

The Fall of Jerusalem!

Zechariah 12:1-14; 13:7-9; 14:1-5

East Berlin Community Church

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December 4, 2022

Introduction

- Antisemitism is not a new phenomenon, but has been around since the fall of Satan.
- Satan special hatred for the Jewish people and his attempts to destroy them through time.
- During the tribulation, Satan will focus on destroying the Jews to prevent Jesus Christ from setting up His kingdom here on earth.
 - Revelation 12:13-- "*when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child.*"
- Satan will indwell the Antichrist and seek to destroy the Jews through him. But God will supernaturally protect and provide for them during the last half of the tribulation.-- Revelation 12
- Not all Jews will flee and be protected. Some will remain scattered throughout the world. Many will live in Babylon, the capital city of the Antichrist's political and economic empire. And many will be living in Jerusalem, the capital city of Israel.
- The Antichrist will be engaged in battle with the kings of the South and the kings of the North in the first stage of the campaign of Armageddon. He will hear disturbing news from the north and from the east.
 - Daniel 11:44-- "*news from the east and the north shall trouble him; therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy and annihilate many.*"
- The Antichrist will be successful in defeating the armies of the south, north, and east, and will persuade them to join forces with him against Israel and specifically Jerusalem.
- The Jews have always been blamed for the ills in this world and the Antichrist will probably blame them and their God for the destruction of his capital city, and for the plagues and judgments under which the world has been suffering. And so he will attempt to rid the world of these pesky Jews and thus come against Jerusalem.

The Fall of Jerusalem!

- Zechariah 12:1-3-- "*The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it."*

A. God's Role: "The Burden of the word of the LORD against Jerusalem"

1. The God who "*stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him*" is sovereign. He is in control! **The attack on Jerusalem is God's plan.** It happens for a purpose.
2. **God gathers all the nations to battle against Jerusalem.**
 - Zechariah 4:1-2-- "*Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.*"
 - a. The Antichrist has a part in securing the cooperation of all the vanquished armies.
 - b. Satan will use demonic forces to influence the nations to gather for the final battle.
 - Revelation 16:13-14-- "*I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*"

c. But in final analysis, this is all part of God's plan, for He rules over all.

3. God makes attacking Jerusalem appealing to the nations of the world

- Zechariah 12:2-- *"Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem."*

4. But God will make Jerusalem an immovable "stone"

- Zechariah 12:3-- *"And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it."*

5. God will empower the Jews in Jerusalem to fight their attackers

- Zechariah 12:4-9-- *"In that day," says the LORD, "I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness; I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in the LORD of hosts, their God.' In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place—Jerusalem. The LORD will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah. In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David shall be like God, like the Angel of the LORD before them. It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem."*

a. In the battle, God will cause confusion among the attacking troops so that they will fight each other.

b. God will empower the Jews so that they will quickly strike down the enemy inflicting heavy losses on the Antichrist's forces.

- Micah 4:11-13-- *"Now also many nations have gathered against you, who say, 'Let her be defiled, and let our eye look upon Zion.' But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD, nor do they understand His counsel; For He will gather them like sheaves to the threshing floor. 'Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion; For I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hooves bronze; You shall beat in pieces many peoples; I will consecrate their gain to the LORD, and their substance to the Lord of the whole earth.'"*

6. But at the height of their success will come crushing defeat, for God will allow the Antichrist and his forces to take the city of Jerusalem.

- Micah 5:1-- *"Now gather yourself in troops, O daughter of troops; He has laid siege against us; They will strike the judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek."*
- Zechariah 14:2-- *"For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city."*

B. God's Purpose: "To spiritually prepare the Jews to welcome their Messiah"

- Zechariah 12:10-14-- *"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. And the land shall mourn, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself, and their wives by themselves; all the families that remain, every family by itself, and their wives by themselves."*

1. **Spiritual deliverance begins with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the ““Spirit of grace and supplication”**
 - Joel 2:28-31-- *“And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. “And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the remnant whom the LORD calls.”*

2. **As a result, “they will look on Me whom they pierced”**
 - a. Could refer to **looking on Jesus Christ when He bodily returns at His Second Coming**. At that point, the Jewish people will realize their sin of rejecting Christ, will mourn over their sin, and will repent and embrace Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

 - b. But the Hebrew preposition translated “on” is more commonly translated “to”, in other words, at this point the Jews will look “to Me whom they pierced”, that is, **looking in faith to Jesus Christ!**
 - 1) God’s call is to look in order to be saved.
 - Isaiah 45:22-- *“Look to Me, and be saved, all you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.”*

 - 2) The Second Coming does not occur until Zechariah 14:3-5. So this “looking on or to” takes place prior to Christ’s second coming.
 - Zechariah 14:3-5-- *“Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south. Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You.”*

3. **The convicting work of the Spirit will produce national contrition or repentance.** Their confession?
 - Isaiah 52:13--53:9-- *“Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. Just as many were astonished at you, so His visage was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men; So shall He sprinkle many nations. Kings shall shut their mouths at Him; For what had not been told them they shall see, and what they had not heard they shall consider. Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, nor was any deceit in His mouth.”*
 - a. Their failure to recognize Jesus at His first coming!
 - b. Their rejection of Him as their Messiah, thinking that He was stricken by God for blasphemy.
 - c. But their realization now that it was their sin that nailed Him to the cross!

4. **They will mourn over their sin, and their godly sorrow leads to repentance.**
 - Zechariah 12:10b-14-- *“Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. And the land shall mourn, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself, and their wives by themselves; all the families that remain, every family by itself, and their wives by themselves.”*

5. **God uses the crushing defeat at Jerusalem to refine and purify the Jews in preparation for life in the kingdom.**
 - Zechariah 13:7-9-- *“Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man who is My Companion,” says the LORD of hosts. “Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; Then I will turn My hand against the little ones. And it shall come to pass in all the land,” says the LORD, “that two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it: I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, “This is My people’; And each one will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’ ”*

6. **God allowed the defeat until “they acknowledge their offense and in their affliction seek His face.”**
 - Hosea 5:15-- *“I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.”*

7. **Once spiritually prepared they are ready to cry out for their Messiah to come and deliver them.**
 - Psalm 79:1-9-- *“O God, the nations have come into Your inheritance; Your holy temple they have defiled; They have laid Jerusalem in heaps. The dead bodies of Your servants they have given as food for the birds of the heavens, the flesh of Your saints to the beasts of the earth. Their blood they have shed like water all around Jerusalem, and there was no one to bury them. We have become a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and derision to those who are around us. How long, LORD? Will You be angry forever? Will Your jealousy burn like fire? Pour out Your wrath on the nations that do not know You, and on the kingdoms that do not call on Your name. For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his dwelling place. Oh, do not remember former iniquities against us! Let Your tender mercies come speedily to meet us, For we have been brought very low. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Your name; And deliver us, and provide atonement for our sins, for Your name’s sake!”*

Application for us today?

1. God is sovereign! He is in control of whatever happens in our lives or in our world!

2. God can take even our defeats and disappointments and bring something good out of them.
 - Romans 8:28-- *“we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”*
 - Romans 8:29-- *“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”*
 - James 1:2-4-- *“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”*

3. Perhaps the Spirit of God is at work in your heart today, convicting you of sin, of the need of a Savior. Will you repent of your sins today and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord?