

Pentwater Bible Church

Zechariah

Message 23 Blessings to Israel

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Second Coming of Jesus by Nathan Greene

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Pentwater Bible Church

**The Book of Zechariah
Message Twenty-Three
The Lord Comes For Israel**

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Painting by Sharlene Lindskog-Osorio

THE LORD COMES FOR ISRAEL

Zechariah 9:16-10:4

¹⁶And Jehovah their God will save them in that day as the flock of his people; for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted on high over his land. ¹⁷For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the virgins. 10 ¹Ask ye of Jehovah rain in the time of the latter rain, even of Jehovah that maketh lightnings; and he will give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field. ²For the teraphim have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie; and they have told false dreams, they comfort in vain: therefore they go their way like sheep, they are afflicted, because there is no shepherd. ³Mine anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the he-goats; for Jehovah of hosts hath visited his flock, the house of Judah, and will make them as his goodly horse in the battle. ⁴From him shall come forth the corner-stone, from him the nail, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler together (ASV 1901).

THE WORLD WILL REALIZE ISRAEL'S FINAL DELIVERANCE

Zechariah 9:16

¹⁶And Jehovah their God will save them in that day as the flock of his people; for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted on high over his land (ASV 1901).

God is finished telling them about their terrible trials and proceeds to let them know some of the characteristics of their final deliverance. The use of the term "that day" is indicative of the final eschatological era of Israel's future placement as the head of the world's people groups, deliverance and reinstatement. To be sure they will be delivered from their enemies due to the Covenants God made with their ancient patriarchs (Leviticus 26:42; Romans 9:4-5 etc.). God is faithful and will always do exactly what He says He will do. Since the Lord only wants us to love and obey Him, this future deliverance and saving will include their permanent spiritual salvation. Otherwise it would only be temporary like all the other occasions wherein the Israelites said they would do all that God asked (c.f. Exodus 19:8) but soon after returned to their sinful ways apart from God (c.f. Exodus 31:1-6). For this present Church Age period they have been set aside from His complete blessings, as they have not corporately accepted Jesus as their Messiah. But this Kingdom Age will see all of them being spiritually redeemed (Zechariah 12:10-14) and being restored to their full national election status (Romans 11:26-36). In the imagery that the Lord used with Hosea they are now *loammi* ("not my people) but in the Kingdom Age they will be "*ammi*" or my people (Hosea 2:23)! By God calling them His flock He is essentially saying that they shall be the protected ones under the Good Shepherd. His relationship to them under the complete fulfillment of the New Covenant will cause God to act toward them as a good shepherd does toward his flock. He will seek, deliver, gather and tend to them (Hebrew for shepherd *ro'eh*). At that time Psalm 23 will be realized as the Lord is their Shepherd and they shall not want any longer. Isaiah who was give many views of this future Messianic period said,

Isaiah 40:10-11

¹⁰Behold, the Lord Jehovah will come as a mighty one, and his arm will rule for him: Behold, his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and will gently lead those that have their young (ASV 1901).

As their Shepherd He will *feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs in his arm, and carry them in his bosom*. This Good Shepherd they for so long have rejected will finally see the reward of all His patience of all these thousands of years when He will finally and permanently be their God and they will be His people.

ISRAEL'S FUTURE OUTWARD ATTRACTIVENESS TO OTHERS

One aspect of their salvation will be the attractiveness of the Nation Israel to others. It has already been mentioned before in this book

Zechariah 8:23

²³Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold, out of all the languages of the nations, they 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 (ASV 1901).

Now in the Millennial Kingdom they will radiate out over the land as glistening precious stones set in a crown. He uses the same imagery in Malachi, “*And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, In that day when I make up my jewels* “ (Malachi 3:17 KJV)

A crown always separates the one wearing it from the rest of the people. In fact the Hebrew word for crown is *nezer* from the root *nazar* to separate. Just as the High Priest is set apart from the other priests and the nation in general so too shall Israel be set apart from the world and radiate out their salvation in a sparkling manner to the world serving them.



19th C. French jeweled crown from Ruby Lane.com

The Jewell in the Crown was a phrase used by Benjamin Disraeli, the British prime minister from 1874 to 1881. Being Jewish he was surely aware of the Zechariah passage. At that time he encouraged expansion of the British Empire, in which he called India "the brightest jewel in the crown". At that time Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India. This speech was given at the Crystal Palace in 1872. Then, Disraeli was the Conservative (or Tory) Party's opposition leader in Parliament. In this speech he described his party's position on Empire.¹

However when Jesus, the King of Kings returns riding on a white horse with His entourage of all the saints he will wear many genuine royal diadems (Revelation 19:11-16). His chosen people the Nation Israel for whom He said He came at His first advent (Matthew 15:24) will be the jewel in His many crowns.

