

11. Zechariah 520-518 B.C.

The book of Zechariah has 14 chapters. It is a Post-Exilic Southern Kingdom book.

Author

Zechariah, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel before him, was both a prophet and a priest. He was born in Babylon (Nehemiah 12:1, 16). Both Ezra and Nehemiah call him a descendant of Iddo, his grandfather. That may mean his father Berkiah died young and Zechariah became priest after the death of his grandfather. He seems to be a *young man* at the time of this prophecy (2:4). Zechariah is a contemporary of Haggai, and like Haggai, he emphasized the significance of the temple in Jerusalem.



Date and Background

The Northern Kingdom of Israel went into captivity in 722 B.C. and the Southern Kingdom of Judah in 605 and 586. In 539 B.C., Babylon fell to the Medo-Persian Empire. Following a decree of Cyrus, over 50,000 Jews returned to Palestine from Babylon in 538. They laid the foundation of the temple, but opposition stalled the work for 10-15 years (Ezra 1:1-4; 4:1-5). Darius (Zechariah 1:1), became king of Persia in 521 and confirmed the decree of Cyrus, and Zechariah joined Haggai in exhorting the people to finish the temple, which they did in 516. The dates of 520-518 are derived from the first verse. The first group of 50,000 (Ezra 2:64-65) returned with Zerubbabel. They rebuilt the altar and did sacrifices with the Levitical priests (Ezra 1-3). Next, they built the foundation of the temple, but then the work stopped. For about 10-15 years there was no construction on the temple. During this time, God raised up two prophets: Haggai and Zechariah, to encourage the people to rebuild the temple. It seems Haggai was an older man and Zechariah was a younger man. [Other information from Ryrie Study Bible]

Purpose

The book of Zechariah has been called, “The most messianic, the most truly apocalyptic and eschatological of all the writings of the Old Testament” [George L. Robinson, International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956]. The purpose of the book goes beyond the rebuilding of the temple to let the returnees know that there is a distant glorious restoration of Israel and its temple, planned by God. Zechariah is saying that God has a plan for His people, and He will bring it about, and nothing His people will do will change it, make it happen, or keep it from happening.

It is important to understand that only the Southern Kingdom of Judah returned to the Land. The ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom did not return in the 500s. They probably did not begin to return after 1947. What Zechariah prophesies is the return of all of Israel, from both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. So, the prophecy of Zechariah was not fulfilled any time in history, at least not until recently.

That brings up the question, “Why did God have this group from the Southern Kingdom of Judah return to Judah if it did not fulfill prophecy?” I want to suggest that the only reason for them to

return was to rebuild the temple, and the reason for the temple to be rebuilt was so the Messiah could enter the temple area. Once the Messiah entered the temple, it was no longer of any value. After the Messiah entered the temple on Palm Sunday, there was no more need for the temple, and it was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. The historical issue going on for Zechariah is to encourage the people to rebuild the temple. This is the second Temple (Solomon’s Temple was the first temple, destroyed by the Babylonians).

Key Verse

“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the LORD of hosts (4:6).

Theme

Subject: The future of God’s people

Complement: will be brought about by God, not by His people.

Zechariah

Chapters 1 — 8 Visions — 6	7 — 4 Messages — 8	9 — 2 Oracles — 14															
<p>Vision:</p> <p>#1 The Horses and Riders— God’s anger against a peaceful world (1:7-17)</p> <p>#2 The Four Horns and the Four Craftsmen— God’s judgment on four nations (1:18-21)</p> <p>#3 The Man Measuring Jerusalem— Jerusalem, the apple of God’s eye (2:1-13)</p> <p>#4 The Cleansing of Joshua— The salvation and sanctification of Israel (3:1-10)</p> <p>#5 The Golden Lampstand— “Not by might nor by power but by My Spirit” (4:1-14)</p> <p>#6 The Flying Scroll— Keeping the commandments (5:1-4)</p> <p>#7 The Woman in the Ephah— The future apostate Babylon (5:5-11)</p> <p>#8 The Four Chariots— Judgment for the world (6:1-8)</p>	<p>Message:</p> <p>#1 Your fasting was not for Me (7:4-7)</p> <p>#2 The previous generation was “scattered” because “they could not hear the Law” (7:8-14)</p> <p>#3 The Lord of Hosts is jealous for Israel (8:1-17)</p> <p>#4 The fasting will be turned to feasting (8:18-23)</p>	<p>Oracle:</p> <p>#1 Behold, Your King Is Coming— “He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey” (chapters 9–11)</p> <p>#2 In that Day, There Will Be—</p> <div style="text-align: center;"> <table style="margin: auto;"> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">Age of Grace unknown to Zechariah (Ephesians 3:3-9)</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">Tribulation</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">A r m a g e d d o n</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">Second Coming</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">Millennial Kingdom</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">+</td> <td style="text-align: center;">13:8-9</td> <td style="text-align: center;">14: 1-3</td> <td style="text-align: center;">14: 4-7</td> <td style="text-align: center;">14:8-21</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Crucifixion 13:7</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> </div>	Age of Grace unknown to Zechariah (Ephesians 3:3-9)	Tribulation	A r m a g e d d o n	Second Coming	Millennial Kingdom	+	13:8-9	14: 1-3	14: 4-7	14:8-21	Crucifixion 13:7				
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Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon conquers Judah 586	Cyrus of Persia conquers Babylon 539	Temple construction begins 535	Darius I becomes king of Persia 521	Temple completed 515	Nehemiah goes to Jerusalem 444
	538 Cyrus decrees return of Jews	530 Temple construction halted	520-18 ZECHARIAH	458 Ezra goes to Jerusalem	443 Walls of Jerusalem rebuilt

