- God compares those in Ekron who survive this judgment to Jebusites (v7)
- There are some people who will survive this judgment

(v7)

- When this prophecy takes place, God will encamp around His house (the temple) (v8)
- When this prophecy takes place, there will be a temple in Jerusalem (v8)
- The reason God will encamp around His temple is because of an approaching army (v8)
- The reason God will encamp around His temple is because of people who are passing by (v8)
- The reason God will encamp around His temple is because of people who are returning (v8)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will no longer allow any oppressors to pass through Judah any longer; (this indicates that this prophecy has to do with the millennium, or perhaps the period after the millennium) (v8)
- It seems that this prophecy takes place when God is dwelling in the midst of His people (v8)
- God commanded the daughter of Zion to shout (v9)
- God commanded the daughters of Jerusalem to shout (v9)
- The reason God commanded people to shout is because the King of the Jews was coming (v9)
- It is good to rejoice over the things that God is going to do in the future (v9)
- God wanted His people to rejoice over the fact that their King was coming (v9)

- God told His people in advance that their King was coming (v9)
- The King of the Jews (the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ) was just (v9)
- The King of the Jews brought salvation with Him (v9)
- We are saved by the Lord Jesus Christ; He is the source of our salvation (v9)
- The King of the Jews is lowly (humble) (v9)
- The King of the Jews would enter Jerusalem while riding on a donkey (v9)
- The King of the Jews would enter Jerusalem while riding on a young foal (v9)
- God gave the prophecy of the triumphant entry of Christ into Jerusalem hundreds of years before it took place (v9)
- God was going to cut off the chariot from Ephraim; He was going to destroy their military might (v10)
- God was going to cut off the horse from Jerusalem; He was going to destroy their military might (v10)
- God was going to destroy the battle bow; He was going to destroy all military might (v10)
- Jesus was going to speak peace unto the heathen (the Gentiles) (v10)
- The dominion of Jesus was going to be from sea to sea (v10)
- The dominion of Jesus was going to be from the river (Jordan) to the ends of the earth (v10)

- One day Jesus will rule over this world (v10)
- One day Jesus will put an end to war, and bring peace to this world (v10)
- God is going to free the prisoners from the pit that contains no water; this was going to be done by the blood of their covenant (the covenant of Moses); this seems to point to the redemptive work of Christ (v11)
- God commanded the prisoners to turn to the stronghold (v12)
- The prisoners were to have hope, for God was going to free them (v12)
- God said that He would give double to the prisoners that He was going to free; (this seems to be a good thing) (v12)
- God was going to rule over Judah (v13)
- God was going to rule over Ephraim (v13)
- God was going to raise up the sons of the Jews (v13)
- God was going to use Judah as a weapon against the sons of the Greeks (v13)
- God was going to use Ephraim as a weapon against the sons of the Greeks (v13)
- In the future there would be a conflict between the Jews and the Greeks, and God was going to wield the Jews against the Greeks (v13)
- God was going to turn Judah and Ephraim into weapons; He compares them to the sword of a mighty man (v13)
- There are times when God uses the Jews as mightily

weapons against Gentile nations (v13)

- There are times when God uses nations as weapons, and as instruments of His wrath (v13)
- The Lord will be seen over Judah and Ephraim (v14)
- The arrow of the Lord will go forth; God compares it to lightning (v14)
- The Lord will blow the trumpet (v14)
- The Lord will go with the whirlwinds of the south (v14)
- The day is coming when the Lord will go out to battle against the Greeks (v14)
- The Lord is mighty and powerful (v14)
- The Lord of hosts will defend the Jews (v15)
- Because God will defend the Jews, they will devour the Greeks (v15)
- Because God will defend the Jews, they will overcome their enemy with stones thrown from a sling (v15)
- It seems that this battle will take place in a world that does not have modern technology; the Jews will fight against the Greeks using stones, which are very primitive weapons (v15)
- The army of the Jews will drink, and will make a noise that will sound like people enraged by drinking wine (v15)
- The army of the Jews will be filled (v15)
- When this prophecy takes place, the Jews will worship the Lord; He will be their God (v16)
- In that day God will save the Jews (v16)

