

Session 10

Understanding What is Happening in the Middle East

A. Introduction

1. Zechariah 12 – 14 are some of the most dramatic and important prophetic passages regarding Israel. It is a passage that we must know. In it, we see:
 - a. The conclusion of God's mysterious End-Time plan.
 - b. The end of human history which culminates with all nations coming together to make war against Israel, resulting in Jesus' return to deliver Israel and destroy her enemies.
 - c. What is happening in the Middle East from a biblical perspective.
2. Israel's main crisis is not with Islam or other anti-Semitic nations. Her crisis is with God! (Zech. 12:1)
 - a. Her crisis is rooted in the fact that God loves Israel and yet the majority of Israel hates God.
 - b. God will not violate her free will but will use difficulties to humble her and lead her to repentance (Hos. 2:14).
3. God's End-Time message is politically incorrect and will offend Christians, Jews and Arabs.
 - a. Many in Israel will be powerfully converted while others will join the evil regime of the Antichrist and worship him.
 - b. Israel will see both revival and apostasy as the Jews in the land are both gathered to the land and driven from it. Some will be supernaturally protected while others will be killed or put in prison (Zech. 14:2; Isa. 42:7, 22; 49:9, 24–25; Ps. 102:20).
 - c. Zechariah prophesied that two-thirds of the nation would be killed (Zech. 13:8). However, others will function as anointed apostolic believers who will freely go in and out of Israel in the spirit of Isa. 66:19.
4. In the Scriptures, it is clear that Israel's best and worst days are yet ahead. Israel's victory will surpass anything seen in history. At the same time, Israel's judgments will surpass all other times of judgment in history including what happened to her in 70 AD. However, the timing of her victory and the trials that occur between now and then must be acknowledged and proclaimed (Matt. 24:21; Dan. 12:7).

5. The Church must boldly and clearly proclaim these themes to believers and unbelievers, and to Jews and Arabs, so that all are well informed about God's plan as set forth in Zech. 12 – 14.
 - a. Many are embarrassed by Jesus being a Judge. It is as if His judgments are too extreme or lacking in love.
 - b. Jesus is zealous to remove all that hinders love. God's End-Time plan is motivated by passion to fill the earth with voluntary lovers of Jesus (Rev. 15:4).
 - c. God's plan is to first produce an entire nation of people (Israel) who will love God first, before leading the whole earth back to God.
 - d. Our message includes telling people that God is unfolding a significant End-Time plan and is fully in control and that all of us have an important role to play.

B. Outline of Zechariah 12 – 14

1. Israel's sudden military and spiritual victory (Zech. 12:1–13:6)
 - a. All the nations will gather against Jerusalem in a major military and political assault (Zech. 12:1–3);
 - b. Israel's military victory — Israel will be unified and anointed like David (Zech. 12:4–9);
 - c. Israel's national repentance and conversion — the outpouring of the Spirit (Zech. 12:10–14);
 - d. Israel's national cleansing — from sin, idols, false prophets and the unclean spirit (Zech. 13:1–6).
2. Israel's suffering — a remnant will be refined in the fire (Zech. 13:7 – 14:2)
 - a. Israel will pass through much tribulation, which will refine the remnant to be saved (Zech. 13:7–9);
 - b. Jerusalem is temporarily taken and captives are deported (Zech. 14:1–2).
3. Israel's victory when Jesus returns as King of the nations (Zech. 14:3–21)
 - a. Jesus returns as the King of Israel to deliver her from her enemies (Zech. 14:3–5);
 - b. Jesus' Kingship is announced through miracles — unusual light and living water (Zech. 14:6–8);
 - c. Jesus is exalted as King over all the nations (Zech. 14:9);
 - d. Jesus' capital Jerusalem is leveled, exalted and safely inhabited (Zech. 14:10 – 11);
 - e. Jesus will punish all the nations that rebel against His leadership (Zech. 14:12–15, 18–19);

- f. The Gentiles shall be converted and unite with Israel to worship Jesus (Zech. 14:16–19);
- g. Israel will be the first nation to walk holy in every area of life. There will be no mixture in her (Zech. 14:20–21).

C. Israel's Military and Spiritual Victory (Zech. 12:1 – 13:6)

1. The Lord introduces Himself as the One who stretched out the heavens, laid the foundation of the earth and formed the human spirit (Zech. 12:1). He has the wisdom, power and love to execute His remarkable plans that are presented in Zechariah 12 – 14.
2. The two metaphors: cup of drunkenness and a heavy stone (Zech. 12:2–3)
 - a. God will make Jerusalem like a cup that makes all the nations drunk.
 - i. All the nations will hate the Jewish people and therefore, will surround Jerusalem and lay siege to her with zeal to destroy Israel.
 - ii. Jerusalem will be like a cup of drunkenness to the nations. She will be as a cup of strong wine that intoxicates all who drink it. By agreeing with the plan to destroy Israel, the nations are drinking this cup. They will become “drunk” in the process.
 - iii. As a result, they will lose their strength and their ability to think rationally. Their false feeling of invincibility leads them to make very bad decisions. The Lord will defeat them as easily as one pushes a drunken man over.
 - b. God will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone to all people.
 - i. Everyone will have to decide whether to stand for God and Jerusalem or against God and Jerusalem. There will be no neutral ground.
 - ii. God will use Jerusalem as “the issue” to separate the righteous from the unrighteous in families, neighborhoods, schools, marketplace, economy etc., both in the Church and in all nations (Joel 3:14).
 - iii. We are now at the early stages of the valley of decision. If we do not now choose to walk close to God with a vibrant spirit, we will not be able to take a stand for the difficult “politically incorrect” truths that God will require of all later.
 - iv. To those who seek to “heave Israel out of the land,” she will be an unmovable rock. The nations will be bolstered in their confidence to come against Israel because all the nations on earth will stand together in this.
3. The Lord is the One who will gather the military forces of all the nations together against Israel. The David and Goliath drama will be re-enacted on the world stage as one little nation, Israel, faces all other nations. The nations’ false confidence is based on not knowing God’s jealousy for Israel (Zech. 8:2; 14:2; Joel 3:2).

4. Zechariah began to reveal this prophecy only at the end of the story — at the point where all the nations have surrounded Jerusalem. He didn't tell us how it happened, but the Lord will put Himself in a position of a "divine checkmate" where it will take God's power to solve Israel's dilemma. This is how God wants it to be.
 5. No one has the power to deliver Israel except God. *The ally that Israel most needs is a holy and prophetic Church that fasts and prays.*
 6. The Lord will release confusion and a spirit of insanity on the Gentile armies. They will boast of their power, but God will instead use it against them. Their strength will end up being their weakness as they use their military might while under a spirit of madness (Zech. 12:4).
 7. This will be the *greatest military victory and reversal in all history* (Zech. 12:9)
 - a. Jesus will anoint Israel so that she will be like a fire pan (vessel used to carry hot coals to ignite other fires).
 - b. Israel's victory in battle will be as fire burns up dry grass — it will be effortless and instantaneous.
 8. Israel's national repentance and conversion — the outpouring of the Spirit (Zech. 12:10–14)
 - a. God will pour out the spirit of grace and prayer so that Israel will cry out to Jesus for salvation. The *spirit of grace and supplication refers to the anointing of revelation, power and prayer.* After this great military victory, Israel will have deep humility instead of pride.
 - b. God will deliver Israel in a way that causes them to love Jesus more than the nations that they looked to for help. Ultimately, they will look to Jesus of Nazareth for deliverance. They will understand that He delivers them because He loves them! Then, they will see the tragedy of having hated Jesus for 2,000 years as He has always loved them! The national repentance and mourning of Israel is described very graphically (Zech. 12:11–14).
 9. *Israel's national cleansing will be from sin, idols, false prophets and the unclean spirit. God will open a fountain of grace to cleanse Israel of all her national and individual sin* (Zech. 13:1–6).
 - a. The Antichrist would have been worshipped throughout the land of Israel. The False Prophet would have been working with the Antichrist in Israel. They would have had a network of false prophets working under them. The cleansing will put the false prophets to shame (Zech. 13:3–6).
 - b. The pattern that God employs in Israel's salvation reveals the same principles that He will use to cleanse and revive the rest of the nations. God will break the pride of all nations, pour out His Spirit, reveal Jesus and then cleanse the people as they come to Him in deep repentance.
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D. Israel's Suffering — The Remnant will be Refined in the Fire (Zech. 13:7 – 14:2)

1. Israel will face trials and suffering during the End Times. God will use the least severe means to bring the greatest number of people to Jesus at the deepest level of love (Zech. 13:7 – 14:2).
2. The remnant of Israel will be refined through the fires of tribulation unto salvation. God now reveals part of His way of bringing about a great spiritual revival to Israel (Zech. 13:7–9).
3. Daniel spoke of persecution and suffering as part of God's End-Time plan to prepare His people to rule the earth with Jesus. God forewarns Israel that her great victory will include pain (Dan. 7:18–27).
4. The Father awakened His sword against His Son at the cross (Zech. 13:7)
 - a. Jesus will oversee the cleansing of End-Time Israel. He is qualified because He is deeply acquainted with suffering for Israel.
 - b. No one will be able to say to Him, "You don't understand the suffering that You are allowing." The sword of God's judgment that struck Jesus is the same sword that will strike End-Time Israel.
 - c. Jesus was innocent but End-Time Israel will be guilty. Jesus understands what Israel will go through since He knows what it means to be struck by the Father's sword. He is able to lead them to salvation.
5. God will turn His hand or sword of judgment against two-thirds of Israel who will be killed. This was not fulfilled in 70 AD. Malachi 3:1–6 develops this same theme of Israel being refined like silver in the End Times.
6. Jerusalem is temporarily taken and captives are deported (Zech. 14:1–2).

E. Israel's Victory when Jesus Returns as King of the World (Zech. 14:3–21)

1. In Zech. 14:3–21, we see Israel's victory because her King comes to deliver her. He brings great victory that will begin in Israel and spread to the rest of the world (Zech. 9:9–10);
2. Jesus will return as the King of Israel to deliver her from her enemies (Zech. 14:3–5);
3. Jesus' Kingship is announced by miracles — unusual light and living water (Zech. 14:6–8);
4. Jesus will be exalted as King over all the nations (Zech. 14:9);
5. Jesus' capital Jerusalem will be leveled, exalted and then safely inhabited (Zech. 14:10–11);
6. Jesus will punish all nations that rebel against His leadership (Zech. 14:12–15, 18, 19);
7. The Gentiles shall be converted and unite with Israel to worship Jesus (Zech. 14:16–19);

8. Israel will be the first nation to walk holy in every area of life. There will be no mixture in her (Zech. 14:20–21).

Session 11

The Redemptive Role of Israel in the End Times

A. Introduction

1. The redemptive role of Israel in the End Times cannot be fully understood without seeing God's big picture with regard to the heart of the Gospel in Isaiah 61, God's eternal purpose for human history and the battle of Jerusalem.
2. To fully understand the subject of Israel and the End Times, we need to know that it is about the wisdom, majesty and glorious leadership of Jesus. It is also about the redemption of mankind and restoration of creation. It is not just an event or just about the nation of Israel.

B. Isaiah 61 — the Gospel of Grace and the Gospel of the Kingdom

1. The primary text that Jesus preached from during His First Coming was Isaiah 61. This is a passage that reveals the very heart of the Gospel.
2. It is interesting to note that in the First Coming when Jesus preached, He ended this text in the middle of verse two (compare Isa. 61:1–2a and Lk. 4:18–19).
3. The Gospel is two-fold:
 - a. Gospel of Grace: the aspect of forgiveness, healing and restoration (Isa. 61:1–2a);
 - b. Gospel of the Kingdom: the aspect of executing judgment, establishing justice, bringing joy to the earth and establishing of the Kingdom of God (i.e. Messianic Kingdom or Millennial Kingdom) on the earth (Isa. 61:2b–7).
4. Jesus concentrated on forgiveness and healing at His First Coming. This is because according to the plan of God, it was the time for Him to be crucified for the atonement and salvation of man.
5. At His Second Coming, He will concentrate on establishing the Kingdom of God. He will appear as a roaring Lion to punish those who have rebelled against God and execute justice.
6. The Messianic Kingdom on earth is connected with the restoration of Israel.
 - a. The restoration of Israel is the overall context for Isaiah 60 – 62.
 - b. When Jesus was raised from the dead, He taught the disciples for forty days about the Kingdom of God. This resulted in their expectation for the restoration of Israel in Acts 1:6.