[Chart from Relational Concepts brochure “Zechariah Book Panorama”]

Commentary

Chapter 1

Verse 1, Commentary above under “Date and Background”

Verses 2-4, *The Lord was very angry with your fathers. “Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Return to Me,” declares the LORD of hosts, “that I may return to you,” says the LORD of hosts. “Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Return now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds.”’ But they did not listen or give heed to Me,” declares the LORD.* The fathers were probably the disobedient ones who had been taken into exile to Babylon. God was telling Zechariah to tell this current generation to return to the Lord. “The Lord of Hosts” (יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת) *Yahweh Tzevaot*) is used throughout the book and refers to God the Father. “Return” is the word for “turn” or “repent.” This word is used in verses 3, 4b, and 6.

Vision #1 (1:7-17) The Horses and the Riders

Verses 8, 14-15, *I saw at night, and behold, a man was riding on a red horse, and he was standing among the myrtle trees which were in the ravine, with red, sorrel and white horses behind him... So the angel who was speaking with me said to me, “Proclaim, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and Zion. But I am very angry with the nations who are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they furthered the disaster.”* Zechariah’s first vision begins in verse 7, which gives symbols that mean the Lord of hosts is very angry with a world that is living at ease. Apparently, world peace was not considered a good thing. A myrtle tree was usually a small shrub type tree. It was used in the Feast of the Tabernacle. It is not valuable to speculate about the colors of the horses. They are not the same color match as the four horses of the apocalypse of Revelation 6. The riders on the horses went out to patrol the earth. The rider of the red horse is the angel of the Lord, who probably represents Christ. The other riders who patrolled the earth said it was peaceful and quiet.

Vision #2 (1:18-21) The Four Horns and the Four Craftsmen

Verse 21, *I said, “What are these coming to do?” And he said, “These are the horns which have scattered Judah so that no man lifts up his head; but these craftsmen have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations who have lifted up their horns against the land of Judah in order to scatter it.”* The four horns probably represent Assyria, Egypt, Babylon and Medo-Persia. At any rate, they are nations that scattered Israel. The craftsmen are people or nations whom God will use to defeat the enemies of Israel.

An Application: Follow the Word of God, not your fathers’ traditions, habits, or culture.

Chapter 2

Vision #3 (2:1-13) The Man Measuring Jerusalem

Verses 1-5, *Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a man with a measuring line in his hand. So I said, “Where are you going?” And he said to me, “To measure Jerusalem, to see how wide it is and how long it is.” And behold, the angel who was speaking with me was*

going out, and another angel was coming out to meet him and said to him, “Run, speak to that young man, saying, ‘Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls because of the multitude of men and cattle within it.’” The Jerusalem of Zechariah’s day had walls (built by Nehemiah). The point is that there will come a time, during the future Millennial Kingdom, when Jerusalem will not need walls. The *young man* may be Zechariah or the measuring man, probably representing an angel.

Verse 6, “*Ho there! Flee from the land of the north,*” declares the LORD, “*for I have dispersed you as the four winds of the heavens,*” declares the LORD.

Verses 8-10, not the explanations in the text, [The Messiah speaking says] *For thus says the LORD of hosts [(יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת) Yahweh Tzevaot, God the Father] “After glory He has sent Me [The Messiah] against the nations which plunder you [Israel], for he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye. “For behold, I [The Messiah] will wave My hand over them so that they will be plunder for their slaves. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts[(יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת) Yahweh Tzevaot, God the Father] has sent Me [The Messiah]. Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I [The Messiah] am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” declares the LORD.*

Verses 11-13, a description of the Millennial Kingdom.

