

Title: **ALEXANDER or CHRIST?**
Text: Zechariah 9:1-11
Subject: *The Coming and Conquests of Christ*
Date: Sunday Morning — February 4, 2007
Reading: *Zechariah 9:1-17*
Tape # Zechariah #48

Introduction:

Most every commentary I have read on the Book of Zechariah asserts that the first eight verses of chapter nine were a prophecy of the mighty conquests of Alexander the Great, pointing to his conquests over the impregnable city of Tyre and the chief cities of the Philistines as prophecy fulfilled and proofs that the Bible is the Inspired Word of God. How sad! That is like saying that the miracles performed by our Lord Jesus were mere demonstrations of his power as God. Such teaching omits the far greater, indescribably more important gospel message of both this prophecy and those miracles. Zechariah's message is not about the conquests of Alexander the Great, but about the conquests of our great Christ! This should be obvious to anyone who simply reads the chapter.

- Chapter 8 closed by describing this great gospel day in which God's elect scattered among all nations "*take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew,*" take hold of the God-man Christ Jesus, Immanuel, saying, "*We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you*" (Zechariah 8:23).
- Verses 9, 10 and 11 are, without dispute a prophetic declaration of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and his mighty conquests of grace. I have read no one who denies that.

(Zechariah 9:9-11) "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. (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. (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."

- I think it is safe to assume that, if the passage immediately preceding verses 1-8 is talking about Christ and the passage immediately

ALEXANDER or CHRIST?

following verses 1-8 is talking about Christ, verses 1-8 must also be talking about Christ.

PROPOSITION: Zechariah is here describing the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and the gathering of God's elect unto him from among the nations of the earth. — Let me show you...

ALL THE TRIBES

We will begin at Zechariah 9:1. — *“The burden of the word of the LORD in the land of Hadrach.”* — Hadrach was a place south of Palestine, near Egypt, named after Hadar, one of the sons of Ishmael (Genesis 25:15, 18). In other words, Zechariah declared that the Word of the Lord would be published among the heathen, the Gentiles.

“And Damascus shall be the rest thereof.” — The prophet here declared that the Word of God would rest in, or upon, Damascus. That is exactly what took place in the Book of Acts. The Apostle Paul was converted on the Damascus road and preached the gospel in the city of Damascus (Acts 9:3, 19-20).

Read on. — *“When the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the LORD.”* — The word translated man is “Adam.” The promise here given is that the eyes of all the Israel of God, all the hosts of God's elect scattered among the fallen sons of Adam shall be fixed upon Christ, Jehovah our Savior. As the gospel is preached in all nations, chosen, redeemed sinners are called out and caused to look to Christ; and, looking to Christ, we live. — *“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”* (Romans 11:26).

PRIDE ABASED

When the Lord Jesus comes in the mighty operations of his saving grace, he abases the pride of man (vv. 2-8).

(Zechariah 9:2-8) “And Hamath also shall border thereby; Tyrus, and Zidon, though it be very wise. (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

ALEXANDER or CHRIST?

smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire. (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. (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.”

In Hameth, a city of Hamites, the cursed people, God’s elect were to be found, and even in Tyre and Sidon, those proud, idolatrous Gentile cities (Acts 21:3-4; 27:3). Tyre was famous for and prided itself in wisdom (Ezekiel 28:3-4). But God made her wisdom foolishness to many there by the preaching of the gospel.

The city of Tyre was a mighty fortress, built upon a rock. It was surrounded by a wall 150 feet high and almost as thick. It was a mighty, proud, impregnable city. But as her walls fell before Alexander, so Christ pulls down the strong holds of men by the gospel.

And these ancient cities had such wealth that their silver was piled up like dust and their gold as mud. Yet, their wealth was reduced to nothing but dust and mud, when Alexander toppled them. So it is when Christ comes in conquering grace! He causes those who thought they were rich to become poor in spirit, that he might fill them with his grace.

Look at verse 4. — “*Behold, the Lord will cast her out.*” Before he gathers in, he casts out. John Gill suggests that this sentence should be translated, “Behold, the Lord will inherit her.” Truly, we are “*his heritage*” (Micah 7:18). — “*And he will smite her power in the sea.*” When the Lord Jesus stretches over us the scepter of his grace and righteousness, he causes our strength to wither before him. — “*And she shall be devoured with fire.*” Our Lord Jesus purges the daughters of Zion “*by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning*” (Isaiah 4:4). “*Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD,*” to devour our pride and melt our hearts before him (Jeremiah 23:29).

ALEXANDER or CHRIST?

The inhabitants of Askelon, seeing the same thing, compelled by grace, were humbled. Gaza was broken. And the Lord's remnant in Ekron were made ashamed of their idolatrous hopes. When the gospel comes to Gaza, the king (the idol Marnes, their god of war — Marnes means "the lord of man") perishes, and the place long inhabited by idolaters is the habitation of grace. — Then bastards, those who were not numbered among the people of God, are made his people, just as Hosea prophesied and Paul explained (Hosea 1:10; Romans 9:25-26).

"Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, *Ye are* not my people, *there* it shall be said unto them, *Ye are* the sons of the living God."

"As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, *that* in the place where it was said unto them, *Ye are* not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God."

You might think I have stretched the meaning of verse 6, until you read it with verse 7. The bastard dwelling in Ashdod is by nature a Philistine. But by grace, the Philistine's pride has been broken, his abominations have been taken away, and "*he that remaineth, even he, shall be for our God!*"

NO OPPRESSOR

Now, look at verse 8. — The Lord God our Savior encamps about his house, his church, and declares, "*no oppressor shall pass through them any more*" The word "*oppressor*" is exactor. It refers to one demanding payment or satisfaction. What a blessed gospel promise that is!

Blessed be God forever! — None shall ever be allowed to exact, or demand satisfaction from any sinner saved by his grace! God demanded satisfaction for our sins from Christ our Surety. Satisfaction once made can never be required again!

- Not by the law, for we are freed by Christ from the exaction, curse, and condemnation of the law.

ALEXANDER or CHRIST?

- Not by justice, for that is fully satisfied, and infinitely well pleased with the righteousness of Christ.
- Not by Satan, the accuser of the brethren.

(Isaiah 59:19-21) “So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him. (20) And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the LORD. (21) As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever.”

(Romans 8:1-4) “*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. (3) For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: (4) That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

(Romans 8:33-34) “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? *It is* God that justifieth. (34) Who *is* he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

John Gill wrote, “This shows that this prophecy is not to be literally understood, since it is certain, that, after the delivery, of it, there were oppressors or exactors among the Jews in a literal sense: Antiochus and others oppressed them before the birth of Christ; they paid tribute to the Romans in his time; he was born at the time of a Roman tax; and, after his death, Titus Vespasian destroyed their nation, and city and temple.”

Now, look at the last line of verse 8. — The Lord God, looking with pleasure upon his people, his church about whom he encamps, looking with satisfaction upon his Son as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the

ALEXANDER or CHRIST?

world, and looking with satisfaction upon us in his Son from everlasting, declares this to be the reason why no exactor shall ever be allowed to oppress us: — *“For now have I seen with mine eyes.”*

CHRIST CRUCIFIED

What has the Lord God seen with his eyes? He tells us in verses 9 and 10. He has seen from eternity that which we must see, if we are to live before him. He has seen Christ crucified, risen, and exalted forever, to save his people.

In these two verses we have a detailed description of our Lord Jesus Christ given 550 years before he actually rode into Jerusalem upon an ass. In fact, the gospel writers refer to this prophecy as a description of our Lord’s physical entry into Jerusalem, when he came there to die for us and enter into his kingdom (Matthew 21:1-11). Zechariah not only describes the circumstances of Christ’s coming, but also gives us a very vivid description of who he is.

1. **Jesus Christ is our King.** — *“Behold thy King cometh unto thee.”* He did not come to be made King. He came as the King. And when he comes in grace he always comes as *“Thy King.”*

2. **“He is just.”** — That means he is righteous in all his ways and in every aspect of his Being. He is *“the Just One”* (Acts 3:12-15; 7:52).

3. **The Lord Jesus Christ, our King, the Just One, he and he alone, has salvation.** — *“Behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation.”* Blessed be his name, he is not only the Just God, — He is the Just God and our Savior (Isaiah 45:21). — He alone has salvation! — He alone is Salvation! — And he alone dispenses salvation!

4. **The Lord Jesus Christ came into Jerusalem in great lowliness and humiliation,** *“lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.”* The great God came down to where we were, that he might take us up to where he is!

5. **The Lord Jesus Christ, our King, comes to save by conquering.** Indeed, he only saves by conquering. That is what we read in the opening

ALEXANDER or CHRIST?

line of verse 10. — “*And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off.*”

6. **And when he conquers, he proclaims peace to those he conquers.** — “*He shall speak peace unto the heathen.*” Christ is our Peace. He made peace for us by pouring out his life’s blood upon the cursed tree. And he speaks peace to us by the gospel.

7. **Our great Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, our great King, has universal dominion.** — “*And his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.*” God the Father has given him power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to his people.

PRISONERS SENT FORTH

In verse 11, the Lord God is still speaking to the daughter of Zion. We know this because the word “*thee*” is feminine. — “*As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.*”

- We were prisoners shut up under the law, shut up in a pit with no water.
- But we were prisoners with whom and for whom the triune God made a covenant. It was a covenant made with us and for us in Christ our Surety.
- It is a blood covenant.
- And by the blood of that covenant, the precious blood of Christ shed for us, we have been thrust out of the prison! — Justice satisfied demands that we be sent out of the pit!

The very same blood that brought our Lord Jesus Christ out of the tomb has delivered us from the pit (Hebrews 13:20).

(Hebrews 13:20-21) “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, (21) Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

By the blood of the covenant...

- Christ came forth from the tomb.
- God makes us perfect.
- The Lord God works in us that which is well pleasing in his sight.
- Christ gets the glory forever.

Amen.