- c. Jesus did not correct their question for it was not wrong. Instead, He answered that the time for the restoration of Israel would not be until the Gospel is preached to all the nations of the world (Acts 1:7–8).
- 7. The nation of Israel will play a vital role in the Second Coming of Jesus and the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom of God.
- 8. This is what Paul talks about in Romans 11:15 — the restoration of the nation of Israel and her spiritual return to the Messiah will usher in the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom on the earth.

C. Centerpiece of God's Eternal Purpose

1. The centerpiece of God's purpose is for Jesus to establish His Kingdom over all the earth as He joins the heavenly and earthly realms together (Eph. 1:9–10).
 - a. God is a Spiritual Being who created a physical world. It is His desire to bring the two worlds (i.e. spiritual and physical) together.
 - b. The fullness of God happens when the heavenly and earthly realms come together!
 - c. The sin of Adam and the rebellion of Satan caused a split between Heaven and earth.
 - d. Only a Person who is both God and man could bridge the gap between Heaven and earth.
 - e. Jesus will bring Heaven and earth together at His Second Coming when the New Jerusalem descends to earth and establishes a vital connection with earthly Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2, 10).
2. The Person and the Place
 - a. The Messiah is God's chosen King upon the earth. This Messiah-King is being referred to as God's Son in Psalm 2:6, 7, 12.
 - b. The Jewish world sees the Messiah as a King but misses Him as God's Son. The Christian world sees Jesus as God's Son but misses Him as the King of Israel (Ps. 2:6–7).
 - c. God has determined that He will establish His authority on earth through a certain Person — Jesus Christ. However, He has also chosen a certain place for His throne — Jerusalem. We have to accept God's chosen Person and His designated place.

“Yet I have set My King on My holy hill of Zion...” (Ps. 2:6)
 - d. These two expressions of God's authority — His chosen Person and His designated Place — constitute a test for all mankind. It is a test of man's heart

to see whether we will submit to the will of God. It is through God's chosen Person and designated Place that God addresses the root of sin and rebellion in man.

3. Jesus will rule all the nations from His Throne of glory in Jerusalem (Matt. 25:31–32; Jer. 3:17; Ezek. 43:6–7)
 - a. His heavenly Throne is also in New (or heavenly) Jerusalem. It will be a dynamic convergence between the two Jerusalems (Rev. 22:3).
 - b. Jesus rules in heaven as the Son of God (i.e. in the New Jerusalem) and He rules on the earth as the Son of David (earthly Jerusalem). The governments of heaven and of earth will fully come together at the Second Coming. He is the only One who has the authority to bring both realms together.
4. There will be an explosion of God's glory when the government of heaven is joined with together with the government of the earth. This will usher in:
 - a. God's fullness on earth (Hab. 2:14);
 - b. Satan's banishment into prison (Rev. 20:1–3);
 - c. The resurrection of the dead and the created order being delivered from its bondage (Rom. 8:17–23; 11:15; Isa. 11:6–9; 35:1–8; 65:17–25).

D. The Redemptive Role of Israel in the End Times

1. To invite the King of glory to rule in Jerusalem and to reign over them (Matt. 23:37–39; Ps. 24:7–10; Lk. 19:11–28)
 - a. Jesus will not rule Jerusalem until He is officially invited by the Jewish leadership to be their King.
 - b. Jesus has bound Himself by His own prophecy to only come back to Jerusalem after Israel's leadership asks Him to reign over them out of their own free will.
 - c. Only upon this covenantal invitation from Israel will Jesus establish Himself as King over Jerusalem and Israel. After that, He will expand His government over all the nations (Isa. 2:1–4; Mic. 4:1–5; Jer. 3:17; Ezek. 37:28; 43:4–7).
 - d. Satan understands this truth and therefore, seeks to exploit this “loophole” in God's prophetic plan. His plan is to control Jerusalem and see to it that no Jewish person is alive to invite Jesus back to be King in Jerusalem over Israel.
2. Israel as a prototype of God's holy nation in the Millennium (Isa. 2:2–3; Deut. 28:1–2)
 - a. Having been provoked to jealousy by the Gentile Church at the End of the Age, Israel will in turn provoke the nations of the earth under the leadership of Jesus to walk out the commandments of the Lord (i.e. Torah and the Sermon on the Mount).

- b. Nations will flock to Israel to learn from her so that they can walk in the same blessings and abundance.

E. Battle of Jerusalem: the Vortex of God's End-Time Drama

1. Satan's rage against the Jewish people — Satan wants to exterminate the Jewish people so that a believing remnant cannot invite Jesus to rule over Israel as her Messiah. Satan seeks to exterminate Israel and the Church that stands with her (Rev. 6:9–11; 7:9–14; 9:21; 11:7; 12:13–17; 13:7–15; 16:5–7; 17:6; 18:24; Dan. 7:21,25; 8:24; 11:33–35; 12:7; Matt. 10:21–22,28; 24:9; Lk. 12:4–7; 21:16–19).
2. The Battle of Jerusalem is the most significant battlefield in the spirit realm today.
 - a. The Battle of Jerusalem is central to the Armageddon Campaign and Jesus' Second Coming to reign as King of the whole earth.
 - b. The Armageddon Campaign is a war for the control of Jerusalem. After Jesus wins this war and is received by Israel in Jerusalem as their King, Satan will be cast into prison (Rev. 20:1–3) and the Kingdom of God will be established on earth.
 - c. Satan knows this truth and is focused on avoiding this prison sentence that will ultimately put him in the Lake of Fire after the Millennium (Rev. 20:10).
 - i. His primary agenda is not to keep people out of heaven but to stay out of prison even though he hates it when people get saved.
3. The call to the Church to engage in the Battle of Jerusalem through:
 - a. Prophetic proclamations to Israel (Isa. 40:1–2);
 - b. Prophetic proclamations to the Gentile nations (Jer. 31:7–10).

Session 13

God's Plan to Transform Israel

(Daniel 9:24–27)

A. Introduction

1. The book of Daniel records four visions that Daniel had: Dan. 7:1–28; 8:1–27; 9:24–27; 10:4 – 12:13.
2. Dan. 9:24–27 records his third vision. It is a short vision about God's plans to transform the entire earth and fill it with the knowledge of the glory of God (Hab. 2:14). In this great plan, God chooses Israel to lead all the nations of the earth to God (Isa. 2:1–4; Mic. 4:1–4).
3. God sent the angel Gabriel to give Daniel this great vision that would cover Israel's most significant historical events over the next 2,500 years. Gabriel spoke in an abbreviated way and used only short phrases to describe Israel's future. However, each phrase has massive implications (Dan. 9:21–23).
4. Gabriel urged Daniel to consider the vision so as to understand it. Gabriel later exhorted the saints to know and understand this vision (Dan. 9:23–25).
5. Similarly, an angel told Daniel that in the End Times, God would raise up "people of understanding" (Dan. 11:33–35).
6. Daniel 9:24–27 prophesies of the difficulties that Israel would endure for approximately 2,500 years (from Daniel's generation until Jesus' return). She would suffer under God's judgment for her persistent rebellion against Him.
 - a. Refusing to give up on Israel, God set into motion a grand plan to bring Israel to national repentance so that she will be able to lead all the nations into God's ways.
 - b. Israel's world leadership begins when Jesus returns and continues through the Millennial Kingdom.
 - c. This vision that spans four verses predicts significant details related to Jesus' first and second comings.

B. Summary and Outline of Dan. 9:24–27

1. In Dan. 9:24, Gabriel gave Daniel six great promises that would describe the transformation of the whole world, beginning in Jerusalem and with the Jewish people.
2. In Dan. 9:25, he revealed the positive things that would happen in Israel's near future. This verse describes what would occur during the first 69 weeks (483 years),

with a positive focus on the restoration of Jerusalem after Babylonian captivity under the leadership of Nehemiah and Ezra and then the coming of Jesus as Israel's Messiah.

3. In Dan. 9:26, he revealed Israel's future sin and trouble related to Jesus' first coming.
 - a. This verse describes the negative things that would occur immediately after the 69th week.
 - b. Gabriel revealed that Israel's Messiah would be "cut off" or killed violently. This would result in God judgment on Israel through the Roman army's destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 70 AD.
4. In Dan. 9:27, he revealed Israel's End-Time sin and trouble related to Jesus' return.
 - a. Israel will make a covenant with the Antichrist and receive him as their Messiah.
 - b. The Antichrist will betray this covenant by acting in extremely abominable ways that include stopping the religious activities in Israel's rebuilt Temple and bringing desolation to Israel.
 - c. Jesus will destroy the Antichrist by pouring great desolation on him.
 - d. This verse describes the final seven years of natural human history and is referred to as Daniel's 70th week.

C. God established Seventy weeks (490 years) for Israel's Salvation (Dan. 9:24a, b)

1. *"Seventy weeks are determined"* — Gabriel said that God has determined a timeframe of "70 weeks" as necessary in His plan to prepare Israel.
 - a. A "week" to the Hebrew understanding was a period of seven days or seven years (there are two understandings to the meaning of a "week"). Scriptures refer to both types of weeks (Gen. 29:27–28).
 - b. A week of seven years was a well-known term in Daniel's day. All commentators agree that the "week" in Daniel's prophecy is a week of years (490 literal years) not a week of days.
2. God has determined to prepare Israel over a period of 490 years (70 units of 7 years).
 - a. Jeremiah prophesied that Israel would suffer under Gentile oppression for 70 years outside the land (Jer. 29:10, Dan. 9:2).
 - b. Gabriel revealed that they would suffer oppression for seventy weeks in the land (Dan. 9:24–27).

D. The Millennial Kingdom: Six Great Promises (Dan. 9:24c–h)

1. Gabriel elaborated on the Millennial Kingdom in Dan. 7:27. He came to give Daniel “skill in understanding.”
 - a. The vision was given to assure Daniel that complete restoration would come to Israel (v.24).
 - b. This involved six specific promises, with each one related to the Millennial Kingdom (and the New Earth). Dan. 7:27 will be fulfilled with eternal dimensions.
 - c. These six glorious dimensions of world transformation are the fruit of God’s seventy-week strategy for Israel and also of the Great Tribulation (v.27).
 - i. The first three promises have to do with God removing sin.
 - ii. The second three promises have to do with the establishment of God’s Kingdom by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, as God’s people on earth worship Him in spirit and truth.
2. The main purpose of the seventy-week strategy is to deal with the sin problem that humans have had since the Garden of Eden.
 - a. All six promises have been partially fulfilled because of the cross. However, they will only be fully manifested on earth at the Second Coming.
 - b. God would use 490 years to prepare them to lead the world to receive the benefit of these six blessings (Isa. 2:1–4; Mic. 4:1–4). These 490 years occur when Israel is in her land.
3. *“To finish the transgression”* (v.24c) — to end Israel’s national rebellion against God and His Son.
 - a. The Hebrew word transgression has a definite article ‘the’, implying that it refers to a specific transgression.
 - b. It ultimately speaks of Israel’s rebellion in their rejection of Jesus throughout history and their acceptance of the Antichrist as their Messiah.
4. *“To make an end of sins”* (v.24d) — sins in the plural speaks of individual sins in everyday life.
5. *“To make reconciliation for iniquity”* (v.24e) — through the cross of Jesus, God provided a way to forgive all debts of past national and individual sins.
 - a. To “make reconciliation” is the Hebrew verb “kipper” (meaning “to atone”), which refers to paying the price for former crimes against God’s holiness.
 - b. Sins from our past do not go away just because we repent, but they must be paid for. Christ, through His blood, has reconciled the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:19).

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6. *“To bring in everlasting righteousness”* (v.24f) — to establish a new world where righteousness prevails in the people, in social structures and in the land.
 - a. What Jesus accomplished on the cross will be released at the Second Coming and made fully manifest in every dimension of society and life (Rom. 8:19–23).
 - b. The Great Commission will be fulfilled completely. The earth will be filled with righteousness forever — the righteous reign of Jesus’ kingdom (Isa. 11:2–5; Jer. 23:5–6; 33:15–18; 2 Pet. 3:13).
 7. *“To seal up vision and prophecy”* (v.24g) — God will fulfill all the prophetic promises that He has given for all individuals, nations and for the earth as a whole.
 - a. He will “seal up” or bring to completion the visions and prophecies that relate to Jesus’ First and Second Coming.
 - b. “To seal” speaks of closing a document to preserve it after it has been verified (Jer. 32:10).
 8. *“To anoint the Most Holy”* (v.24h) — the presence of the Holy Spirit will fully rest on Jesus as the King of the whole earth and will be manifested in the Temple that He reigns from.
 - a. To anoint means to consecrate for God’s service. Jesus is the “anointed One” or the Messiah. He will be anointed for worldwide Millennial ministry (Isa. 61:1).
 - b. This also refers to God’s anointing (Shekinah glory) being made manifest in the Holy of Holies in the new Millennial Temple. God will be fully manifest with us forever in the eternal Holy of Holies in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:3–7).

E. What happens during the first 69 weeks (or 483 years) (Dan. 9:25)

1. The going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem (under Nehemiah and Ezra) until Messiah (Jesus’ First Coming) will be 69 weeks (units of 7 years or 483 years).
 - a. The 69 weeks or 483 years are separated into 2 parts:
 - i. 7 weeks (49 years);
 - ii. 62 weeks (434 years).
 - b. The 7 weeks (49 years) begins with a command given to Nehemiah (Neh. 2:5) by Artaxerxes to re-build Jerusalem in 445 BC.
 - c. If we add an additional 62 weeks (434 years), we arrive at Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem on a donkey and subsequent crucifixion in April of AD 32. The first part of the prophecy stopped with the cutting off of the Messiah.
 - d. Note that a Jewish calendar year is 360 days (as opposed to 365 days in the Roman calendar).
 2. The 70 weeks (490 years) are divided into 3 parts:
 - i. 7 weeks (49 years);
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- ii. 62 weeks (434 years);
- iii. 1 week (the final 7 years just before Jesus' return).
- a. We are currently living in the gap between the first 69 weeks (7 weeks + 62 weeks) and the final 70th week. After Jesus was killed in Jerusalem and Israel was driven out of her land in AD 70, God's prophetic clock stopped, and has stopped for over 2,000 years until a time in the near future when Israel makes a covenant with the Antichrist while back in her land (v.27).
- b. The 70th week (final seven-year period with the Antichrist) is immediately before the Second Coming of Jesus.

F. What Happens after the 69 Weeks (483 years) (Dan. 9:26)

1. Daniel prophesied that after the end of the 7 weeks (49 years) plus 62 weeks (434 years) — a total of 483 years (from 445 BC to AD 32) — the Messiah would be cut off or violently killed (v.26a). This happened in April of AD 32.
2. *"The people of the prince who is to come"* refer to the Romans and the Emperor Titus. They destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in AD 70.
3. God had determined desolations for Israel until the end of the Roman war against her (v.26d).

G. What Happens in the 70th week (Dan. 9:27)

1. After Jesus' crucifixion (AD 32) and the destruction of the city of Jerusalem by the Romans (AD 70), the Antichrist shall confirm a covenant with many (majority in Israel and/or many Gentile nations) for "one week" or for a seven-year period (v.27a). The length of time between v.26 and v.27 has so far been about 2000 years, and based on the signs of the times today and the return of Israel to her land, the start of the "one week" is likely to be in the near future.
2. In the middle of this one week (seven-year period), the Antichrist will bring an end to the sacrifice and offering that he would have originally permitted in the Jerusalem Temple (v.27b).
3. *"On the wing of abominations"* or by using extreme abominations to God, the Antichrist who is the "one who makes desolate" will bring desolation to all nations (v.27c).
 - a. Gabriel told Daniel that the Antichrist would operate on the wing (pinnacle or extreme expression) of abominations.
 - b. The "Abomination of Desolation" is directly referred to by name six times in Scripture (Dan. 8:13; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Matt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14).
 - c. The "Abomination of Desolation" is the scriptural name for the Antichrist's image that is placed in the Temple.

4. The Antichrist will continue this desolation until Jesus' judgments come upon him. God has determined to pour out great judgment on this man who is called "the desolate" (v.27d).

Session 15

The Political Signs of the Times Pertaining to Israel

A. Introduction

1. Scripture commands us to know the signs of the times. Many Scriptures emphasize how important prophetic signs are at the End of the Age. In the Scriptures, Jesus taught on, more than any of the apostles, the need to discern the times (Matt. 24:32–44; Lk. 21:28–31).
2. When comparing Matt. 24 with 1 Thes. 5:2–3 we see three distinct prophetic timeframes related to the final seven-year period of this age:
 - a. The beginning of birth pangs (Matt. 24:8);
 - b. A worldwide period of counterfeit peace and safety or increased birth pangs (1 Thes. 5:2–3; Dan. 9:27);
 - c. The Great Tribulation or heavy birth pangs (Matt. 24:21; Jer. 30:5–7).
3. The beginning of birth pangs began in either 1948 (when Israel became a nation) or 1967 (when Jerusalem came under Jewish control). I believe that it should begin in 1948. This is because Israel is the reference point for understanding God's redemptive history (past and future). Israel gives us the prophetic timetable for the unfolding of God's End-Time plans.
4. Five of the most significant prophetic political events since Jesus' ascension that have taken place and will take place are:
 - a. The re-birth of the nation of Israel (May 15, 1948);
 - b. The re-capturing of Jerusalem during the Six Day War (June, 1967);
 - c. Jerusalem at the center of world controversy (Zech. 12:1–3; 14:1–3);
 - d. The establishment of the European Union in the same territory as the ancient Roman Empire (Dan. 2:41–42; 7:7, 20, 24; 9:26–27; Rev. 12:3; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12, 16);
 - e. The emergence of an international leader in the unique position to establish a peace treaty with Israel and the Middle East to bring world peace (Dan. 9:27; 1 Thes. 5:2–3).
5. Four of these have occurred or have begun to occur (Europe soon to be unified). Thus, the most significant political prophetic events as prophesied in the Bible are occurring in our generation.

6. The nation of Israel has always been the primary time indicator for God's prophetic calendar. The entire End-Time scenario in Scripture is given in context of events related to Israel. Dan. 9:24–27 is the most significant prophecy about nations in the End Times. It speaks of Israel being in her land, with a functioning Temple in Jerusalem and in a covenant with the Antichrist.
7. Several prophecies related to Israel are closely linked and interdependent with each other. These include:
 - a. The setting up of the Abomination of Desolation;
 - b. The return of Israel to her land and the re-establishment of the State of Israel;
 - c. Jerusalem returning to Israel's control;
 - d. The rebuilding of the Temple;
 - e. The re-establishment of the Hebrew language and the Sabbath (in their civil law);
 - f. The focusing of world politics onto Israel that will result in worldwide anti-Semitism;
 - g. The gathering of all nations to lay siege against Jerusalem.

B. The Abomination of Desolation: the Primary Sign of the End Times

1. The sign of the Abomination of Desolation has many significant implications to it (Matt. 24:15–22). The Abomination of Desolation is referred to six times in Scripture — four times by Daniel (Dan. 8:13; 9:27; 11:31; 12:11) and two times by Jesus (Matt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14).
2. The Abomination of Desolation will occur when the Antichrist declares himself to be God. Central to this Abomination is the image of the Beast (Antichrist), which will be a statue (image or idol) that is demonically empowered so that it will seem to think, talk, breathe, and make laws. This statue (image) will be the abomination in the Temple. The apostle John made reference to this image ten times (Rev. 13:14, 15; 14:9, 11; 15:2; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4).
3. This image will be the greatest abomination to God in all of history because the Antichrist will demand to be worshipped as God. The desolation will occur in two different ways:
 - a. The Antichrist will seek to desolate or destroy any who refuse to worship him;
 - b. God will desolate or destroy in judgment all those who give in to the pressure to worship the Antichrist.

4. After the wound on the Antichrist's head heals, the Abomination of Desolation will be the key to beginning his aggressive plan to rule the whole earth as God. This act of abomination will occur in the middle of the last seven years before Jesus returns.
5. The image (statue or idol) of the Beast will be set up in the Jerusalem temple. When this happens, the daily sacrifices (according to Mosaic law) that would have been recently restored will be stopped (Dan. 9:27; 12:11).
6. Antiochus Epiphanes (Antiochus IV; 175–164 BC) defiled the Temple in a way that would prophetically foretell how the Antichrist would defile it in the End Times (Dan. 11:31).
7. The Abomination of desolation requires Israel to be in her land with a rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem in order for the Antichrist to be able to set up an idol in it (Dan. 9:27; Matt. 25:15; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 13:5, 15–18).

C. The Relationship between the Antichrist's Actions and the Rebuilt Temple

1. Significant activities related to the Tribulation Temple signal the signs of the End Times. The Abomination of Desolation cannot occur unless Israel rebuilds the Temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem (Matt. 24:15; Mk. 13:14; 2 Thes. 2:4; Rev. 11:1–2; 13:12–18; Dan. 9:26, 27; 11:31; 12:11).
2. The Temple does not currently exist, but we know that it must be rebuilt. Even now, plans to rebuild the Third Temple are being pursued aggressively in Israel. The temple may be rebuilt just before the first half of the final seven-year period (often referred to as Daniel's 70th Week).
3. Paul's prophecy about the Tribulation Temple is founded on Daniel's prophecy (Dan. 9:27). Paul prophesied of the desecration of the Tribulation Temple by the Antichrist (2 Thes. 2:4).
4. For the Antichrist to stop the daily sacrifices in the Temple, the Tribulation Temple must exist (Dan. 12:11; Rev. 11:1–2).
5. The "Third Temple" is NOT the same as the Millennial Temple. There are two distinct Jerusalem Temples prophesied in Scripture:
 - a. The Third Temple, which is the same as the Tribulation Temple, will be built by unbelieving Jews and then desecrated by the Antichrist.
 - b. The Millennial Temple will be built by Jesus upon His return (Isa. 2:3; 60:6, 10, 13; Ezek. 37:26–28; 40–48; Zech. 2:11; 6:12–15; 14:16–21).

D. Nations Will Set a Siege against Jerusalem

1. Jerusalem will become the central focus of world attention (Zech. 12:3; 14:2).
2. By this time, Israel's military forces and strength would have been re-established (Zech. 12:6–8).

E. Israel becomes a nation and gains control over Jerusalem

1. For the Abomination of Desolation to occur and for Israel to be the center of world attention and attacked, she would have to be in back in her land and be re-established as the State of Israel (Isa. 14:1; 66:7–8; Ezek. 36:22–37:1–2; Zech. 12:1–6; Matt. 24:32–35; Mk. 13:28–30; Lk. 21:29–31).
2. Jewish people must also be re-gathered their land (Deut. 30:1, 5–9; Isa. 11:10–12; Ezek. 37:1–12).
3. Over five million Israelites have returned to their ancient land, making this the largest movement of people to return to Israel in her history (surpassing the Exodus from Egypt over 3,500 years ago).
4. As recent as 100 years ago, it seemed impossible that Israel would become a nation again. The Jewish people were weak and scattered throughout many nations. Suddenly, however, out of the burning ashes of the Holocaust, Israel became a nation again and then as unexpected re-captured Jerusalem from the Arab nations.

F. Israel will establish a Covenant with the Antichrist

1. The angel Gabriel spoke to the prophet Daniel about the final seven years of this age immediately preceding the Messiah's coming to rule the world from Jerusalem (Dan. 9:24–27).
2. Gabriel spoke of these seven years as a “week”. This was a common expression in Israel where they thought of a “week” in terms of years (seven years) or in terms of days (seven days). In Daniel's prophecy, the “week” refers to a period of seven years. Hence, this final seven-year period just before Jesus' return is often referred to as “Daniel's prophetic week” or “Daniel's 70th week” (Dan. 9:24–27).
3. Israel's governmental leaders will make a covenant with the Antichrist (called the “covenant with death and with Sheol” or Hell), and give their authority to him seven years before Jesus' Coming (Isa. 28:14–18; Dan. 9:27; 11:45; Zech. 11:16; Ezek. 38:8–12, 14; 39:26; Jn. 5:43; Lk. 19:11–28; 1 Thes. 5:3).
4. The remnant of Israel will fully resist this decision. At the end of the Tribulation, Israel will reverse her decision by asking Jesus to rule over her, leading to great blessing.
5. This political covenant will include peace treaties and economic deals with many nations, including the Middle Eastern Islamic nations. This covenant will seem to “guarantee” political, economic and spiritual prosperity along with protection for Israel.
6. The Antichrist will win the trust of Israel by establishing peace in the Middle East, by making a way for them to rebuild the Temple and by possibly establishing Jerusalem as one of the main economic centers of the world, thus granting Israel financial security. One of the implications of this covenant or peace treaty will be

that Israel will be allowed to offer animal sacrifices (as commanded by Moses) in their Temple through a restored Levitical priesthood.

7. The Antichrist will then break the covenant and stop the grain offerings and animal sacrifices. This gives us insight into the details of this covenant.
8. The Great Tribulation starts when the Antichrist breaks this covenant. When the covenant is first established for a designated period of seven years, counterfeit peace and safety is ushered in. This lasts approximately three-and-a-half years because in the middle of the week (seven-year period), the Antichrist will break the treaty, resulting in the termination of Israel's religious activities in the Temple (1 Thes. 5:3) and the beginning of the Great Tribulation.
9. Twice in 1 Thessalonians 5:3, Paul refers to "they" as those who rejoice in peace and then those who will not escape. This "they" refers to all the unbelieving nations on the earth, including Israel. Those who are deceived will think that the time of peace is God's blessing instead of the work of the Antichrist.
10. Peace and safety will be established by the Antichrist after an escalating "nation against nation" season, which is the beginning of birth pangs. However, this "peace and safety" will be followed by the sudden "coming of destruction" of the day of the Lord. During this period of counterfeit peace and safety, the world will wrongly assume that their problems will be permanently solved by the Antichrist's seemingly skillful leadership.
11. The global pressures produced during the first prophetic timeframe (beginning of birth pangs) will set the stage for the Antichrist to look successful as he appears to be able to solve the world's problems. During this time, he will take control of many governments in order to fix their economy, etc. He will appear to have the answers for this period of time.
12. A man will rise to power and appear to deliver the world from its political, economic, spiritual and military crises. The Antichrist's credibility to establish his worldwide empire will come partially through his ability to establish peace in the Middle East, which will be the most volatile place in history. In the time when nations of the world are rising up against each other in military conflicts, he will be seen as the man who ends this time of international conflict (Matt. 24:7–8; Dan. 8:25; 11:21).
13. The treaty will appear to settle the Middle East crisis by bringing Jews and Muslims together with regard to Jerusalem and its holy sites. A key issue will be Mount Moriah (in Jerusalem), which is holy to both Muslims (current site of the Dome of the Rock which is their third holiest shrine) and Jews (ancient site of Solomon's Temple).
14. No one knows when the final seven-year period of natural human history begins. However, we do know how it will start and end. It will start as a result of the Antichrist making a covenant with Israel and various Middle Eastern nations (Dan. 9:27).

15. The Antichrist will use this covenant to gain a stronghold in the land of Israel. He will plant part of his headquarters in Israel. The "glorious holy mountain" refers to the site of the Temple in Jerusalem (Dan. 11:45).
16. The consequences of this covenant are described in Isaiah 28 as a terrible scourge that will go through the land in a relentless way. The very mention of what happens will cause terror and every attempt to find comfort at that time will be totally frustrated (Isa. 28:14–20).

G. Other Developments in Israel and related to Israel

1. The re-establishment of the Hebrew language:
Some believe that this was prophesied by the prophet Zephaniah in Zeph. 3:9;
2. The re-establishment of the Sabbath in Israel's society and civil law (Matt. 24:15–20);
3. Terrorism and persecution against Israel as prophesied by Jesus:
The initial fulfillment of this prophecy occurred in the first century at the hands of fellow Jews like Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9), then at the hands of the crusaders throughout the Middle Ages. The most dramatic fulfillment of this prophecy will be in the End Times by Islamic terrorists who will increasingly terrorize and persecute Israel (Ezek. 35:1–36:7; Jn. 16:2).
4. The rapid rise of anti-Semitism around the world:
Satan is stirring up anti-Semitic sentiments all across nations as he wants to exterminate the Jewish people so that a believing remnant cannot invite Jesus to rule Israel as their Messiah (Rev. 12:13 –17).
5. Israel will face another Holocaust:
The Jewish people will once again be in prison camps and under assault by foreign armies just before Jesus' Second Coming (Isa. 11:11–16; 27:12–13; 42:6–24; 49:5–25; 61:1–2; Jer. 30:3–24; 31:1–23; Ezek. 20:33–44; 39:25–29; Hos. 11:10–11; Amos 9:8–15; Joel 3:1–2; Zeph. 3:19–20; Zech. 9:10–14).

Session 16

God's End-Time Plan for Israel

A. Introduction

1. The Book of Zechariah is primarily about God's Plan for Israel and specifically for the city of Jerusalem.
2. Its secondary theme is about praying for God's destiny for Jerusalem — the raising up of a global prayer movement at the End of the Age, specifically in Jerusalem (Isa. 62:6–7).
3. There are five reasons why we should care about Jerusalem:
 - a. Jesus is zealous for Jerusalem and He will dwell in Jerusalem when He returns (Zech. 8:2–3).
 - b. God's End-Time purpose and eternal plan is Jerusalem-centric (Jer. 3:17; Ps. 2:6). Everything is centered around Jerusalem. God's eternal city is Jerusalem and not any other city.
 - c. The issue surrounding Jerusalem is the issue of God's sovereignty and faithfulness. How God deals with Jerusalem is a witness to God's leadership and faithfulness to His Word and to the nations. How God deals with Israel reveals God (Ezek. 36:22–23).
 - d. Jerusalem is an unique model of how God will deal with nations.
 - i. Theologically, God will deal with nations according to the principle of “like kind but lesser degree”. This means that the blessings, judgment and glory that God will release to Israel during the Great Tribulation and in the Millennial Kingdom will be released in like kind but to a lesser degree to the Church and the nations.
 - ii. This gives us a powerful picture of what will happen to us!
 - e. Jerusalem is the only city for which God commands us to pray and stand with. It is not an option (Isa. 62:6–7; 66:2; Ps. 122:6).

Note: Jerusalem is mentioned over 800 times in the Bible. Zion is mentioned about 160 times.

B. Theme and Outline of the Book of Zechariah

1. The theme of the book of Zechariah is God's zeal for Zion. It also provides fuel for Houses of Prayer to pray for Israel (Zech. 1:14–17).
2. The book of Zechariah gives many specific promises concerning God's End-Time plan for Israel. These promises are primarily found in Zech. 9 – 14.
3. The book of Zechariah is divided into two main sections:
 - a. The first section: Chapters 1 – 8 (dated around 520 BC) comprise a series of eight visions together with a message of fasting from chapters 1 – 6, and four messages concerned with encouraging the people to complete the building of the Temple in chapters 7 and 8.
 - b. The second section: Chapters 9 – 14 (undated) are made up of two prophecies that focus, with great detail, on many of the End-Time events surrounding the return of the Messiah and the salvation of Israel.
4. Outline of the Book of Zechariah:
 - a. A call to repentance and to return to God (Zech. 1:1–6);
 - b. Eight prophetic visions concerning Israel and the House of Prayer (Zech. 1:7 – 6:15):
 - i. Vision of the horses (Zech. 1:7–17);
 - ii. Vision of the horns and craftsmen (Zech. 1:8–21);
 - iii. Vision of the measuring line (Zech. 2:1–13);
 - iv. Vision of the high priest (Zech. 3:1–10);
 - v. Vision of the lampstand and olive trees (Zech. 4:1–14);
 - vi. Vision of the flying scroll (Zech. 5:1–4);
 - vii. Vision of a woman in a basket (Zech. 5:5–11);
 - viii. Vision of the four chariots (Zech. 6:1–8).
 - c. The vision of the Millennial Kingdom and the rebuilding of the Millennial Temple (Zech. 6:9–15);
 - d. Four explanatory messages concerning Israel (Zech. 7:1 – 8:23):
 - i. Rebuke (Zech. 7:1–7);
 - ii. Repentance (Zech. 7:8–14);
 - iii. Restoration (Zech. 8:1–17);
 - iv. Rejoice (Zech. 8:18–23).
 - e. Two prophecies concerning Israel (Zech. 9:1 – 14:21):
 - i. Promise of the coming Messiah and His rejection by Israel (9:1 – 11:17);
 - ii. End-Time prophecies concerning Israel (Zech. 12:1 – 14:21).

C. God's Deliverance of Israel and the Re-gathering of Israel (Zech. 9 – 10)

1. The ultimate fulfillment of the events in chapters 9 and 10 will occur primarily at the Second Coming of Jesus.
 - a. Though there have been partial fulfillments that have already occurred, it is clear that the full fulfillment will only be at the End of the Age.
 - b. "In that day" was mentioned 18 times in chapters 9 – 14, and this indicates the time of the End of the Age.
2. Zechariah received two prophetic oracles (Zech. 9 – 11 and Zech. 12 – 14) that answered a question that arose after the visions in Zech. 1 – 8:
 - a. In Zech. 1 – 8, God revealed that He would discipline Israel as a result of her sin;
 - b. Zech. 9 – 10, God answered the question, "What about the Gentile nations that oppose Israel?"
3. God gave the answer through two oracles / prophecies in Zech. 9 – 11 and Zech. 12 – 14. The Primary Theme of these two oracles is "The Coming of the Messianic King":
 - a. Zech. 9 – 11
 - i. God will deliver and empower Israel to overcome her enemies;
 - ii. God will re-gather and bless Israel in Jerusalem.
 - b. Zech. 12 – 14
 - i. God will save and refine Israel;
 - ii. God will transform Israel.
4. Both oracles / prophecies begin with the Word "burden". These burdens are against:
 - a. Nations that will oppose God primarily at the End of the Age (Zech. 9:1);
 - b. Israel who has been in rebellion against God. The issue that Israel faces is not Satan, Antichrist, or anti-semitism, but a God who loves her (Zech. 12:1).
5. Both oracles are set in the context of the global war at the End of the Age:
 - a. Jesus is returning in the context of a war. This is not a new subject. It is mentioned in various passages in Scripture e.g. in the book of Joel and Revelation.
 - b. Zech. 9 – 11 speaks of war between Israel and the Gentile Nations.
 - c. Zech. 12 – 14 speaks of war between Jesus and the Gentile Nations.
6. Both oracles talk about the same theme but approach it from different angles.

D. A Simple Outline of Zechariah 9 – 10

1. Together, Zechariah 9 and 10 convey one message:
 - a. Zech. 9:1–8 — God will deliver Israel from the surrounding nations;
 - b. Zech. 9:9–10 — The coming of the Messianic King;
 - c. Zech. 9:11–17 — Restoration of Jerusalem when Jesus returns;
 - d. Zech. 10:1–12 — Israel is to be re-gathered and blessed by God.

E. God will deliver Israel from the surrounding nations (Zech. 9:1–8)

1. God will deliver Israel from the surrounding nations that oppress her:
 - a. God promised salvation / deliverance for Israel;
 - b. God promised judgment for the Gentile Nations that would come against her.
2. Many things have been prophesied to happen in these eight verses. It is only a snapshot of what will happen.
3. Nine cities from three nations are mentioned — three cities in Syria (Hadrach, Damascus, and Hamath; Zech. 9:1–2a), two in Phoenicia (Tyre and Sidon; Zech. 9:2b–4) and four cities in Philistia, modern-day Palestine (Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and Ashdod; Zech. 9:5–8).
4. These nine cities from three nations prophetically represent the following:
 - a. They are a prototype of nations that will oppose God and Israel at the End of the Age.
 - b. They give a powerful picture of how God will deal with nations in the End Times:
 - i. For those who respond to God — God will humble their pride (v.6a), cleanse their sin (v.7a), offer them salvation (v.7b) and allow them to be a part of His Kingdom (v.7c);
 - ii. For those who resist Him — God's zeal will be against them (v.3–5).

F. Fulfillments of the Prophecy in Zechariah 9:1–8

1. The prophecy in Zechariah 9:1–8 was given 200 years ahead of time before it was partially fulfilled in 330 BC through Alexander the Great. The ultimate fulfillment would only happen at the End of the Age. In 330 BC Alexander the Great was:
 - a. God's tool of judgment against nations that oppressed Israel;
 - b. A foreshadow of the coming Messianic King who will deliver Israel at the End of the Age.
2. Alexander the Great came with a swift army and conquered the major cities of Syria all the way to Egypt. However, he spared and refused to harm Jerusalem. He bypassed the land because he had a dream from the God of heaven NOT to harm Jerusalem. All this happened 200 years after Zechariah's prophecy in Zech. 9 – 14.
3. Zech. 9:1–2 speaks of the judgment of God against three cities in Syria and two cities in Phoenicia:

“The burden of the word of the Lord against the land of Hadrach, and Damascus its resting place (For the eyes of men and all the tribes of Israel are on the Lord); also against Hamath, which borders on it, and against Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.”