- In that day the Jews will be the flock of God (v16)
- God compares the Jews of that time to stones in a crown (v16)
- In that day God will lift up the Jews (v16)
- The land of Israel belongs to the Lord; God said that it was His land (v16)
- God compares the Jews of that tie to an ensign (a military banner) (v16)
- The goodness of God is great (v17)
- The beauty of God is great (v17)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will give corn to the young men (v17)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will give new wine to the maids (v17)
- Corn makes young men cheerful (v17)
- New wine makes maids cheerful (v17)
- Corn is a blessing from God (v17)
- New wine is a blessing from God (v17)
- It is good to eat corn (v17)
- It is good to drink wine (v17)
- Drinking wine is not a sin; instead it is a blessing from God, and it make the heart cheerful (v17)

[Last updated 8/3/2023]

Zechariah 10

- In the day when God saves Israel, He commands the people to ask Him for rain in the time of latter rain; if they ask then He will make bright clouds and give them showers of rain, so that grass will grow in the field (v1)
- If we need something, and it is the right time for that thing to come to pass, then we should ask for it (v1)
- It is important to ask God for the things that we need (v1)
- God controls the rain; He has the power to give us rain (v1)
- There are times when God answers people's prayers for rain, and gives them the rain that they seek (v1)
- The things that idols have said are empty and worthless; idols cannot be trusted (v2)
- The things that diviners have said are lies; diviners cannot be trusted (v2)
- The diviners have spoken of dreams that they had, but those dreams were false (v2)
- Some dreams are lies and cannot be trusted; not all dreams are true (v2)
- The comfort that idols give is empty and worthless (v2)
- The comfort that diviners give is empty and worthless (v2)
- The comfort that comes from false dreams is empty and worthless (v2)
- Since idols and diviners were worthless, the people went

away and were troubled (v2)

- Since there was no shepherd to guide the people, the people went away and were troubled (v2)
- People need a shepherd (v2)
- People need comfort (v2)
- People need guidance (v2)
- When this prophecy takes place, there were shepherds; however, they were worthless shepherds that did not take care of the people (v3)
- God was angry with the worthless shepherds who did not take care of His people (v3)
- God holds the shepherds of His people accountable (v3)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will punish the goats; (the goats are those who are not His people, as opposed to the sheep who hear His voice) (v3)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will visit His flock (v3)
- The flock that God will visit is the house of Judah (v3)
- God compares the house of Judah to a quality horse that is ready for battle (v3)
- The cornerstone comes from God (v4)
- The nail that holds everything together comes from God (v4)
- The battle bow comes from God; God is the one that stirs up nations and calls them to battle (v4)
- Oppressors come from God; God is the one who sends

trouble upon nations (v4)

- When this prophecy takes place, the people of Judah will become mighty men (v5)
- When this prophecy takes place, the people of Judah will tread down their enemies (v5)
- The reason the people of Judah will tread down their enemies is because God will be with them (v5)
- When this prophecy takes place, those who ride upon horses against the Jews will be confounded (v5)
- When this prophecy takes place, modern technology will not exist; the war will be fought with riders upon horses, instead of with modern weapons; the streets will also be made of dirt, and will be full of mire (v5)
- God has the power to give victory in battle; if He is with an army then they will triumph (v5)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will strengthen the house of Judah (v6)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will save the house of Joseph (v6)
- when this prophecy takes place, God will bring the Jews back to the promised land (v6)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will have mercy upon the Jews (v6)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will bless the Jews; it will be as if He had never cast them off (v6)
- God cast off the Jews for a time, but not forever; one day He will have mercy on them and will greatly bless them

(v6)

- God is the God of the Jews; this is true even in times when they are in rebellion against Him, for they are His people (v6)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will hear the Jews (v6)
- When this prophecy takes place, the people of Ephraim will become mighty men in battle (v7)
- When this prophecy takes place, the people of Ephraim will rejoice as people who have been drinking wine (v7)
- Drinking wine makes the heart rejoice (v7)
- When this prophecy takes place, the children of the people of Ephraim will see all these things and will be glad (v7)
- When this prophecy takes place, the children of the people of Ephraim will see all these things and will rejoice in the Lord (v7)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will hiss against the enemies of the Jews for their sake (v8)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will gather the Jews back to the promised land (v8)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will redeem the Jews (v8)
- When this prophecy takes place, the Jews will be increased; they will multiply (v8)
- God has a great and blessed future in store for His people; they will not always be cast off (v8)