Chapter 3

Vision #4 (3:1-10) The Cleansing of Joshua, the High Priest

Verses 1-2, *Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. The LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?”* The revealing angel (as in 4:1) showed Zechariah a vision of Joshua the high priest in the midst of a confrontation between Satan (“Accuser” is the Hebrew word “Satan.”) and the angel of the Lord, the preincarnate Christ. The accusations of Satan, though they may be correct, are nullified by the choice of God. Joshua was *a brand plucked from the fire.*

Verses 3-10, The cleansing of Joshua the High Priest is a picture of our salvation. Satan’s accusations, though possibly true, are nullified by the choice of God and our being cleansed by the blood of Christ. Then Joshua is given what can be applied to us as instructions for ministry.

Verse 7, “*Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘If you will walk in My ways and if you will perform My service, then you will also govern My house and also have charge of My courts, and I will grant you free access among these who are standing here.’*”

Chapter 4

Vision #5 (4:1-14) The Golden Lampstand

Verse 2, *He said to me, “What do you see?” And I said, “I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold with its bowl on the top of it, and its seven lamps on it with seven spouts belonging to each of the lamps which are on the top of it.”*



Verses 6-7, *Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts. ‘What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of “Grace, grace to it!””* In vision #4 the high priest was cleansed with instruction to *walk in My ways*, now Zerubbabel the civil leader is given a vision of encouragement that the temple would be completed: *Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit*, pictured by the olive branches (or trees) supplying the oil. No obstacle (*mountain*) would stand in the way. Whatever the *top stone* is it represents finishing the temple after which the people will be it by the grace (selective favor) of God.

Verse 10, *“For who has despised the day of small things. But these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel—these are the eyes of the LORD which range to and fro throughout the earth.”* The *small things* probably represent a comparison of the Zerubbabel Temple to Solomon’s Temple. The *seven lamps on it with seven spouts* (here and verse 2) are connected to the omniscience of God *throughout the earth*, the same idea as the *seven Spirits of God* in Revelation 5:6.

Verse 14, *Then he said, “These [the two olive branches, or clusters (verses 11-12)] are the two anointed ones who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth.”* The two olive branches pour oil into two golden pipes (mentioned for the first time in verse 12). They may refer to Joshua and Zechariah, but they are also symbolic of the those who minister to the whole earth, possibly a reference to the two witnesses of the future tribulation period (Revelation 11:3-6), before the Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 20).

Chapter 5

Vision #6 (5:1-4) The Flying Scroll

Zechariah sees a large (30 x 15 ft, or 9 x 4.5 m) flying scroll opened, written on both sides. The explanation is, the scroll (1) represents a *curse* or oath, (2) includes *the whole land* (3) is about two sins, stealing and lying or perjury (4) means no one will escape and (5) has a purpose of purging or cleanse the liars and thieves from the Land. To guess why these two sins are specified would be a speculation. But purging evil is a prominent subject in the Bible (eight times in Deuteronomy and in 1 Corinthians 5:7). This will only ultimately take place in the Millennial Kingdom.

Vision #7 (5:5-11) The Woman in the basket

Verses 6-11, In the seventh vision, Zechariah sees a moving basket and is told this is the eye of the earth. This probably represent the antichrist’s (or Satan’s) kingdom, unknown as evil until the lead cover containing it is lifted so that it is identified as *wickedness*. But wickedness is contained in the basket, with a *lead cover* which is removed by unidentified agents called women with *wings of a stork*. These winged women remove the basket containing evil to Babylon,

where it sits on a pedestal in a house (or temple). This could represent Israel's idolatry taken to Babylon, but that is hardly sufficient as a meaning for this vision. Ultimately, it seems to represent Babylon, the evil place since the tower of Babel (Genesis 11:2) and the center of the antichrist's empire (Revelation 17-18, note 17:3-5). So it seems that the wickedness of the antichrist's global empire is unidentified until it is centered in a future rebuilt Babylon, during the upcoming tribulation period before it is destroyed by Christ at His Second Coming.

Chapter 6

Vision #8 (6:1-8) The Four Chariots

In vision #8, four chariots come from between two bronze mountains. The mountains may represent heaven, at any rate the chariots are the judgments of God. The different colors of the horses probably represent the different kinds of judgment (Jeremiah 49:36; Daniel 7:2; Revelation 7:1) but speculating about which is what judgment would only be guessing. The chariots go to the north and the south, where the attacks on Israel come from, since the Mediterranean Sea was on the west and the Arabian Desert was on the east. Concerning the chariots, Zechariah reports:

Verse 5, *The angel replied to me, "These are the four spirits of heaven, going forth after standing before the Lord of all the earth,"* The four spirits are apparently angels, if so, it confirms that angels are spiritual beings. Since they were *standing before the Lord of all the earth*, their judgment may represent the judgment of the whole earth carried out during the tribulation period and at the Second Coming of Christ. No doubt the chariots represent God's judgment on Israel's enemies, but the focus is on the north.

Verse 8, *Then He cried out to me and spoke to me saying, "See, those who are going to the land of the north have appeased My wrath in the land of the north."* This seems to ultimately focus on God being appeased by the angels judgment on the antichrist's government centered in Babylon (Revelation 11:15; 18:21).