 - a. The judgment of God will rest on these cities until the LORD's purpose is fully accomplished.
 - b. Damascus is God's resting place and He will not relent until His purpose is fully accomplished in her.
 - c. *“For the eyes of men and all the tribes of Israel are on the Lord”* refers to those who were aware of Zechariah's prophecy about Alexander the Great as God's instrument of wrath. They looked to God in fear and trembling and turned to the God of Israel.
 - d. Through this verse, God exhorts us today to turn our eyes towards God and put our confidence in Him.
4. The context for Zech. 9:3–4 was that the two cities of Phoenicia — Tyre and Sidon — had built a wall that was 150 feet high around themselves and thought that they would prevail. In fact, Assyria and Babylon had tried to capture these cities for five years and thirteen years respectively but failed. However, Alexander the Great destroyed them swiftly. God was using Alexander as His vehicle of His judgment upon these nations that opposed Israel.

5. Zech. 9:5–7 speaks of judgment and salvation upon Philistia:
 - a. Out of fear and sorrow they responded to God;
 - b. After seeing what happened to the cities in Syria and Phoenicia, they turned to the Lord;
 - c. This gives us one powerful insight as to why God sends judgment — to awaken salvation in men / nations.
6. There are four things God will do as a result of their response because of His mercy:
 - a. The Lord will humble the Philistines (v.6);
 - b. God will remove idolatry from them (v.7);
 - c. They will turn to the God of Israel (v.7 — “*shall be for our God*”). This is what Hag. 2:7 speaks about. When God shakes nations, they will turn to the Desire of all nations.
 - d. These cities that turn will be given leadership status in the Millennial Kingdom (v.7 — “*Like a leader in Judah*”). This is the grace and mercy of God through judgment.
7. Zech. 9:8 is a powerful verse that can be used to comfort Jerusalem:

“I will camp around My house because of the army, because of him who passes by and him who returns. No more shall an oppressor pass through them, for now I have seen with My eyes.”
8. There are two fulfillments to this verse:
 - a. The first fulfillment refers to Alexander the Great bypassing Jerusalem because he received a dream from God not to harm the city.
 - b. The full fulfillment is at Jesus’ Second Coming, when Jesus Himself will watch over Jerusalem and cause His angels to encamp around the city during the End-Time conflict.
 - c. “*No more...*” refers to God’s promise that He will not allow Jerusalem to be destroyed anymore.

G. Prophecy of the Coming Messianic King (Zech. 9:9–10)

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be ‘from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.’” (Zech. 9:9–10)

1. Jesus is the One who will “camp around Jerusalem” (Zech. 9:8). Zechariah 9 – 10 is about:
 - a. Calling the Jewish people in Jerusalem to rejoice and to see the bigger picture of God;
 - b. Their King who is coming and who will deliver them and restore everything.
2. Verse 9 is fulfilled with Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem in Matt. 21:5 at His First Coming. Its focus is on who God is:
 - a. He is just — Jesus is righteous and just in all His motives, plans and actions. Through Him, perfect justice will fill the earth.
 - b. Having salvation — Jesus will restore everything for Jerusalem spiritually, politically, geographically, etc.
 - c. Lowly — Jesus is humble and meek. He will lead nations on the basis of humility (Ps. 45:5). Only the meek will inherit the eternal leadership of the earth (Matt. 5:5). Everything that He does, including His leadership, is from the place of humility and it seeks to produce humility in others.
3. Verse 10 is about Jesus’ Second Coming. Jesus will do the following at His Second Coming:
 - a. “*I will cut off the chariot ...He shall speak peace to the nations*” — Jesus will cause all war to cease when He returns. There will be everlasting peace on earth (Isa. 2:4; 9:5–7).
 - b. “*His dominion shall be...*” — Jesus will be the ultimate and supreme leader over all the nations.

4. Israel's rejection of Jesus at His First Coming exposed her heart:
 - a. She was looking for a "freedom fighter" to liberate the land from Gentile Domination.
 - b. However, Jesus came as a Spiritual Reformer seeking to change the heart of Israel and produce humility and righteousness in her.
 - c. Israel was not interested and refused to align with God.
 - d. The key lesson for us is whether we will align ourselves with God. The question God is asking us is, "Will you agree with Me?" (Ps. 110:3)

H. What Jesus will do specifically when He returns (Zech. 9:11–17)

1. When He returns, there are seven things Jesus will do to empower and save Israel in Zech. 9:11–13:
 - a. "I will set your prisoners free" (v.11)
 - i. Out of His mercy and grace, the Lord will set prisoners free from the "waterless pit".
 - ii. The waterless pit is a dry well with no water. Joseph and Jeremiah were thrown into such pits. They were grateful that there was no water in it or else they would have drowned. Also, with a waterless pit, there was a chance that they could be rescued.
 - b. "Prisoners of hope" (v.12)
 - i. The remnant of Israel today are "prisoners of hope" as they set their hope on God. God will deliver them from Gentile Domination.
 - ii. Zech. 9:12 is the only place in the Old Testament where the article is included with the word "hope" in the original Hebrew language, i.e. "prisoners of *the* hope". Thus, this "hope" is the same as "the hope of Israel", which Paul refers to in Acts 26:6 and 28:20, which ultimately refers to salvation for Israel through Jesus.
 - c. "Blood of your covenant" (v.11)
 - i. The Lord delivers us on the basis of the blood of the covenant. The expression of "the blood of the covenant" is found in Exo. 24:8.
 - ii. Jesus uses this phrase when speaking of His death for only in Him is our deliverance found and fulfilled (Mk. 14:24).
 - iii. The blood of the covenant is God's pledge of faithfulness to deliver us.
 - d. "Restore double" (v.12)
 - i. The Lord promises to restore double of what the enemy has taken from Israel.

- ii. A double restoration means a complete restoration. Just as the Lord has given Israel double for her sins, He will completely restore her. He will fully restore Israel spiritually to Himself and physically to the land. It will only happen one time in history in its fullness (Isa. 40:2; 51:19; 61:7).
- e. *“Return to the stronghold”* (v.12)
 - i. There is a two-fold return of the Jewish people — they will return to the land of Israel (or Jerusalem) and also spiritually to the Lord (Ps. 9:9; 18:2; 31:3; 71:3; 91:2; 94:22; 144:2; Jer. 16:19; Nah. 1:7; Joel 3:16 and Ezek. 36 prophecies).
- f. *“I... raised up your sons... like the sword of a mighty man”* (v.13)
 - i. The Lord promised to raise up sons of Zion as mighty men to overthrow Greek oppression.
 - ii. He will make Judah His bow and Ephraim His arrow. The Lord promised to anoint Jewish soldiers to do battle against oppressors and defend Israel against an attack. However, they will not wage war as aggressors seeking conquest.
- g. *“O Greece”* (v.13)
 - i. The initial fulfillment of Israelites being anointed to fight against the Greeks was when the Jews overthrew the Greeks during the Maccabean revolts in the second century BC.
 - ii. The Maccabean uprising against Greece was only a partial fulfillment of this prophecy.
 - iii. The ultimate fulfillment of this will be in the future battle of Jerusalem (Zech. 10:5–7; 12:3–9).
- 2. **Zech. 9:14–15** points to what will happen just prior to and at the Second Coming of Jesus. The confrontation between David and Goliath gives us a prophetic picture of what it will be like (1Sam. 17:34).
 - a. *“The Lord will be seen over them,”* (v.14a)
 - i. Jesus Himself prophesied that “all the tribes of the earth...will see” Him at His Second Coming (Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7);
 - b. *“A trumpet will sound”* (v.14c);
 - c. *“And go with whirlwinds from the south.”* (v.14d) — Jesus will come up from Bozrah and Edom (Isa. 63:1–6):
 - i. Jesus will return as the Greater Moses (Deut. 33:2–5; Judg. 5:4–5; Ps. 68:7–9);
 - ii. Jesus will gather all the Jewish people scattered all over surrounding nations (Isa. 34:6–8; 19:20; Mic. 2:12–13; Hab. 3:3–5);

- d. He will defend them as the “Greater David” against the “Eschatological Goliath” (v.15). Jesus’ army will be outnumbered and overpowered yet He will overcome His and His people’s enemies.

3. **Zech. 9:16–17:**

- a. *“The Lord their God will save them in that day...”* (v.16) — Jesus will deliver Israel from her enemies.
- b. *“For they shall be like the jewels of a crown, lifted like a banner over His land...”* (v.16) — God will proclaim how precious and valuable Israel is to Him.
- c. *“...how great is His goodness...how great His beauty!”* (v.17) — Jesus will reveal His goodness and beauty to Israel and to all nations.

I. **Israel Will Be Blessed and Re-gathered (Zech.10:1–12)**

The second part of this oracle is two-fold: Israel will be blessed (Zech. 10:1–7) and Israel will be re-gathered (Zech. 10:8–12).

1. Israel will be blessed (Zech.10:1–7).

These seven verses prophesy of the fruit of Jesus’ active leadership over Israel in the End Times in these areas:

- a. Agricultural (Zech. 10:1);
- b. Spiritual (Zech. 10:2);
- c. Governmental (Zech. 10:3–4);
- d. Military (Zech. 10:5–7).

a. Israel will be blessed agriculturally (Zech. 10:1)

“Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain. The Lord will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone.”

- i. Israel still has to “ask” (i.e. pray). More than a prayer for revival, this verse speaks of literal rain. The rain will come in response to obedience and prayer (Deut. 28:12).
- ii. God has promised to send rain to bless the crops. Rain is one of the signs that God is responding to Israel’s prayer (Deut. 11:13–14).
- iii. The autumn or “early” rain usually comes in October/November to prepare the soil for sowing. The period of sowing is usually between October and December.

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- iv. The spring or “latter” rain usually comes in March/April to help the harvest. The harvest is usually between March and July. The dry season in Israel is usually from May to September.
- b. Israel will be blessed spiritually as the Lord confronts and removes idolatry from the nation:
“For the idols speak delusion; The diviners envision lies, and tell false dreams; They comfort in vain. Therefore the people wend their way like sheep; They are in trouble because there is no shepherd.” (Zech. 10:2)
- i. *“Tell false dreams”* — The leaders would have been giving flattering dreams to comfort Israel. This is vanity.
- ii. *“In trouble”* — Jesus will look with compassion on the multitudes and see them as troubled sheep without a shepherd.
- c. Israel will be blessed governmentally as God will remove their bad leadership (Zech. 10:3) and raise up leaders as His “royal horses” to provide strong and godly leadership for their society (Zech. 10:4). God’s anger with false shepherds (i.e. civil and political leaders, priests, etc.) is an expression of His zeal (Zech. 1:14; 8:2).
- “My anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the goatherds. For the Lord of hosts will visit His flock, the house of Judah, and will make them as His royal horse in the battle. From him comes the cornerstone, from him the tent peg, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler together.”* (Zech. 10:3–4)
- i. I will punish the goatherds — These herdsmen or shepherds speak of the spiritual leadership in the nation. The spiritual leaders in Zechariah’s time eventually killed Zechariah.
- ii. His royal horse in battle — The Lord will visit leaders by releasing His power through them so that they function as a royal horse that He will “ride,” or use, in the End-Time battles. These strong and godly leaders will be used by the Lord in the End Times (Ps. 20). He will raise them up as the Jeremiah 3:15 shepherds.
- iii. The leadership that God will raise up is “from Him” (i.e. the house of Judah; Zech. 10:4):
- The Lord will raise up leaders to use as His “royal horse” (Zech. 10:3) to provide strong godly leadership for Israel’s society.
 - The strength of a society is built upon the quality of its civil, political, financial, military, and spiritual leadership.
 - These four figures together describe strong, reliable, skilled, and trustworthy leaders:
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- The “*cornerstone*” adjoins two walls at a corner — such a leader brings unity to society;
 - The “*tent peg*” holds a tent in place, even in the midst of a storm. These leaders will strengthen the nation;
 - The “*battle bow*” speaks of military leadership in the End Times (Zech. 9:13; 10:5–7; 12:5–8);
 - The “*ruler*” is a Hebrew word that speaks of a strong, determined and trustworthy leader.
- d. Israel will be blessed militarily (Zech. 10:5–7) and this is also emphasized elsewhere (Zech. 9:13; 10:3; 12:5–8). In Zech. 12:5–8, God promises to be with Israel’s military forces as He was with David and to empower them to resist the Antichrist even before Jesus returns.