- When this prophecy takes place, God will sow the Jews among the nations (v9)
- When this prophecy takes place, there will be Jews in distant nations (v9)
- When this prophecy takes place, the Jews who live in distant nations will remember God (v9)
- When this prophecy takes place, the Jews will live with their children (v9)
- When this prophecy takes place, the Jews will return to God (v9)
- When this prophecy takes place, there will be Jews in Egypt (v10)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will bring the Jews out of the land of Egypt (v10)
- When this prophecy takes place, there will be Jews in Assyria (v10)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will bring the Jews out of the land of Assyria (v10)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will bring the Jews to Gilead (v10)
- When this prophecy takes place, Gilead will be part of Israel (v10)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will bring the Jews to Lebanon (v10)
- When this prophecy takes place, Lebanon will be part of Israel (v10)
- When this prophecy takes place, the Jews will reside in

Israel; they will no longer have a place among the Gentile nations (v10)

- When this prophecy takes place, the enemies of God will pass through the sea with affliction (for God will afflict them) (v11)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will smite the waves of the sea (v11)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will dry up the river (v11)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will bring down the pride of Assyria (v11)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will destroy the Egyptian government (v11)
- There are times when God destroys governments (v11)
- There are times when God destroys the pride of nations (v11)
- There are times when God dries up rivers (v11)
- There are times when God smites the sea (v11)
- God has the power to destroy governments (v11)
- God has the power to destroy the pride of nations (v11)
- God has the power to dry up rivers (v11)
- God has the power to smite the sea (v11)
- When this prophecy takes place, God will strengthen the Jews; they will be strong in the Lord (v12)
- When this prophecy takes place, the Jews will walk up and down in His name; they will worship Him and serve

Him (v12)

[Last updated 8/3/2023]

Zechariah 11

- God gave Zechariah a prophecy about Lebanon (v1)
- Lebanon was home to many cedar trees (v1)
- God was going to set a fire in Lebanon that would burn down that country's cedar trees (v1)
- There are times when God judges nations with fire (v1)
- The cedar trees of Lebanon were going to fall (v2)
- The might and power of Lebanon was going to be spoiled (v2)
- The oaks of Bashan were going to be destroyed (v2)
- The old forest was going to come down (v2)
- God was going to target the pride and wealth of Lebanon for destruction (v2)
- There are times when God destroys trees as an act of judgment (v2)
- When this judgment comes to pass, the shepherds will howl (v3)
- The reason the shepherds will howl is because their glory has been spoiled (v3)
- There are times when God humbles nations (v3)

- There are times when God humbles individuals (v3)
- There are times when God spoils the glory of nations (v3)
- When this judgment comes to pass, the pride of Jordan will be spoiled (v3)
- In this judgment, young lions will roar (v3)
- The flocks of Lebanon were going to be slaughtered (v4)
- The flocks of Lebanon were being fed (fatted) in preparation for slaughter (v4)
- The flocks of Lebanon seem to be a reference to people, who were going to be slaughtered (v4)
- In Lebanon there were oppressors who were killing innocent people (v5)
- The oppressors who were killing innocent people did not feel guilty about it; they killed people without shame (v5)
- In Lebanon there were oppressors who were selling people into slavery (v5)
- The oppressors who were selling people into slavery did not feel guilty about it; they felt no shame (v5)
- It is wrong to kill innocent people (v5)
- It is wrong to sell people into slavery (v5)
- We must not kill innocent people (v5)
- We must not sell people into slavery (v5)
- The wicked people of Lebanon were saying "Bless the Lord" as they murdered innocent people (v5)
- The wicked people of Lebanon were saying "Bless the

Lord" as they sold people into slavery (v5)

- The wicked people of Lebanon were praising God as they did utterly vile things that God hated (v5)
- The shepherds of the people did not pity their flocks, but instead oppressed and killed them (v5)
- The wicked people of Lebanon became very rich from the evil things they were doing (v5)
- There are times when people can become rich by doing evil things (v5)
- Just because a person is rich does not mean God is with them, or that God approves of what they are doing (v5)
- Because the people of Lebanon were so wicked, God was not going to pity the inhabitants of that country (v6)
- There are times when God takes pity on a nation (v6)
- There are times when God no longer takes pity on a nation (v6)
- God was going to punish Lebanon for its wickedness by delivering each person into the hands of their neighbor (v6)
- God was going to punish Lebanon for its wickedness by delivering each person into the hands of their king (v6)
- The people of Lebanon would smite the land and destroy it (v6)
- The king would smite the land and destroy it (v6)
- God was not going to deliver Lebanon from its enemies (v6)