The Crowning of Joshua the High Priest (6:9-15)

This ceremony was a conclusion of the eight night visions. Zechariah's comment, *the word of the Lord also came to me saying (verse 9)*, indicates this is was something he heard rather than an image that he saw. Some visitors came from Babylon with an offering. Zechariah was instructed to *Take silver and gold, make an ornate crown and set it on the head of Joshua..., the high priest (Verse 11)*. This is unusual because priests were not crowned as king. There was to be a separation between the priesthood and the kings. The priests were from the tribe of Levi, the family of Aaron. The kings were from the tribe of Judah and the family of David. The reason for crowning the priest is given in **verse 12**, *"A man whose name is Branch...will build the temple of the Lord."*

Verse 13 tells us three things about the Branch: (1) He will build the temple, (2) He will be worthy of honor, and (3) He will reign on a throne, both as a priest and as a king. He will bring peace between those two offices. The Branch represents the Messiah, who is a priest of the order of Melchizedek (Genesis 14; Hebrews 5:6-10; 6:20; 7:1-17, a better priesthood). The Levitical priesthood was in submission to the Melchizedek priesthood because Abraham paid tithes to

Melchizedek, and Levi was the great-grandson of Abraham. The Messiah is also a king from the family of David.

Chapter 7

A Question for the Priests (7:1-3)

It was nearly two years after the eight night visions (on December 7, 518 B.C.), about halfway through the building of the second temple (520-516), and Zechariah gave four messages, saying, *The word of the Lord of hosts, or the Lord, came to me saying...*

Verses 2-3 tells us about a delegation sent from Bethel, a worship center since Abraham and Jacob each built an altar there nearly 1500 years earlier. But more recently, Bethel had become an apostate worship center for the Northern Kingdom, since Jeroboam built a golden calf there (cf. 1 Kings 12:28-29; 13:1; Amos 7:13). The question was, *Shall I weep in the fifth month and abstain, as I have done these many years?* The fasts they had been doing were not part of the Mosaic Law, they were a way of weeping over the destruction of Jerusalem. But now that Jerusalem and the temple were being rebuilt, the question is, "Should the fasting continue?" This question was answered in all four of Zechariah's messages.

Message #1 (7:4-7) "Was it actually for Me that you fasted?"

The question of the Bethel delegation was not actually answered until message #4, but first, the Lord of hosts has a question of His own: "Aren't you actually carrying out these rituals for yourselves?" Religious rituals are something people do for themselves. God consistently told them He wanted things like truth, justice, and loyal love, not a ritualistic religion (Isaiah 1:11-17; Hosea 6:6; Amos 5:21-24).

Message #2 (7:8-14)

In **verses 9 and 10**, God gave them a list of five things to do, none of which are accomplished by rituals:

1. *Dispense true justice*
2. *Practice kindness*
3. [Practice] *compassion each to his brother*
4. *Do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor*
5. *Do not devise evil in your hearts against one another*

But the response of those who were deported to Assyria and Babylon (verse 14) was *they made their hearts like flint* (verse 12). So God did not answer their prayers.

Verse 13, "And just as He [the Lord of Hosts] called and they [God's people] would not listen, so they [God's people] called and I would not listen," says the LORD of hosts.

Chapter 8

Message #3 (8:1-17) The Lord of Hosts Is Jealous for Israel

"The Lord of hosts" occurs 36 times in Zechariah, and 15 of them are in this chapter. But they are not the outline of the message.

Verses 1-8 develop the idea of **verse 2**, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'I am exceedingly jealous for Zion, yes, with great wrath I am jealous for her.'"

God's jealousy for Jerusalem is expressed as:

- (1) His wrath. Historically, this is against her idolatry.
- (2) Jerusalem becoming a *City of Truth*, representing the way things actually are.
- (3) A *Holy Mountain*, a place completely separated from sin.
- (4) A place where people are born and grow old in peace (notice this is on earth, not a description of heaven because people are becoming old and people are being born).
- (5) A place where God's people come *from the land of the east and the land of the west*, probably the whole earth, since usually their enemies were seen as coming from the north and the south.
- (6) A place of not only truth but righteousness, applied righteousness
- (7) A place where God's people live, but unlike the New Jerusalem, God does not live there. He is the God of His people who live there.