“They shall be like mighty men, who tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle. They shall fight because the LORD is with them...I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph...Those of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man...their children shall see it and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD.” (Zech. 10:5–7)

2. Israel Will Be Re-gathered from All Nations (Zech. 10:8–12)

“I will whistle for them and gather them, for I will redeem them; and they shall increase as they once increased. I will sow them among the peoples, and they shall remember Me in far countries; they shall live, together with their children, and they shall return.” (Zech. 10:8–9)

- a. I will whistle — This describes the Lord arresting Israel’s attention in a way that causes them to respond swiftly to Him, even from the distant nations of the earth (Isa. 5:26).
- b. I will sow — He will plant Israel as a nation in this earth to reap a harvest (Jer. 31:27; Hos. 2:23).
- c. Zech. 10:10–12 gives details about the End-Time re-gathering of the Jewish people. In particular, they will return from Egypt and Assyria (Zech. 10:10) because of great miracles (Zech. 10:12).

“I will also bring them back from the land of Egypt, and gather them from Assyria. I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon...”

- i. From Egypt and Assyria — The Lord will bring the remnant of Israel back from Egypt in the south and from the former region of Assyria (parts of Iraq, Syria, and Jordan) in the north (Isa. 11:11, 16; 27:13; Hos. 11:10–11; Mic. 5:6; 7:12–15; Zech. 10:10–11).

“He shall pass through the sea with affliction, and strike the waves of the sea: all the depths of the River shall dry up. Then the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart.”

- ii. Great miracles — The dividing of the Red Sea when Israel was released from captivity in Egypt foreshadows the great miracles in the End Times that will be seen by the nations as God re-gathers Israel.

“As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders. The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall put their hand over their mouth... They shall be afraid of the LORD our God.”
(Mic. 7:15–17)

“I will strengthen them in the LORD, and they shall walk up and down in His name.” (Zech. 10:12)

Session 17

The Judgment and Deception of Israel

(Zechariah 11)

A. Introduction

1. It is vital to understand God's heart and plan for Israel from the Scriptures because:
 - a. God is not neutral towards Israel (Zech. 8:2–3).
 - b. Israel plays a vital role in God's End-Time plan. We will not fully understand the End Times without understanding Israel. We will not fully understand Israel without understanding the End Times.
 - c. It is God's requirement for the Gentile Church to pray for Israel and specifically Jerusalem (Isa. 62:6–7). It is not an option!
2. Zechariah 9 – 14 gives us the clearest summary of God's plan for Israel at the End of the Age. There are two fulfilments — a partial one during the time of ancient Israel and a full one at the End of the Age:
 - a. Zech. 9 – 10: The Deliverance, Blessing and Re-gathering of Israel;
 - b. Zech. 11: The Judgment and Deception of Israel;
 - c. Zech. 12 – 13: The Salvation and Refinement of Israel;
 - d. Zech. 14: The Restoration and Transformation of Israel.
3. Zechariah 11 is a remarkable and intense chapter. It gives us two clear reasons why God judged Israel. We need to grapple with this issue so that we will not be offended.
4. We need to study Zechariah 9, 10 and 11 together as one continuous flow of Scripture to understand why Israel is being judged and deceived. All three chapters reveal the heart of God concerning Israel.
5. Zechariah 9 – 14 centers around two oracles:
 - a. Zech. 9 – 11 is about the Gentile nations' treatment of Jerusalem. God will bring judgment on nations that oppose Jerusalem.
 - b. Zech. 12 – 14 is about Israel and specifically Jerusalem.
6. Zechariah 9 – 10 contains God's promise to deliver, bless and re-gather Jerusalem. This will primarily take place at the Second Coming of Jesus.
7. The core theme of Zech. 9 – 10 is the coming of the Messianic King, Jesus.
 - a. Jesus will come as a humble King who will have dominion over all nations.

- b. This will happen in close relation to Jerusalem, i.e. the coming of Jesus will be in Jerusalem and through Jerusalem. The primary issue at the End of the Age will be centered around Jerusalem.

B. A Brief Overview of Zechariah 11

1. Zechariah 11 was written about 500 years ahead of Jesus' First Coming and reveals Israel's response to His First Coming. Israel wanted a King and thus:
 - a. They did not like the humble One in righteousness;
 - b. They were looking for a "freedom fighter" and not a "Spiritual Reformer".
2. As a result, Israel faced the judgment of God in AD 70 because she rejected the Messiah.
3. Zech. 11 speaks of a two-fold judgment that Israel will face:
 - a. Zech. 11:1–14 — The judgment through the destruction of the temple in AD 70 by the Roman army led by Emperor Titus.
 - b. Zech. 11:15–17 — The deception of Israel by the Antichrist, who will deceive her into accepting him as their "false shepherd". This is a major subject pertaining to Israel during the End Times. God will allow it to purify, deliver and ultimately establish Israel (Zech. 13).
4. Zechariah 9, 10 and 11 have to be studied together:
 - a. Zech. 9 and 10 are about God's promise to restore Jerusalem at the End of the Age.
 - b. Zech. 11 is centered around two "shepherds":
 - i. The shepherd who feeds the flock (v.4,7) — This refers to Jesus at His First Coming whom Israel rejects, resulting in God's judgment on Israel;
 - ii. The "foolish" / "worthless" shepherd (v.15,17) — This refers to the Antichrist whom Israel will accept as their leader at the End of the Age.
5. Zechariah 11 is a dramatic and intense chapter where there are many issues and agendas to grapple with:
 - a. Many in Israel will accept the Antichrist as their leader;
 - b. While not all in Israel will accept Antichrist as their leader, her leadership/ government will do so.
 - c. The Antichrist will deceive them by:
 - i. Signing a 7-year peace treaty with Israel (Dan. 9:27);
 - ii. Allowing the re-building of the Jerusalem Temple.

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- d. After 3 ½ years, the Antichrist will break the peace treaty in an act of betrayal of Israel's trust in him.
 - e. The Antichrist's deception of Israel will give rise to the Abomination of Desolation. Dan. 9, 11 and Matt. 24 prophesy of the persecution of Israel at the End of the Age and Zech. 13 prophesies of an End-Time Holocaust that will come upon Israel.
- 6. Zech. 11:1–14 is God's judgment on Israel because of her rejection of Jesus.
 - 7. Zech. 11:15–17 — The deception of Israel as she accepts the Antichrist as her "shepherd". This will open the door for the greatest crisis in the history of Israel, which will surpass Pharaoh's persecution in Exodus, Haman's scheme in Esther, Antiochus Epiphanes in 167 BC and Hitler in World War II.
 - 8. It is vital for us to understand the convergence of many agendas and see that Satan will seize the opportunity to persecute Israel. God allows all this to happen and the key is to know how we should pray for Israel.
 - 9. In Zechariah 11, there are two parables being acted out by Zechariah. These two prophetic acts are found in verses 4–17:
 - a. Verses 4–14 — Zechariah depicted the coming Messiah, Jesus the Good Shepherd.
 - b. Verses 15–17 — Zechariah depicted the Antichrist, the false and wicked shepherd.
 - 10. The Lord called Zechariah to work for a time as a head shepherd in Israel. There were three incidents that foreshadowed what would happen in Israel's future:
 - a. He fired three shepherds for their failures to do their jobs:
 - i. This is a prophetic picture of the failure of Israel's leadership (both spiritual and governmental);
 - ii. Jesus built on this in Matt. 23. The eight "woes" of Jesus reveal how God viewed Israel's leaders.
 - b. 30 pieces of silver were paid to Zechariah as the shepherd's reward:
 - i. This gives us prophetic insight into what Israel will think of Jesus. They will think very lowly of Jesus.
 - ii. It was the same amount of money that Judas was paid to betray Jesus (Matt. 26:14–16).
 - c. The breaking of two shepherd's staff — "Beauty" and "Bond":
 - i. Two staffs — Shepherds carried two staffs when going out to feed their flock (Zech. 11:7). One staff was used to protect the sheep from wild animals and the other to direct them to green pastures. The names of the two staffs had prophetic significance related to the coming judgment.
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- ii. “Beauty” could be translated as “favour.” This spoke of God’s favour to keep “all the peoples” (Gentile nations), Israel’s enemies, from destroying them. When Zechariah cut this staff in two (Zech. 11:10), it spoke of God lifting His protection and allowing the Gentiles (i.e. Rome) to attack Israel. He had “covenanted” with the peoples (nations) to keep them from harming Israel.
- iii. “Bonds” spoke of God keeping Israel united as a nation.
- iv. The breaking of the two staffs speaks of the breaking of God’s covenant and grace over Israel.
- v. The covenant with the peoples was not a formal covenant since God never breaks His promises. The term “covenant” is used in a loose sense and not as a formal agreement. It refers to the Lord’s hand of restraint upon the nations to stop them from assaulting Israel. He has many ways of restraining nations from engaging in international or civil strife.

C. Outline of Zechariah 11

1. Verses 1–3 — Judgment of God on Israel as a result of her rejection of Messiah
 - a. The partial fulfilment of this prophecy was in AD 70;
 - b. The ultimate fulfilment is at the End of the Age (Zech. 12 – 14).
2. Verses 4–14 — Reasons for Israel’s judgment
 - a. The judgment upon Israel is primarily because of her rejection of Jesus.
3. Verses 15–17 — Deception of Israel resulting in the acceptance of the Antichrist as their “shepherd”
 - a. The reason for Israel’s judgment at the End of the Age will be the rejection of Jesus, which was the same as for AD 70;
 - b. However, the judgment at the End of the Age will be heightened because of her acceptance of the Antichrist as their leader.

D. Judgment on the whole land of Israel (Zech. 11:1–3)

1. In these verses, Zechariah described a judgment that would affect the whole land of Israel.
2. There are two fulfilments:
 - a. A partial fulfilment on ancient Israel in AD 70 where Emperor Titus led the Roman invasion of Jerusalem;
 - b. The ultimate fulfilment at the End of the Age prior to the Second Coming of Jesus (Zech. 12 – 14):
 - i. Israel and the nations will be judged;

- ii. God will cleanse the earth and remove all evil so as to establish “everlasting righteousness” (Dan.9:24).
3. *“Open your doors, O Lebanon, that fire may devour your cedars. Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen, because the mighty trees are ruined. Wail, O oaks of Bashan, for the thick forest has come down.”* (Zech. 11:1–2)
- a. Lebanon is called to “open” its doors so that fire might destroy its forests of cedar trees (v.1). There will be no point resisting because it will be God who sends the judgment (Lk. 19:41–44);
 - b. In ancient Israel, they thought they could prevail;
 - c. Lebanon is symbolic of the leadership and cedars were symbolic of kings or the royal class (Judg. 9:7–15; Isa. 10:33–34; Ezek. 31:3–18);
 - d. The mighty tree of cedar (v.2) is something that is valuable to them;
 - e. These verses imply that there will be no chance of survival. There will be no mercy and favour from God.
4. *“There is the sound of wailing shepherds! For their glory is in ruins. There is the sound of roaring lions! For the pride of the Jordan is in ruins.”* (Zech. 11:3)
- a. The sound of wailing shepherds is symbolic of Israel’s leadership. They wail because everything will be destroyed by the invading Roman armies;
 - b. “Roaring lions” is symbolic of invading Romans armies;
 - c. Everything will be destroyed from Northern to Southern Israel.