- God was not going to deliver Lebanon from destruction (v6)
- There are times when God punishes nations for their sins (v6)
- God was going to feed the flock, which was about to be slaughtered (v7)
- Zechariah took two staves (v7)
- One stave was named Beauty (v7)
- One stave was named Bands (v7)
- Zechariah fed the flock (as a symbolic representation of what God was going to do to Lebanon) (v7)
- As a part of this prophecy, God was going to kill three shepherds in one month (v8)
- God loathed the soul of those three wicked shepherds (v8)
- The three wicked shepherds that God was going to kill abhorred God (v8)
- God was going to punish Lebanon by not feeding them (v9)
- God was going to let the people of Lebanon die; He was not going to save them (v9)
- When this judgment comes against Lebanon, people will eat one another (v9)
- God is the one who gives food to the nations (v9)
- There are times when God punishes nations by withholding food from them (v9)

- Zechariah took the staff which was named Beauty and destroyed it (v10)
- The breaking of the staff was symbolic of God breaking the covenant that He had made with the people; since the people were wicked and did not keep the covenant, God ended it (v10)
- The staff which was named Beauty symbolized the covenant that God had with His people (v10)
- When Zechariah broke the staff, the people who were around him knew that this was a word from God (v11)
- Zechariah told the people to give him whatever price they thought was fair (v12)
- The people gave Zechariah thirty pieces of silver (v12)
- God mocked the price that the people had paid Zechariah; (30 pieces of silver was the fine paid for a slave that was killed) (v13)
- God commanded Zechariah to cast the thirty pieces of silver to the potter (v13)
- Zechariah casted the thirty pieces of silver to the potter in the house of the Lord (v13)
- Zechariah took the staff which was named Bands and destroyed it (v14)
- The breaking of the staff was symbolic of God destroying the brotherhood between Judah and Israel; since the people were exceedingly wicked, God destroyed that relationship (v14)
- The staff which was named Bands symbolized the brotherhood between Judah and Israel (v14)

- There are times when God punishes nations by destroying their relationship with other nations (v14)
- God commanded Zechariah to take up the instruments of a foolish shepherd (v15)
- God said that He was going to raise up a wicked shepherd; (this seems to be a reference to the antichrist) (v16)
- This wicked shepherd will not visit those that are cut off (v16)
- It is good to visit those that have been cut off (v16)
- We should visit those that have been cut off (v16)
- This wicked shepherd will not seek out the young (v16)
- It is good to seek out those who are young (v16)
- We should seek out those who are young (v16)
- This wicked shepherd will not seek to heal that which is broken (v16)
- It is good to heal that which is broken (v16)
- We should heal that which is broken (v16)
- This wicked shepherd will not feed the flock (v16)
- It is good to feed the flock (v16)
- Shepherds should feed their flock and care for them (v16)
- This wicked shepherd would eat the flesh and the fat; (under the Mosaic Law it was forbidden to eat the fat of the sacrifice) (v16)
- This wicked shepherd would tear people into pieces (v16)

- God pronounces woe upon shepherds who leave their flock (v17)
- Shepherds must not leave their flock; instead shepherds need to take care of them (v17)
- The wicked shepherd (the antichrist) will have a sword injury on his right arm (v17)
- The wicked shepherd (the antichrist) will have a sword injury on his right eye (v17)
- The right arm of the wicked shepherd (the antichrist) will be dried up (v17)
- The right eye of the wicked shepherd (the antichrist) will be blind (v17)

[Last updated 8/4/2023]

Zechariah 12

- God gave Zechariah another prophecy (v1)
- This prophecy has to do with Israel (v1)
- This prophecy is the word of the Lord; it came from God (v1)
- God is the one who stretched out the heavens; (this is a recurring theme in the Bible) (v1)
- God is the one who laid the foundation of the earth (v1)
- God is the one who formed the spirit of man within him (v1)