¹ T.E. Kebbel, ed., *Selected Speeches of the Earl of Beaconsfield* (London, 1882), Vol. II, pp. 529-534.

ISRAEL WILL HAVE THE FULLEST BLESSINGS IN THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM

Zechariah 9:17

¹⁷ For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the virgins (ASV 1901).

This verse epitomizes the traditional biblical language used to describe the fruitfulness of the age when the Messiah will rule. Grain and wine are staple products in the Holy Land and are often mentioned together in the Old Testament indicating abundance (Genesis 27:28; Joel 2:24; Haggai 1:11; 2:16). The two parts of the last half of this verse should be taken together as indicating plenty of both for everybody. Therefore converted Israel, when “*they shall be as precious stones of a crown lifted up high over His land*” will receive an abundance of spiritual blessing and “glory and then dwell in the land. That will be the outward sign of abundance. “Grain,” exclaims the prophet, “shall make the young men cheerful” (*yenobhabh*, literally, to “grow,” or to “increase “), “as well as new wine the maids (or ‘virgins’).”

THE PRINCE OF PEACE OF HIS PEOPLE

Zechariah 10:1

¹ Ask ye of Jehovah rain in the time of the latter rain, even of Jehovah that maketh lightnings; and he will give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field (ASV 1901).

Chapter continues the thought of further blessings for Israel as a result of the Second Coming of the Messiah. As grain and new wine make for abundance so too does *the latter rain*. “Latter rain” is also a term with prophetic significance, as it refers to the pouring out of divine blessing in the Messianic or Kingdom age. Hosea speaks of Jehovah reviving His people at the end time, in which he refers to His Second Coming “*as the rain, as the latter rain that waters the earth*” (Hosea 6:3). Joel associated it with a time of abundant harvest, the wheat, vineyards, and olive trees having soaked up its nourishment so as to yield their fruit (Joel 2:21-25). This prayer asking for the latter rain is essentially requesting copious showers in fulfillment of the promises of the abundance of the Messianic Kingdom and its resulting blessings. Israel has been blessed with some degree of abundance since they again became a nation in 1948. Their scientific farming technologies and irrigation have turned the wasteland into productive crop filled acres. But this passage speaks of a blessing producing an abundance that the world has not seen yet (Isaiah 30:23-26; 35:1-2; 65:21-24; Jeremiah 31:1-6. 11-14; Ezekiel 34:25-31, 36:8-15, 28-38; Joel 2:18-27; Amos 9:13)

THE FALSE SHEPHERDS CONDEMNED

Zechariah 10:2

² For the teraphim have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie; and they have told false dreams, they comfort in vain: therefore they go their way like sheep, they are afflicted, because there is no shepherd (ASV 1901).

Following verse one with its promises of blessings Jehovah God brings the message that He alone is the source of Israel's help. In verse two He is saying that in the past they relied on idols and pagan occultism for their spiritual sustenance. He is intent on exposing the source of their misdirected affections. The two types of deception are listed as teraphim and diviners. Beginning with the teraphim He accuses them of speaking nonsense (vanity) which is what one should expect from an inanimate object of which one believes will speak to them. Apart of this passage there is only seven other Old Testament occurrences of the teraphim. Some call these small images household gods since individuals and not temples or places of worship held them. They were thought to produce good luck and were frequently relied upon to provide successful outcomes to uncertain situations. There are three fundamental problems with them.

1. They were a gateway to the occult. Any time there was a successful outcome it was the result of demonic intervention in the lives of a family or individual of ancient Israel.
2. They replaced reliance on the genuine God of the universe, Jehovah.
3. They were forbidden to be used and kept by the Israelites but many of them seriously relied upon their advice anyway (I Samuel 15:23; II Kings 23:24).



The Idols Are Brought by James J. Tissot (1836-1902) from II Kings 23:24

The second category of mediums is the diviners, who were persons who pretended to predict the future (Jeremiah 27:9; 29:8; Ezekiel 21:21; Habakkuk 2:18). *Have told false dreams; They comfort in vain*, when they promise temporal blessings (Job 21:34). *Therefore they went their way as a flock*. God clearly told the Israelites just before they entered the promise land that they must stay away from these false prophets (Deuteronomy 18:9-22). He commanded them and in general they did not follow Him. Their first king Saul even violated this command by visiting the witch of Endor to determine the outcome of a battle he was contemplating (I Samuel 28:1-25). By violating his own order against mediums he went to one any way. It resulted in him losing the battle, his throne and his life through suicide as well as the life of his sons Abinab,

Jonathan, and Malchuishua. The punishment for false prophets was death (Deuteronomy 18:20). Saul had issued his own command to kill the false prophets or mediums in Israel and in the end he lost his own life over one. God has provided true prophets but for some strange reason the ancient Israelites and the world in general is led to follow the false ones.