E. Israel's rejection of the good shepherd (Zech. 11:4–14)

1. This prophecy was given 500 years before the First Coming of Jesus. Zechariah gave the reason for the destruction of Jerusalem in v.1–3:
 - a. The Lord sent Israel the best shepherd (11:4–6);
 - b. However, they rejected Him (11:7–14).
2. **Zechariah 11:4–14** recounts Zechariah's first prophetic act that prophesies of Israel's rejection of Jesus
 - a. The Lord told Zechariah to offer Himself as a shepherd to care for a flock of sheep that were soon to be sent to the market to be slaughtered and sold.
 - b. As he tells the story, he speaks for the Messiah and as the Messiah.
 - c. *"Feed the flock for slaughter..."* (v.4)
 - i. Zechariah was to take a job that included taking a flock of sheep out to graze in the pasture lands. This flock was being fattened for slaughter so that their wool and meat could be sold at the market.
 - ii. The spiritual condition of Israel at the First Coming of Jesus was very corrupt. They were hostile towards God and had set their hearts against Him. This was evident through their attitude towards the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus (Matt. 11:18; Jn. 10:20).
3. *"...whose owners slaughter them and feel no guilt; those who sell them say, 'Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich', and their shepherds do not pity them."* (v.5)
 - a. The new owners who bought the sheep represented the Roman rulers who controlled Israel. The Roman armies will show no mercy and destroy Jerusalem (Lk. 21:20–24).
 - b. The shepherds who sold the sheep were Israel's former leaders who, through their unbelief and sin, set the people of Israel up for future judgement at the hands of the Roman army, which was an instrument of God.
 - c. Jesus exposed these shepherds in Matt. 25 through the eight "woes" that set Israel up for judgement.
4. *"'For I will no longer pity the inhabitants of the land,' says the Lord. 'But indeed, I will give everyone into his neighbour's hand and into the hand of his king. They shall attack the land, and I will not deliver them from their hand.'"* (v.6)
 - a. God prophesied that He would deliver Israel into the hands of the Roman kings. He would not deliver and protect Israel any longer.
 - b. The Lord no longer pitied or showed mercy to the generation of leaders that had rejected Jesus.

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- c. This was because the Lord saw their murderous hearts and thus, their participation in the murder of previous prophets (Matt. 23:35);
 - 5. *“So, I fed the flock for slaughter, in particular, the poor of the flock. I took for myself two staffs: the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bonds, and I fed the flock.”* (v.7)
 - a. Zechariah was a prophetic picture of Jesus as the good Shepherd coming to feed the flock of Israel.
 - b. Israel was destined for slaughter because of their decision to reject the Messiah.
 - 6. Zechariah was received by a group he called *“the poor of the flock”* (Zech. 11:7, 11). The poor can be translated as the afflicted or the humble. They refer to a godly remnant who paid and will pay close attention to Zechariah’s words and believe that what he had spoken was God’s true word (Zech. 11:11).
 - 7. Typically, shepherds carried two staffs when going out to feed their flock (Zech. 11:7). One staff was used to protect the sheep from wild animals, and the other to direct them to green pastures. In Psalm 23, Jesus is portrayed as the Shepherd who protects, provides and guides.
 - 8. The names of the two staffs were “Beauty” (favour, covenant) and “Bonds” (unity, grace).
 - a. Beauty
 - i. It spoke of God’s favour to keep “all the peoples” (Gentile nations), Israel’s enemies, from destroying them. It spoke of God’s favour to keep the peoples (Gentiles), Israel’s enemies, from destroying them.
 - ii. When Zechariah cut this staff in two (Zech. 11:10), it spoke of God lifting His protection and allowing the Gentiles (i.e. Rome) to attack Israel. He had previously “covenanted” with the peoples (nations) to keep them from harming Israel.
 - iii. God has always been in the picture and if God does not allow for it, nothing could touch us.
 - b. Bonds
 - i. It spoke of God keeping Israel united as a nation. It was and will be the grace of God that united Israel and Judah, not human wisdom and ability.
 - 9. *“I dismissed the three shepherds in one month. My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me.”* (v.8)
 - a. *“Dismissed the three shepherds”*
 - i. In one month, Zechariah fired three shepherds who were working under him. It was a prophetic picture of Jesus rejecting the three shepherds.
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- ii. The three classes of shepherds (i.e. leaders) that were dismissed were the elders, chief priests, and scribes.
 - iii. Jesus named these three classes of leaders who rejected Him in Lk. 9:22.
- b. The dismissal of these three governmental offices was the outward sign that God was suspending Israel's enjoyment of a covenantal relationship with Him and with it, all its benefits.
 - c. Their dismissal was an expression of judgement because they abhorred Jesus (Matt. 23:37).
10. *"Then I said, 'I will not feed you. Let what is dying die, and what is perishing perish. Let those that are left eat each other's flesh.'"* (v.9)
- a. "Dying" and "perishing":
 - i. This describes God's judgment on them for their rejection of Jesus and their fate — many Israelites died.
 - ii. Some were so hungry that they engaged in cannibalism and ate one another during the siege of Jerusalem in AD 70.
11. *"And I took my staff, Beauty, and cut it in two, that I might break the covenant which I had made with all the peoples. So, it was broken on that day. Thus, the poor of the flock, who were watching me, knew that it was the word of the LORD."* (v.10–11)
- a. When Zechariah cut this staff into two, it spoke of God lifting His protection and grace from Israel and allowing the Gentiles (Romans) to attack her.
 - b. He had "covenanted" with the peoples (nations) to keep them from harming Israel.
 - i. This was not a formal covenant since God never breaks His promises. This term "covenant" was used in a loose sense and not as a formal agreement.
 - ii. It refers to the Lord's hand of restraint upon the nations to stop them from assaulting Israel. As signified by the cutting of the staff in two, He would allow the nations to harm Israel for a season.
 - c. The poor, humble and godly remnant knew that it was the Word of God. We can learn much from it because God is not impressed with giftedness and talent but with those who tremble at His Word (Isa. 66:1–2).
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12. **Zechariah 11:12–14** reveals Israel's attitude towards her messianic King.
- a. Zechariah ended his prophetic act by asking the other shepherds to pay him the wages that they felt he deserved for his service. It would be a prophetic expression of how they felt towards Jesus.
13. *"Then I said to them, 'If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain.' So, they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver." (v.12)*
- a. They paid him thirty pieces of silver, which was the cost of making restitution for the work that could not be done when a slave was injured (Ex. 21:32). This small amount of money was an insult in light of all that Jesus the Shepherd would do to feed Israel.
 - b. It revealed how little Israel valued Jesus' service. To offer Zechariah this wage was akin to telling Jesus that they considered the services of a common slave to be about as helpful as He had been to them.
14. *"And the Lord said to me, 'Throw it to the potter', that princely price they set on me. So, I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord for the potter." (v.13)*
- a. *"Throw it to the potter"*
 - i. The Lord told Zechariah to throw the silver to the potter in the temple courtyard.
 - ii. This was a statement and expression of disdain for the wages since potters were usually very poor.
15. *"Then I cut in two my other staff, Bonds, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel." (v.14)*
- a. The staff called Bonds was cut
 - i. The staff "Bonds" referred to God's keeping of Israel united as a nation.
 - ii. When Zechariah cut this staff, it meant that the Lord was going to allow great strife to divide Israel. This division would be temporary; they will be forever reunited at the end (Zech. 10:6).

F. Zechariah's Second Prophetic Act (Zech. 11:15–17)

1. **Zechariah 11:15–17** — Zechariah depicted the “false shepherd” or the Antichrist in this prophetic act. This is a terrifying passage because God will raise up a “foolish and worthless shepherd” for Israel to choose him. Zech. 11:16 makes it clear that it is God who raises up the Antichrist.
2. *“I will raise up”* (v.16)
 - a. God will raise up this foolish shepherd “in the land” of Israel. However, Satan and man’s sinful choices will contribute to it.
 - b. Jesus is the One who will open the first seal to release the Antichrist (Rev. 6:1–2).
3. Prophetic Precedents in the Bible
 - a. The Lord raised up a wicked Pharaoh in Moses’ day. He was the most powerful man in the world (Ex. 9:16; Rom. 9:17);
 - b. The Lord raised up a cruel and powerful Assyrian king named Sennacherib to judge Israel in a severe way in 722 BC (Isa. 10:5);
 - c. The Lord called the wicked Nebuchadnezzar His “servant” to judge Israel in 586 BC (Jer. 25:9,12; 27:6; 43:10; Hab. 1:5–7).
4. The principle of man’s free will:
 - a. God wants to reveal the depth of human wickedness (Jer. 17:9);
 - b. God will allow man to act on his own free will with no restraint at the End of the Age (2 Thes. 2:7);
 - c. Sin, evil and wickedness will reach the fullness of which mankind is capable of (Dan. 8:23; Rev. 9:21);
 - d. There will be a company of God’s people who will choose righteousness (Isa. 60:1, Dan. 11:32–33).
5. Zechariah was told to take symbolic action by presenting himself as a foolish shepherd and taking up certain tools that such a shepherd would use.
6. *“And the Lord said to me, ‘Next, take for yourself the implements of a foolish shepherd.’”* (v.15)
 - a. This “*foolish shepherd*” prophecy will find its ultimate fulfilment in the Antichrist, who will make a covenant with Israel and then break it to fiercely persecute Israel (Isa. 28:15–18; Dan. 9:27; 11:36–45; Jn. 5:43; 2 Thes. 2:3–10; Rev. 12:13–17; 13:1–18).

7. *"For indeed I will raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand. But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces." (v.16)*
- a. *"Eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves"*
- i. He is described as one who totally devours people. To "tear the hooves" means to frantically search for the last morsel, which reveals that Israel will be totally consumed. He will have no mercy on Israel.
8. *"Woe to the worthless shepherd, who leaves the flock! A sword shall be against his arm and against his right eye; his arm shall completely wither, and his right eye shall be totally blinded." (v.17)*
- a. God's judgment on the Antichrist — This "woe" applies to all the evil kings of Israel, but one specific man is especially in view.
- b. *"his arm shall completely wither "*
- i. This means that the Antichrist's power will be totally broken;
- c. *"his right eye shall be totally blinded"*
- i. This means that he will lose his understanding and sanity;
- d. Jesus will easily and quickly destroy the Antichrist (Dan. 7:11–14, 22, 26–27; 9:27; 11:45; 2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 19:20).

Session 18

The Salvation and Cleansing of Israel

(Zechariah 12:1 – 13:6)

A. Introduction

1. Zechariah 12:1 to 13:6 is about:
 - a. Israel's salvation by the Lord and her eventual cleansing that occurs at the End of the Age;
 - b. The feasts of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur that point to the events in Zech. 12 – 14.
2. About Zechariah 12 – 14:
 - a. These chapters are a few of the most important prophetic Scriptures concerning Israel at the End of the Age. This whole section of Scripture is a summarized version of the book of Revelation from the perspective of Israel in the End Times.
 - b. They give us insight to and details of Israel's coming great trouble, deliverance and salvation by the Lord, and the Millennial Kingdom in the context of Jerusalem. It is vital to study this with Daniel 12 and Joel 3, to have the bigger picture of what is to come.
 - c. These three chapters are compulsory for students of the End Times and Israel to know because they give:
 - i. Understanding of Israel's trouble in the coming days;
 - ii. Insight into the real issue concerning Israel's trouble;
 - iii. Insight into God's zeal for her. He is the One who will engineer all the events in Zech. 12 – 14: God says "I will" 16 times.

B. Our approach to the issue of Israel (Zech. 12 – 14)

1. Israel will be the vortex of the world's chaos and conflict at the End of the Age. Every nation will be involved and no one will be exempted. We will either be with Israel or against Israel.
2. We need to make sense of what is happening now in the Middle East not in terms of politics but from a spiritual perspective.
3. The tension and conflict over Israel will continue to escalate and no nation will be exempted. This is God's litmus test for everyone. We are either for God or against God (Joel 3:14; Matt. 25:31–46).

4. Zechariah 12:2 mentions that God will make Jerusalem a "cup of drunkenness". God will be the One who stirs up crisis in and around Israel.
 - a. "Cup" represents the nation and issue of Israel;
 - b. "Drunkenness" represents hatred that is totally irrational and illogical.
 - i. An example can be found during World War II, when Hitler was still determined to destroy the Jewish people even though he knew that he was losing the war.
5. Zechariah 12:3 mentions that Jerusalem will be a "heavy stone"
 - a. It will be the central issue that will affect everyone — Jews, believers, unbelievers and nations of the earth;
 - b. God is using the controversy surrounding Jerusalem to reveal our hearts and to cause Israel to return to Him (Zech. 1:3).
6. Zechariah 12 – 14 describes the great trouble that Israel has faced and will face. Both Zech. 12:1 – 13:6 and Zech. 13:7 – 14:21 tell the same story in the same timeline, but from different viewpoints.