Verses 9-13 are an encouragement to follow the *words from the mouth of the prophets* (that would be Zechariah and Haggai) *to the end that the temple might be rebuilt.*

Verses 14-17 tell us that in the future God will *'do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah,'* and they are to:

- *'Speak the truth to one another*
- *Judge with truth and judgment for peace*
- *Let none of you devise evil in your heart against another, and*
- *Do not love perjury; for all these are what I hate,' declares the LORD.*

Message #4 (8:18-23) The Fasting Will Be Turned Into Feasting

Message #4 is the answer to the question the messengers from Bethel had asked in 7:1-3 about keeping the fasts. The answer is that the fasts are going to be turned into feasts. Two additional fasts are mentioned, but the point is that in the future kingdom, which we call the Millennial Kingdom, there will be feasting, not fasting. At that time, the people from many nations will come to Jerusalem to seek the favor of the Messiah. People from these nations will even *grasp the garment of a Jew* because they know God is with them.

Oracle #1, Chapters 9–11 Behold Your King Is Coming

Chapter 9

Verses 1-8 predicted what was fulfilled by the campaign of Alexander the Great. Tyre and Sidon are very wisely built fortresses, but the Lord will cast their wealth into the sea. Tyre withstood a five-year siege by the Syrians and later a 13-year siege by the Babylonians, but Alexander defeated the city in 5 months. After that, Alexander moved down the coast to four of the Philistine cities. "Him" in verse 8 seems to be Alexander. "Passes by" Jerusalem. This was written about 500 B.C., and Alexander's campaign was in the 300s, about 200 years after this prophecy.

Verses 9-10, This is one of the prophecies, which was fulfilled at the first coming of Christ at His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. It is said that if a king came on a donkey, he was coming in peace (first coming), and if on a horse, he was coming for war (Second Coming). (1) The king is just, (2) He is endowed with salvation, and (3) He is humble. He will

cut off the war chariots from Ephraim (Israel) and the war horse from Jerusalem (Judah). The Messiah will speak peace to the nations. His dominion will be from sea-to-sea. Verse 9 is the first coming of the Messiah, and verse 10 is the Second Coming of the Messiah, and Zechariah does not see a difference between the two comings. Zechariah does not see or know about the age of the church. Paul says that God kept it hidden and revealed it to the apostles in the New Testament (Ephesians 3:3-9).

Verses 11-17, This is primarily about the victory of the Maccabees over Antiochus IV Epiphanes and the Syrian Greeks. It is because of the blood of the covenant (which could be the Abrahamic or Mosaic Covenant) that God is going to do this. Setting the prisoners free are the exiles still in Babylon. The waterless pit is a cistern, an old, unused cistern that was used as a dungeon. The prisoners will return to Jerusalem, those who have hope in Yahweh. God will use His people to defeat the Greeks, specifically He will use the Maccabees (169-135 B.C.) to defeat Antiochus IV, V, and VII (the same prediction as in Daniel 11:32). This rather vague prediction in Zechariah is given in great detail and accuracy in Daniel 11. Zechariah's point is that these campaigns are actually being waged by God, but God is also using people to bring about His campaign.

Verses 14 and 17 some say refer to the Second Coming of Christ because of the use of "blowing of the trumpet" in verse 14 and the seemingly prosperity of verse 17. But most likely these verses continue the prediction of the victory of the Maccabees over the Syrians. The sling stones are the Syrians. Those who drink and are boisterous as with wine are the victorious Israelites.

Chapter 10

Oracle #1 continued

Teraphim (household gods) speak iniquity, and the diviners see lying visions. They comfort in vain, so the people wander like sheep. The message of the false teacher will usually be one of comfort (everyone can be healed, prosperity gospel, etc.). Comfort does not teach the people how to navigate through life. God has visited Judah, and He gave 3 metaphors for the Messiah: cornerstone, tent peg, and bow of battle. Mighty men will tread down the enemy and the Lord will be with them. God will strengthen Judah and Joseph (Northern Kingdom). God will bring them back, and Ephraim (the Northern Kingdom) will be like a mighty man.

Starting with verse 8, twelve things are listed that God is going to do:

- (1) God will whistle for them to gather them together
- (2) God will redeem them
- (3) God scattered them among the peoples
- (4) They will remember God in the far countries
- (5) Then they, with their children, will come back.
- (6) God will bring them back from Egypt and Assyria
- (7) God will bring them to the land of Gilead and Lebanon (a bigger piece of land Israel has had).
- (8) Israel will pass through the sea of distress as their enemies are destroyed
- (9) The Nile will dry up
- (10) The pride of Assyria will be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt will depart
- (11) God will strengthen them in the Lord
- (12) In God's name they will walk

Lessons:

1. The message of a false teacher is always one of comfort here on this earth. The message of a true teacher will always be about suffering now, caused by sin, and future comfort, caused by redemption and repentance (10:1-2a).
2. The result of false teaching is short-term comfort but with no way to navigate through this world. Any teaching that does not emphasize sin and the judgment of a sovereign holy God will never offer the true wisdom or the peace that passes understanding (10:2-3).
3. God's answer to sin is war and a violent destruction of all that remains of sinfulness and sinful people. THERE SEEMS TO BE NO SEPARATION BETWEEN THE SIN AND THE SINNER. The world will never accept that solution (10:4-6).
4. There is a difference between the comfort of the false teacher and the joy of the heart given by God. God's joy is:
 - a. A result of the call of God, not the will of the people (10:8).
 - b. Possible only because of the redemption supplied by God, not by human effort or education (10:8).
 - c. A return from a place of suffering caused by sin (10:9).
 - d. A response to God's people remembering Him, not people trying to better themselves or mankind (10:9).
 - e. A coming back to where God told them to be in the first place, not a progressive development of society (10:9).
 - f. Coming out of the world, not trying to fix the world (10:10).
 - g. Returning to receive the promises of God, not pursuing whatever we want (10:10).
 - h. Obtained by passing through distress, not by avoiding it (10:11).
 - i. Due to God strengthening His people, not people strengthening themselves (10:12).
 - j. That people walk by His name, not by any name or way they choose (10:12).

An Application Question:

Chapter 10 teaches us:

- A. The occupation of Israel by the current Hebrews could be a fulfillment of Zechariah 10.
- B. The occupation of Israel by the Hebrews of Zechariah's day could be a fulfillment of Zechariah 10.
- C. The occupation of Israel by the Hebrews in Jesus' day could be a fulfillment of Zechariah 10.
- D. All of the above are true.

Answer:

A is correct. The "Jews" in Israel today are Hebrews of both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, so they could be a fulfillment of Zechariah 10. B and C (and therefore D) are incorrect because the Jews in Israel in Zechariah's day and Jesus' day were only from the Southern Kingdom, and 10:6 says "I will bring them back" from both houses.

Chapter 11**Oracle #1**

- After reading chapter 10, they would think they would shortly be returning to the Land.
- But chapter 11 says it would not happen because of their rejection of the Messiah.
- This chapter is basically about the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

- First is the destruction of Lebanon, Bashan, and the forests, the shepherds wail because the pasture is destroyed, and even the lions roar at the destruction of the jungle by the Jordan River.
- God is going to pasture a flock (specifically, Judah) that is doomed for slaughter (by the Romans in A.D. 70).
- **Verse 5**, Those who buy and sell are different political powers ruling the Jews. In particular, the Greeks and then the Romans, especially Herod the Great. Their own shepherds with no pity are the Pharisees and Scribes who rule the Jews during the time of Christ.
- **Verse 6**, God will no longer have pity on the Land. The actual destruction is in 70. The power is the Caesars of Rome who will strike the Land, and God will not deliver them.
- **Verse 7**, God took two staves: favor and union.
- **Verse 8**, God annihilated three shepherds. (One commentator says there are over 40 interpretations of this verse). It could be the 3 types of Jewish leaders (Sadducees, scribes, and Pharisees).
- **Verse 9**, God will not pasture the Jews. He is going to let them die.
- **Verse 10**, God breaks His favor or grace, i.e., breaking His covenant with them.
- **Verse 11**, There is a Jewish group who realizes this is the Word of God (Messiah).
- **Verses 12-13**, The rejection of the Messiah, specifically the price paid to Judas.
- **Verses 14**, The division of the kingdoms. It will remain broken until the Messiah comes again.
- **Verses 16-17**, God will raise up a shepherd, a worthless one, who will not care for the people (the antichrist). He makes a peace treaty with the Jews and breaks it in the middle. He will be strong and intelligent. But he will be defeated at the Second Coming.

Lessons:

1. Do not take advantage of people. Do not participate with people who take advantage of people. And do not stand silently by while others take advantage of people (11:1-5).
2. Never seek the security of being under the power of human leadership. That is a curse not a blessing. We are to submit to our government (Romans 13:1-3, 1 Peter 2:13-17), but we are under the power and authority of God (11:6).
3. We should never give our ultimate commitment to people (family, friends, colleagues in ministry). There are situations where it is appropriate to set aside our relationships with people—always being eager for their return like the father of the prodigal son (11:7-10).
4. People will understand the Word of God when, and only when, God takes priority over people. For example, if you defend your children when they sin, they will never understand the Word of God (11:11).
5. There are certain things which God does over which we have no choice (our nationality, parents, genetic makeup, time of birth, what He is doing in history). But in some areas, God gives us a choice, then it is up to us to give Him His “wages” or not (11:12-17).

An Application Question:

Chapter 11 is mainly describing the time:

1. Between 500 B.C. and 0.
2. Between 0 and A.D. 70
3. After A.D. 70

Answer:

B is correct. The campaigns of Alexander the Great and the war with the Syrian Greeks fulfilled this literally. This is a judgment call, since A and C are in this chapter. It just seems they are not the main emphasis.