- The heavens have been stretched out (v1)
- The earth has a foundation (v1)
- People have a spirit within them (v1)
- The power of God is unimaginable (v1)
- God was going to make Jerusalem a cup of trembling for the surrounding nations (v2)
- The day was coming when the nations would besiege Judah (v2)
- The day was coming when the nations would besiege Jerusalem (v2)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God would make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all nations (v3)
- All nations that burdened themselves with Jerusalem would be cut into pieces (v3)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, all of the nations in the world would gather together against Jerusalem (v3)
- Although all nations would gather against Jerusalem, they would not be victorious; instead God would cut them into pieces (v3)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will smite every horse with madness (v4)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will smite every rider with madness (v4)
- God has the power to smite animals with madness (v4)
- God has the power to smite people with madness (v4)
- When this prophecy is fulfilled, wars will be fought with

ancient weapons (horses); it seems that modern technology will not exist at that time (v4)

- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will smite every horse with blindness (v4)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will open the eyes of the Jews (v4)
- There are times when God intervenes in battle (v4)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, there will be multiple governors in Judah (v5)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the strength of the Jews will rest in the Lord (v5)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the Lord will be the God of the Jews (v5)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the governors of Judah will rely on the strength of the inhabitants of Jerusalem (v5)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will make the governors of Judah like fire among wood (v6)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will empower the governors of Judah to devour the surrounding nations (v6)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, Jerusalem will once again be inhabited (v6)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the first people that God will save are the inhabitants of Judah (v7)
- The reason God will save the inhabitants of Judah first is so that other people do not magnify themselves against

Judah; specifically, God does not want the house of David or the inhabitants of Jerusalem to magnify themselves above Judah (v7)

- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem (v8)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, Jerusalem will exist (v8)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, all the nations of the world will come against Jerusalem (v8)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, people will live in Jerusalem (v8)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the feeble people of Jerusalem will fight as David did (v8)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the people of the house of David will fight as angels (v8)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will mightily empower the inhabitants of Jerusalem; they will act with superhuman strength, far beyond their normal capabilities (v8)
- One of the ways that God can fight for a nation is by enabling its people to do things that are beyond their capabilities (v8)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem (v9)
- It is a very bad thing to wage war against Jerusalem; there are serious consequences for waging war against the people of God (v9)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will pour out His

grace upon the house of David (v10)

- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will pour out His grace upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem (v10)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will pour out a spirit of supplication upon the house of David (v10)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will pour out a spirit of supplication upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem (v10)
- The day is coming when God will bestow His grace upon the Jews (v10)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the Jews will finally repent and believe in Jesus; they will bitterly mourn over the death of Jesus and will realize what they had done (v10)
- The reason the Jews will finally repent and believe on Jesus is because God will bestow His grace upon them (v10)
- The day is coming when the Jews will believe in Jesus (v10)
- The day is coming when the Jews will bitterly mourn over Jesus (v10)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, there will be tremendous mourning in Jerusalem; the people will mourn over the Messiah (the Lord Jesus Christ) (v11)
- God compares this mourning to the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon (v11)
- When the Jews finally repent, they will mourn over what they had done; it will be a very great and a very bitter

mourning (v11)

- When this prophecy comes to pass, the land will mourn (v12)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, every family will separate themselves and mourn (v12)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the house of David will mourn by themselves (v12)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the men will mourn separately from the women (v12)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the house of Nathan will mourn by themselves (v12)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the house of David will still exist (v12)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the house of Nathan will still exist (v12)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, people will still have wives (v12)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the house of Levi will mourn by themselves (v13)
- The wives of the house of Levi will mourn separately from the men (v13)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the house of Shimei will mourn by themselves (v13)
- The wives of the house of Shimei will mourn separately from the men (v13)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, the house of Levi will still exist (v13)

- When this prophecy comes to pass, the house of Shimei will still exist (v13)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, all of the families will mourn for the Messiah (v14)
- This prophecy repeatedly emphasizes the fact that the wives will mourn separately from their husbands (v14)
- This prophecy repeatedly emphasizes the fact that each family will mourn separately (v14)

[Last updated 8/4/2023]

Zechariah 13

- When this prophecy comes to pass, a fountain will be opened to the house of David (v1)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, a fountain will be opened to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (v1)
- This fountain will cleanse people of sin (v1)
- This fountain will cleanse people of uncleanness (v1)
- In the end times, God will cleanse the house of David from sin (v1)
- In the end times, God will cleanse the inhabitants of Jerusalem from sin (v1)
- The house of David will still exist in the end times (v1)
- The Jews will still inhabit Jerusalem in the end times (v1)
- In the end God is going to save the Jews; He will forgive

their sins and wash away their uncleanness (v1)

- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will destroy the names of the idols that are in Israel; the idols will be forgotten (v2)
- In the end times there will be idols in Israel (v2)
- In the end times God will destroy the idols that are in Israel (v2)
- In the end times God will cause the Jews to forget about the idols that once existed in the land (v2)
- God is not only going to destroy idols; He is also going to destroy the very memory of those idols (v2)
- There are times when God destroys something by not only destroying it, but by going further and destroying the very memory of that thing (v2)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will put an end to prophets; He will remove all prophets from the land of Israel; (based on verse 4 this seems to be a reference to false prophets) (v2)
- When this prophecy comes to pass, God will remove all unclean spirits from the land of Israel (v2)
- God hates idols (v2)
- God hates idolatry (v2)
- Before this prophecy came to pass there were unclean spirits in Israel (v2)
- Unclean spirits exist; they are real things (v2)
- After this prophecy comes to pass, there will be no more prophets; (based on verse 4 this seems to be a reference

to false prophets) (v3)

- After this prophecy comes to pass, if anyone prophesies lies their own parents will kill him on the spot for being a false prophet (v3)
- After this prophecy comes to pass, false prophets who lie in the name of the Lord and will be killed (v3)
- The punishment for being a false prophet is death (v3)
- False prophets are lying in the name of the Lord (v3)
- Telling lies in the name of the Lord is a very serious sin (v3)
- After this prophecy comes to pass, people will not tolerate those who lie in the name of the Lord (v3)
- After this prophecy comes to pass, parents will not tolerate their own children telling lies in the name of the Lord (v3)
- Before this prophecy came to pass there were false prophets in Israel (v4)
- The false prophets wore rough garments in order to deceive people (v4)
- False prophets deliberately try to deceive people (v4)
- After this prophecy comes to pass, false prophets will be ashamed of what they had done (v4)
- After this prophecy comes to pass, false prophets will no longer try to deceive people; they will stop being false prophets (v4)
- It is very bad to be a false prophets (v4)

- We must not be a false prophet (v4)
- We must not tell lies in the name of the Lord (v4)
- God is angry with those who tell lies in His name (v4)
- After this prophecy comes to pass, the false prophets will admit that they are not prophets at all (v5)
- After this prophecy comes to pass, the false prophets will admit that instead of being a prophet they actually raise livestock, and had done so from their childhood (v5)
- In the end times people will raise livestock (v5)
- When this prophecy comes to pass and people ask false prophets where their scars came from, the false prophets will admit that they got the wounds from the house of their friends; their wounds did not come from persecution and had no special meaning (v6)
- It seems that in the end times, false prophets will use their scars to claim that they are genuine prophets; however, that evidence is a lie (v6)
- God commanded the sword to wake up against His shepherd (the Messiah) (v7)
- God calls the Messiah "my fellow"; the Messiah is equal to God (v7)
- God commanded the sword to smite His shepherd (the Messiah); the Messiah would die (v7)
- God said that when the Messiah was smitten, the sheep would be scattered; (this is a reference to the disciples fleeing, which came to pass) (v7)
- God said that after the Messiah died, He would turn His

hand against children (v7)

- In the end times, two thirds of the Jews would be cut off and die (v8)
- In the end times, one third of the Jews would be saved (v8)
- Not all of the Jews would die in the end times, some of them would be saved and enter into the Millennium (v8)
- The devil will be unable to kill all of the Jews (v8)
- In the end times, the one third of Jews who are not killed will pass through the fire (the tribulation period) (v9)
- In the end times, the one third of Jews who are not killed will be refined as silver is refined (v9)
- In the end times, the one third of Jews who are not killed will be tried as gold is tried (v9)
- In the end times, the one third of Jews who are not killed will call upon the name of the Lord (v9)
- When the Jews call upon the name of the Lord, He will hear them; they will be His people and He will be their God (v9)
- In the end God will save the Jews; two thirds will be killed, but one third will call upon the name of the Lord and be saved (v9)