Because the Jews trusted in these vain superstitions, the Israelites had to leave their own place, were led into exile like a flock of sheep driven away for sale or slaughter (Jeremiah 50:17). *They were troubled.* They were and are still oppressed by the heathen. *Because there was (is) no shepherd.* Because they had no righteous king to guard and lead them, they fell under the power of foreign rulers, who ill-treated and oppressed them (Ezekiel 34:5; Nehemiah 5:15).

THE RESULTS OF ISRAEL'S DECEPTION

Zechariah 10:3

³Mine anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the he-goats; for Jehovah of hosts hath visited his flock, the house of Judah, and will make them as his goodly horse in the battle (ASV 1901).

God then made it real clear that He was angry with the bad kings, false prophets, and the demons that led them (he-goats). The Old Testament frequently makes use of the goat *haahtodeem* to signify demonic activity. Sometimes other Hebrew terms are translated as "demons." Always, the context of the term is an attack upon the idolatrous practices of the near neighbor Canaanites and their demon worship for which the Israelites frequently fell victim. For example:

In II Chronicles 11:15 the Hebrew word translated "devils" in the KJV is "goat-demons" in the NRSV. The most common meaning of the word, specifically "he-goat" is found in Genesis 37:1; Leviticus 4:24, and 53 times in the Masoretic Hebrew Text. A feminine form of the word occurs twice to refer to "she-goat" (Leviticus 4:28, 5:6). The basic meaning of "he-goat" is seen in Leviticus 17:7a *And they shall no more sacrifice their sacrifices unto the he-goats, after which they play the harlot.* Directly forbidden in verse seven is the offering of sacrifices to the "he-goats" instead of to the Lord. It becomes clear that the "he-goat" is not just an ordinary goat, but refers to something that is a false object of worship, especially with the term "prostitute" that is commonly used in the Old Testament to describe the unfaithfulness of the people in worshipping pagan gods. Finally in describing the final destruction of Babylon at the end of the Great Tribulation Isaiah tells us that it will be no longer inhabited any longer by humans but only demons which the text represents as exotic animals.

Isaiah 13:19-22

¹⁹And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldeans' pride, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. ²⁰It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall shepherds make their flocks to lie down there. ²¹But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and ostriches shall dwell there, and wild goats shall dance there. ²²And wolves shall cry in their castles, and jackals in

the pleasant palaces: and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged (ASV 1901).

This verse closes with God saying that He, Jehovah of *hosts hath visited his flock, the house of Judah, and will make them as his goodly horse in the battle.* The Israelites shall be delivered from all oppression and God shall use them as a stately war-horse, richly appointed with wardress, to tread down enemies and parade ceremonially over them. Earlier He used war implement imagery similarly in (Ch. 9:13) that he would make Judah his bow and Ephraim his arrow.

THE MESSIAH IS THE CORNERSTONE

Zechariah 10:4

⁴From him shall come forth the corner stone, from him the nail, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler together (ASV 1901).

The Cornerstone is a Messianic title and is frequently found in the Old Testament.

Isaiah 28:16-17

¹⁶therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone of sure foundation: he that believeth shall not be in haste. ¹⁷And I will make justice the line, and righteousness the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place (ASV 1910).

Here Isaiah issues a warning from God to those who have made lies their refuge and under these lies have hidden themselves. They cannot hide because God knows everything and in the Zechariah passages we see them exposed.

God in the Messiah is referenced as the deliver. Isaiah and Zechariah describe the God-Man Jesus who will provide divine leadership in the revived kingdom structure. Paul knew this is Christ, “the chief cornerstone” (Ephesians 2:20). The Cornerstone, nail and battle bow are all metaphorical ways of speaking of people in positions of responsibility and prominence. The nail means one used in building, or a peg for hanging up arms and utensils on the walls of a house. The imagery it implies is one who consolidates or upholds the political constitution (Isaiah 22:23, 24). In this case it is a descriptor of the Messiah in His future role as king of the world providing true justice through His perfect law. The battle bow is a symbol of power and authority, and in the ancient world, kings were often drawn holding a bow. So our Messiah who is the foundation, or cornerstone will uphold His righteous laws in the Millennial Kingdom, have war capabilities to conquer His enemies which will cause them all to depart from Israel.

NEXT WEEK: CHRIST’S SECOND ADVENT

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