Chapter 12

Oracle #2 (12:1–14:21)

Jerusalem is going to dominate the world (12:1–13:6). The overthrow of the Gentile nations is in 12:1-9. Then is the regeneration of individual Jews in 12:10–13:6. The last part of the oracle (13:7–14:21) tells how Jerusalem and the conversion of the Jews will happen.

The Overthrow of the Gentile Nations (12:1-9)

- **Verse 12:1**, A description of God (comparable to Romans 1:19f) in general revelation. “...forms the spirit of man within him” are comparable to the conscience in Romans 2.
- God will make Jerusalem (1) a cup of reeling and (2) a heavy stone, so people will injure themselves. This is against **all** the nations of the earth, not just Assyria and Babylon. (3) He will strike the horses with bewilderment and the riders with madness.
- Then Judah will say in their hearts that the Lord of hosts is a strong support for the Jews. They will be like a fire burning sheaves.
- 17 times the phrase “in that day” is repeated in this oracle. There is no number with “day” so it is not a 24-hour day. The time when God takes hold of history and leads it toward the establishment of His kingdom. It begins with the beginning of the tribulation period and goes through the end of the Millennium Kingdom. Sometimes it is called “the day of the Lord.” It is that time where God brings about the end of history. Of course, God is always in charge of history, and everything is within the sovereign control of God. But at this time, God is taking history to a particular goal. For most of history, we do not know exactly what God is doing in establishing and taking down nations (Romans 13:1f). Starting with the “day of the Lord,” we know why He is doing it and the direction in which it is going.
- Prophecies are given in various ways—figures of speech, metaphors, etc., but they are always fulfilled literally.
- God will specifically save the house of David, but there will be a unity of the house of David and Judah.
- **Verse 8**, God will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that even the weak, feeble people will be like the strength of David, like the “angel of the Lord,” that is, Jesus.
- **Verse 9**, God will destroy all the nations who come into Jerusalem (towards the end of the Tribulation).

The Regeneration of Individual Jews (12:10–13:6)

- **Verses 10-11**, The Spirit of God comes over the believing remnant of Israel during the Tribulation and convicting them about their sin of crucifying the Messiah. Then they will mourn and weep bitterly. See Romans 11.
- **Verses 12-14**, The wives of various tribes will be weeping. These are individual people who are mourning, not just an official position of the leaders. It is individual Jews in individual households.
- **Verse 13:1**, In that day, a fountain will be opened, that is, the blood of Christ. It will be for sin (personal sin—Romans 3:23) and for impurity (their imputed sin—Romans 5:15-19).

- Part of the repentance during the Tribulation:
 1. **Verse 12:10**, The work of the Holy Spirit.
 2. **Verses 10-14**, The realization of the seriousness of sin, leading to a true emotional repentance.
 3. **Verse 13:1**, Dependence on the blood of Christ for the cleansing of sin.
 4. **Verses 13:2-6**, A change of lifestyle, a change which goes to war, instead of tolerating and making peace with, false religions and false teachers, in that the false prophets will admit they are false prophets (13:5).
- **Verse 13:6**, Probably wounds from claiming to be a prophet (see verse 3).

Lessons:

1. There is a sense in which the Bible is a tale of two cities: Jerusalem and Babylon (Revelation 18). Babylon represents the world: its people and their achievements. “In that day” Babylon will fall and Jerusalem will become the dominant city of the world (12:1-8).
2. True repentance is felt personally and emotionally, and it leads to bitter weeping. Those convicted by the Holy Spirit weep bitterly, those corrected by society seek therapy (12:9-14).
3. Four steps (or aspects) of restoration are:
 - a. Conviction of the Holy Spirit (12:10).
 - b. Repentance reflected by bitter remorse (12:10-14).
 - c. Dependence completely upon the blood of Christ for cleansing from sin (13:1).
 - d. A change of lifestyle which goes to war with sin, instead of compromising, negotiating, tolerating or making peace with false teachers, false prophets, and false religions (13:2-6).
4. The church is not about nations. The church is in every nation. The war is against sin in the individual believer.

An Application Question:

This passage predicts:

1. The world will repent of its sin against God.
2. The Jews will repent for crucifying Jesus.
3. Unbelievers will repent for rejecting Christ.

Answer:

B is correct. 12:10 says that because of the pouring out of the Spirit on Jerusalem, the Jews will mourn because of “Me whom they pierced.” A and C are incorrect because this is not a repentance of the world or unbelievers in general.