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Zechariah 14

- The day of the Lord is coming; (this is a reference to the tribulation) (v1)
- When the day of the Lord comes, the Jews will spoil those who come against them (v1)
- In the tribulation, all nations will gather against Jerusalem to wage war against the city (v2)
- The reason all nations will gather against Jerusalem is because God will gather them (v2)
- In the tribulation, all nations will be involved in fighting against Jerusalem (v2)
- In the tribulation, the city of Jerusalem will be conquered; the Jews will be unable to overcome the combined armies of the entire world (v2)
- When the city of Jerusalem is conquered, the houses of the city will be looted (v2)
- When the city of Jerusalem is conquered, the women of the city will be raped (v2)
- When the city of Jerusalem is conquered, half of the city will be taken as slaves (v2)
- When the city of Jerusalem is conquered, the rest of the Jews will remain in the city (v2)
- After the city of Jerusalem is conquered, God will go forth and fight against the nations (v3)
- There will be consequences for the nations that fought against Jerusalem and conquered the city: God Himself will fight against them (v3)

- In the day that God goes to battle against the nations, His feet will stand upon the mount of Olives; (this is a reference to the return of Jesus at the end of the tribulation) (v4)
- The mount of Olives is located to the east of Jerusalem (v4)
- When Jesus returns and stands upon the mount of Olives, the mountain will split into two (v4)
- When Jesus returns and stands upon the mount of Olives, half of the mountain will move toward the north (v4)
- When Jesus returns and stands upon the mount of Olives, half of the mountain will move toward the south (v4)
- When Jesus returns and stands upon the mount of Olives, a great valley will form where the mount of Olives once stood (v4)
- The valley will go from the east to the west; the mountain will be split, with part on the north and part on the south (v4)
- When Jesus returns, the Jews will flee to the valley of the mountains (v5)
- The valley of the mountains will reach to Azal (v5)
- There was a mighty earthquake in the days of Uzziah (v5)
- Uzziah was king (v5)
- Uzziah was the king of Judah (v5)
- Jesus is the Lord; He is God (v5)
- Jesus is going to return (v5)

- When Jesus returns, He will bring all of the saints with Him (v5)
- When Jesus returns, the Jews will flee as they fled in the days of the earthquake that happened during the reign of Uzziah (v5)
- When Jesus returns, the light will not be clear (v6)
- When Jesus returns, it will not be dark (v6)
- When Jesus returns, it will be neither day nor night (v7)
- The day when Jesus returns will be a special day, unlike other days that came before it; it will be a day that is known to the Lord (v7)
- On the evening of the day when Jesus returns, it will be light (v7)
- When Jesus returns, living waters will go forth out of Jerusalem (v8)
- Half of the living waters will go toward the former sea (v8)
- Half of the living waters will go toward the hider sea (v8)
- The living waters will flow in summer (v8)
- The living waters will flow in winter (v8)
- In the end times God will be king over all the world; (this is looking forward to the earthly reign of Jesus) (v9)
- There is only one God, and His name is one (v9)
- When Jesus returns, all of the land between Geba and Rimmon will be turned into a plain (v10)
- When Jesus returns, the topography of Israel will be

dramatically altered (v10)

- Jerusalem is going to be lifted up (v10)
- Jerusalem will be inhabited; people will live there (v10)
- People will live from Benjamin's gate to the first gate (v10)
- People will live all the way out to the corner gate (v10)
- People will live from the tower of Hananeel to the king's winepresses (v10)
- People will live in Jerusalem again (v11)
- Jerusalem will never be destroyed again (v11)
- Jerusalem will be a safe place to live; it will be safely inhabited (v11)
- In the future Jerusalem will be a place of safety (v11)
- God will smite all those who fought against Jerusalem with a plague (v12)
- The punishment for fighting against Jerusalem will be death (v12)
- Those who fought against Jerusalem will have their flesh consumed from them as they stand on their feet (v12)
- Those who fought against Jerusalem will have their eyes consumed out of their heads (v12)
- Those who fought against Jerusalem will have their tongue consume out of their mouth
- Those who fought against Jerusalem will die a horrible death (v12)