Chapters 13:7—14:21

1. **Verse 13:7**, The crucifixion of the Messiah
2. **Verses 13:8-9**, The emergence of individual saved Jews during the Tribulation (144,000 and others)
3. **Verses 14:1-3**, The Battle of Armageddon
4. **Verses 14:4-7**, The Second Coming of Christ
5. **Verses 14:8-21**, The Millennial Kingdom

- **Verse 13:7**, The crucifixion of Christ and the cutting off of Israel. The sword is what pierced Christ in 12:10 (see John 19:34, 37). Notice that God is the One who wakes up the sword. The Messiah is described as “My Associate,” that is, One close to God. Killing the Messiah is what will result in scattering of the Jews, as has been described throughout Zechariah. However, there is a distant meaning in Mark 14:27, where the same verse describes the scattering of His disciples.
- **Verse 8**, Describes the 70th year, described in Daniel 9:26-27 and Matthew 24:15, that is, the Tribulation. Zechariah goes from crucifixion in verse 7 to the Tribulation in verse 8. The Old Testament prophets did not see the church age (Ephesians 3:3f). That is, the church is between verses 7 and 8. Two thirds of the people of the Land will be destroyed.
- **Verse 9**, The third part of the Jews will come through the fire (i.e., the Tribulation). They will be refined like silver and tested like gold. The results: (1) they call upon God’s name, (2) God will answer them, (3) God will say they are God’s people, and (4) the people will say God is their God.
- **Verse 14:1**, The day is coming (of the Millennial Kingdom) when the spoil taken from the Jews (i.e., the Land of Israel) will be divided among the Jews. Here is how it will happen.
- **Verse 2**, God will gather all the nations against Jerusalem for battle, the city will be captured, houses plundered, women ravished, half the city exiled. Tremendous suffering.
- **Verse 3**, The Second Coming of Christ—Christ will fight against the nations.
- **Verse 4**, Christ’s feet will stand on the Mt. of Olives on the east of Jerusalem. The Mt. will split in the middle, and it will become a very large valley. Half the mount will move to the north and half to the south.
- **Verse 5**, The Jews will flee from the devastation of the invasion of Jerusalem.
- **Verse 6**, The sunlight will dwindle, i.e., become darkness.
- **Verse 7**, In the darkness there will be a supernatural light from God (Matthew 24:27-30).
- **Verse 8**, begins the Millennial Kingdom. Living water will flow out of Jerusalem, half toward the Mediterranean and half toward the Dead Sea, in both summer and winter.
- **Verse 9**, Yahweh will be king over **all** the earth. He will be the only God, and His name will be the only name of God.
- **Verse 10**, All the Land will be changed into a plain, but Jerusalem will rise up as a single mountain in the midst of the plain. Geba is 10 km NE of Jerusalem, Rimmon is 56 km SW of Jerusalem.
- **Verse 11**, People will live in Jerusalem. There will no longer be a curse (see Romans 8:19-22).
- [**Verses 12-13**, A flashback to the Tribulation—the plague and war against Jerusalem (v. 2) and the panic they will have.]
- **Verse 14**, The abundance of the nations is taken by God to Jerusalem. It is gathered for God and His purposes.
- **Verse 15**, This destruction before the Second Coming will include the animals.]
- **Verse 16**, The Millennial Kingdom continued from verse 11. Anyone left from the nations will go year-to-year up to Jerusalem to worship the King (Matthew 25:31-46).
- **Verses 17-18**, There will be righteous families (the sheep of Matthew 25).
- **Verses 19-21**, The standard of punishment will be the holiness of God. Even the cooking pots will be holy to God. That is the purpose of creation to begin with. Holiness can only be achieved by destroying Satan’s whole worldly system.

Lessons:

1. The killing of the Messiah is essential for the salvation of the remnant of believers (13:7).
2. People of God are always (13:8-9):
 - a. Brought through the fire
 - b. Tested and
 - c. Refined
3. The peace of God is brought about by war, not negotiation (14:1-7 and 12-15).
4. Wealth (gold, silver, expensive clothing, abundant prosperity) is not evil when it is supplied by God for the glory of God (14:8-11, 14).
5. Worship (liturgy, forms, activities, places, times, and frequency) consists of those things designated by God, not created locally by people (14:16-19). Notice: For this Age of Grace there is no command given for time, place, or frequency of worship. The apostles established a gathering in homes to eat the Lord's Supper "as often as you do it" (Acts 2:42, 46; Romans 14:5; 16:5; 1 Corinthians 11:25-26; 14:26; 16:19; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 4:15; Philemon 2; and Jude 12).
6. The purpose of creation is to reflect the holiness of God—a separation from the world and sin (14:20-21).

An Application Question:

This passage predicts what will happen

1. Between 520 B.C. and A.D. 33.
2. Between A.D. 33 and the Millennial Kingdom of Revelation 20.
3. After the beginning of the Tribulation.

Answer:

B is correct. 13:7 is about the crucifixion of Christ in about A.D. 33. Then he skips the Church Age and predicts the Tribulation, Second Coming, and the Millennial Kingdom of Revelation 20:1-10.

A is incorrect because this is about what happens after the crucifixion of Christ, not before it.

C is incorrect because the passage also covers the crucifixion of Christ and does not extend to the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15) and the eternal state of Revelation 21 and 22.