- When Jesus returns, God will send a great disturbance among those who fought against Jerusalem (v13)
- When Jesus returns, those who fought against Jerusalem will fight against one another; God will turn the nations against one another (v13)
- When Jesus returns, Judah will join the fight in Jerusalem (v14)
- When Jesus returns, the Jews will gain the wealth of the surrounding nations (v14)
- The Jews will gain gold in great abundance (v14)
- The Jews will gain silver in great abundance (v14)
- The Jews will gain apparel in great abundance (v14)
- The plague that God will send upon those who came against Jerusalem will also be sent upon their horses (v15)
- The plague that God will send upon those who came against Jerusalem will also be sent upon their mules (v15)
- The plague that God will send upon those who came against Jerusalem will also be sent upon their camels (v15)
- The plague that God will send upon those who came against Jerusalem will also be sent upon their donkeys (v15)
- The plague that God will send upon those who came against Jerusalem will also be sent upon all the animals they brought with them (v15)
- The nations that come against Jerusalem will bring horses

(v15)

- The nations that come against Jerusalem will bring mules (v15)
- The nations that come against Jerusalem will bring camels (v15)
- The nations that come against Jerusalem will bring donkeys (v15)
- The nations that come against Jerusalem will bring animals (v15)
- The nations that come against Jerusalem will be in tents (v15)
- It seems that when the nations come against Jerusalem, they will be fighting with ancient weapons and riding animals; they will apparently not have access to modern weapons or modern technology (v15)
- It seems that in the tribulation era, modern technology will not exist (v15)
- God is going to kill the soldiers who fought against Jerusalem, but He is not going to kill all the people of those nations; there will be some people of those nations who will enter into the millennium (v16)
- All the nations that fought against Jerusalem will be required to go to Jerusalem each year to worship the King (v16)
- The King of Jerusalem will be the Lord; (this is a reference to the earthly reign of Jesus) (v16)
- All the nations that fought against Jerusalem will be required to go to Jerusalem each year to keep the feast of

tabernacles (v16)

- In the millennium, Gentile nations will be required to go to Jerusalem and keep the feast of tabernacles (v16)
- The feast of tabernacles will be kept in the millennium (v16)
- Every year all the families of the world will be required to travel to Jerusalem to worship the King (the Lord Jesus Christ) (v17)
- Any family that does not travel to Jerusalem to worship Jesus will be punished; (in this context "family" seems to refer to nations, as opposed to individuals) (v17)
- The punishment that will fall upon families that refuse to travel to Jerusalem to worship Jesus is this: no rain will fall upon their land (v17)
- There are times when God punishes nations by withholding rain (v17)
- God has the power to send rain, and to withhold it (v17)
- In the millennium, the entire world will be required to worship Jesus (v17)
- In the millennium, any nation that does not worship Jesus will be punished (v17)
- If Egypt does not travel to Jerusalem to worship Jesus then God will withhold rain from that entire nation (v18)
- If Egypt does not travel to Jerusalem to worship Jesus then God will smite the nation with a plague (v18)
- All of the nations that refuse to travel to Jerusalem to worship Jesus will be smitten with a plague (v18)

- The nations will be required to travel to Jerusalem to keep the feast of tabernacles; those who refuse to travel to Jerusalem and keep it will be severely punished (v18)
- In the millennium Jesus will reign with a rod of iron (v18)
- It seems that in the millennium, Egypt is not going to travel to Jerusalem to worship Jesus; therefore God will punish Egypt (v19)
- All nations that refuse to travel to Jerusalem to worship Jesus and keep the feast of tabernacles will be punished; God repeated this several times in this chapter (v19)
- In the millennium, people will still use horses for transportation (v20)
- In the millennium, it seems that modern technology will not exist (v20)
- In the millennium, the horses in Jerusalem will have bells (v20)
- The bells will have an inscription: HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD (v20)
- In the millennium, even the bells upon the horses will be holy (v20)
- In the millennium, there will be a temple for the Lord (v20)
- In the millennium, the pots in the house of the Lord will be as holy as the bowls before the altar (v20)
- In the millennium, holiness will abound (v20)
- In the millennium, the land of Israel will be saturated with holiness (v21)

- In the millennium, every pot in Jerusalem will be holy (v21)
- In the millennium, every pot in Judah will be holy (v21)
- In the millennium, Jerusalem will be holy (v21)
- In the millennium, Judah will be holy (v21)
- In the millennium, sacrifices will be offered in the temple; there will be a millennial sacrificial system (v21)
- In the millennium, no Canaanite will enter the temple of the Lord (v21)

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