C. Primary theme of Zechariah 9 – 14

1. The primary theme of Zech. 9 – 14 is that of the Messianic king bringing judgment and blessing on Israel. He empowers Israel to defeat the Gentile world powers in order to establish the Millennial Kingdom from Jerusalem.
2. Zech. 9 – 14 is centered around two oracles:
 - a. The deliverance, empowerment and re-gathering of Israel (Zech. 9 – 11);
 - b. The salvation, restoration and transformation of Israel (Zech. 12 – 14).
3. Both oracles are in the context of a global war at the End of the Age. There is no shadow of doubt that human history will end with a global war with Jerusalem at the center of it.
4. God's End-Time plan to transit from this age to the Millennial Age includes nations coming against Israel.

D. The Ultimate and Complete Fulfillment of Zechariah 12 – 14

1. It is compulsory for us to know these chapters because they give us clarity and insight into what is going to happen spiritually, politically, economically and geographically to Israel at the End of the Age
2. This is a tremendous gift from God for us and it is vital for us to spend energy and effort on this passage so that we can:
 - a. Know the storyline and characters;
 - b. Understand the heart of God;

- c. Stand for the truth and align with God;
 - d. Boldly and gently proclaim this message to the church (Rom. 11:25) and Israel (Isa. 40:1–2).
3. It is one of the most dramatic and vital passages of prophetic Scripture that reveals Israel's coming horrific suffering, greatest victory and eventual world leadership.
4. These chapters are full of paradoxes:
- a. Israel will experience the greatest revival and most severe apostasy;
 - b. Israel will witness her best days and her worst days ahead;
 - c. Israel will taste victory and suffering that will surpass anything in history;
 - d. Israel will be re-gathered to the land and then scattered again;
 - e. God will gather nations against her and God will defeat nations for her.
5. The most important and controversial thing about these chapters is that everything is engineered by God. He said, "I will" 16 times throughout these three chapters.

E. Israel's Primary Issue

1. Zechariah 12:1 makes it clear that Israel's primary issue is neither the Islamic nations nor anti-Semitism. Israel's primary issue is God:
- a. Israel is in rebellion against God;
 - b. In His zeal, He engineers her "greatest crisis" to cause her to turn back to Him without violating her free will (Zech. 1:3);
 - c. It is in God's heart to pursue after Israel (Zech. 8:2–3).

2. Zech. 12:1

- a. *"The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel..."*
 - i. God has great zeal for Israel;
 - ii. Thus, Israel's primary issue is God Himself.
- b. *"Thus, says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth and forms the spirit of man within him."*
 - i. This is a statement that gives us confidence;
 - ii. It is the Creator-God from Genesis 1 who will engineer the plan;

- iii. He understands human emotions and the make-up of human hearts. Thus, He knows how to lead Israel to salvation.
- c. Zech. 12:1 is not meant to cause fear, but is meant to cause us to agree with Him in prayer, in partnership and in proclaiming His word.
- 3. Zech. 12 – 14 is politically incorrect and offensive. It is offensive to:
 - a. Israel — Two-thirds of the Jewish people will be killed (Zech. 13:8);
 - b. Muslims — All nations will worship a Jewish God (Zech. 14: 2–16);
 - c. Church — The Millennial rule of God is centered around Jerusalem and on the Jews.
- 4. The issue of who inherits Jerusalem will ultimately be determined by God.
 - a. Currently, Jews, Muslim and Gentile Christians are all staking their claim on Jerusalem.
 - b. However, it is ultimately those who are in alignment with Jesus who will inherit Jerusalem (Ps. 2:6; 110:3), and it will be the Lord who evaluates the hearts of man.

F. Brief Outline of Zechariah 12:1 – 13:6

- 1. Zech. 12:1–3 — All nations gather against Israel, specifically Jerusalem;
- 2. Zech. 12:4–9 — Jesus defeats and destroys all nations that come against Jerusalem;
- 3. Zech. 12:10–14 — Israel's national salvation;
- 4. Zech. 13:1–6 — Israel's national cleansing.

G. A Study of Zechariah 12

- 1. Zechariah 12 begins with a “burden” of the Lord. This can be taken to mean an “oracle” or “heavy burden”. The focus of the oracle is on the siege of Jerusalem by all nations (Zech. 12:2–3; 14:1–2) and the return of Jesus (Zech. 12:10; 14:3, 9).
- 2. Human history will end with a great battle — the battle for Jerusalem that is traditionally called the “battle of Armageddon”. This battle will be for the control of Jerusalem because the return of Jesus hinges on Israel crying out to Jesus and inviting Him back as their Messiah and King (Matt. 23:39) from Jerusalem.
- 3. The End-Time siege of Jerusalem will definitely happen. The surrounding nations will be involved and eventually, the nations of the world too will be drawn into this conflict.

"...though all nations of the earth are gathered against it." (v.3)

"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision..." (Joel 3:14)

a. In that day, there will be no neutral ground when it comes to the nation of Israel. Everyone will have to take a stand.

b. It is vital for us as God's people to get it right and accurate theologically.

4. *"Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all surrounding peoples (nations) when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem." (v.2)*

"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." (v.3)

There are two metaphors that serve as a warning to the nations:

a. *"Cup of drunkenness"*

i. This describes the irrational and illogical hatred and hostility that nations will have towards Israel.

ii. God is the One who stirs up the "drunkenness" amongst nations. It is the litmus test of God to see whether we are with Him or against Him.

b. *"Very heavy stone"*

i. Israel will be a vortex that draws all nations in. She will be the central issue that will involve all nations.

ii. Anyone who tries to remove her will be *"cut in pieces"*.

5. This is intriguing because it is the Lord who will gather the armies of nations to stand against Israel (Zech. 14:2; Zeph. 3:8; Joel 3:2). Although Satan will help by sending deceiving demons (Rev. 16:13–14), God is ultimately the One who will gather them. He wants to:

a. Judge Israel (Zech. 11);

b. Cleanse Israel (Zech. 13);

c. Replace her government with the rule of the Righteous One — Jesus.

6. The situation will be a re-enactment of the "David and Goliath" drama. Israel will place their confidence in the God of Israel (Ps. 20:7–8) instead of in their political and military allies or in their own defense force.

7. **Zech. 12:4–9** speaks of Jesus defeating the nations for Israel (Joel 3, Rev. 19:17–21).

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- a. *“It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all nations that come against Jerusalem.” (v.9)*
 - i. This will be the greatest military turnaround in history.
 - ii. It will also be the most violent battle in history (Rev 13:20; 19: 17–18).
 - b. *“In that day...I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness...” (v.4a)*
 - i. The Lord will release confusion and a spirit of insanity on the Gentile armies (Zech. 12:4; Deut. 28:28);
 - ii. Horses will be terrified and suddenly struck blind and soldiers will be struck with insanity;
 - iii. There will be a great panic that comes on these Gentile armies (Zech. 14:13).
 - c. *“I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.” (v.4b)*
 - i. The Lord will open His eyes on the house of Judah. This speaks of His supernatural intervention in the battle.
 - ii. The Lord is One who watches over Judah (Ps. 32:8; 33:18).
8. In **Zech. 12:5–6**, the Lord gives strategic insight into the battle:
- a. *“And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, ‘The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in the LORD of hosts, their God.’” (v.5)*
 - i. The Lord will supernaturally empower the small Israeli army as a weapon in His hand.
 - ii. The political leaders of Judah who live outside Jerusalem will see and conclude that God is helping Jerusalem. This will greatly inspire and encourage those in Judah.
 - b. *“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.” (v.6)*
 - “Like a firepan”
 - i. The leaders of Judah will also receive supernatural help from the Lord;
 - ii. God will make them like a firepan (a vessel that carries hot coals to ignite other fires);
 - iii. This implies that they will devour all the armies who are surrounding them.
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“Like a fiery torch in the sheaves”

- i. The military success of the leaders of Judah will be comparable to fire that burns the dry grass;
 - ii. It will be effortless and instantaneous.
9. *“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.”* (v.7)
- a. The Lord will empower the soldiers who live in Judah first. This is to ensure that the people living in Jerusalem will not think that they are more important to the Lord.
 - b. Those in Judah will be in a more defenseless position, as indicated by them dwelling in tents, while those in Jerusalem will be more protected as they dwell in the well-defended capital city.
 - c. All this will work together to help end the long-standing infighting among the Jewish leadership (Zech. 11:6, 14). There will be reconciliation and unity amongst the Jewish people.
10. *“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.”* (v.8)
- a. Zechariah prophesied that the Lord would anoint the Israeli soldiers, as He did David.
 - b. This will be before the return of Jesus in order to empower the Israeli army to resist the Antichrist.
11. *“It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.”* (v.9)
- a. Jesus will destroy all nations that come against Jerusalem.
12. After the battle is fought over Jerusalem,
- a. The leaders in Jerusalem will receive Jesus as their Messianic King (Matt. 23:39; Ps. 24:7–8);
 - b. Jesus will establish His Throne in Jerusalem and transit this Age to the Millennial Age (Matt. 19:28; 25:31; Jer. 3:17; Rev 20:1–5).
13. **Zech. 12:10–14** focuses on:
- a. The national repentance and salvation of Israel;
 - b. The Lord delivering Israel from her spiritual enemy. Israel's greatest enemy is:
 - i. Not Satan;

- ii. Not the Antichrist;
 - iii. Not anti-Semitic nations;
 - iv. But sin and unbelief.
- c. The Lord opening the eyes of the people of Israel through the spirit of revelation. This results in national mourning and repentance, and the nation turning to Jesus in just one day (Isa. 66:8).

H. Outline of Zechariah 13:1–6

1. The theme of Zech. 13:1–6 is the national cleansing of Israel
 - a. The events in Zech. 12:1 – 13:6 are chronological, and the same people and places are mentioned within the same timeframe in both chapters.
 - b. Once Israel receives her Messiah in repentance, Jesus will begin to cleanse the land.
 - c. Israel will be cleansed from sin, idols, false prophets, and the unclean spirit.
2. *“In that day, a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. It shall be in that day...that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land.”* (v.1–2)
 - a. God will open a fountain of grace to cleanse Israel of all her national and individual sin.
 - b. Jesus will remove Idolatry, false prophets, and the unclean spirit that was in the land, which will be related to the abomination of desolation (the center of Antichrist worship) in Jerusalem (Matt. 24: 15).
 - c. Satan will be thrown into prison, and the Antichrist and False Prophet will be thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 19 – 20; 20:1–3).

I. Conclusion

1. This will be a powerful re-enactment of Israel’s past deliverances by Jesus. In that day, Jesus will show Himself as the greater Moses when He frees the captives of Israel from prison camps.
2. He will be seen as the greater Joshua when He leads Israel, who will be refugees in the nations, back to the Promised Land.

3. He will be seen as the greater David when He wins back Jerusalem and establishes His throne and tabernacle there (Amos 9:11).
4. He will show Himself as the greater Elijah when He confronts the Antichrist, cleanses the earth of idolatry, and turns Israel and the nations to God.

Session 19

The Refinement and Transformation of Israel

(Zechariah 13:7 – 14:21)

A. Introduction

1. We need to develop a living understanding of how God feels towards Israel and not just have cognitive knowledge about her.
2. We can fully understand this (Jer. 23:20) but we need to wrestle with the truth to develop conviction that will last (Jer. 30:24).
3. The key is to encounter the heart of God for Israel because God is not neutral (Zech. 8:2–3). God is not pro-Israel (in the sense that He does not agree with everything she does), but He wants us to agree with His heart.

B. Global War and The Return of Jesus (Zech. 13:7 – 14:21)

1. This subject is highly controversial and offensive. It can also be intriguing and encouraging because it gives us insight into God's heart for Israel, His ultimate plan for her, and for the Millennial earth.
2. The prophecy in Zechariah 13:7 – 14:21 has the same timeframe and storyline as that in Zechariah 12:1 – 13:6, but it is retold from a different point of view.
 - a. Zech. 12:11 – 13:6 is prophesied from the angle of military conflict and spiritual cleansing;
 - b. Zech. 13:7 – 14:21 is prophesied from the angle of geographical and spiritual transformation of both Israel and the earth.
3. Zechariah prophesied the following about Israel's future:
 - a. Her horrific suffering at the End of the Age;
 - b. Her attack by nations;
 - c. Her great ultimate victory;
 - d. Her mandate of world leadership in the Millennial Kingdom.
4. The reasons why God would allow such suffering for Israel are to:
 - a. Cause Israel to turn to Jesus (Zech. 1:3);
 - b. Refine Israel (Zech. 13:9);
 - c. Transform Israel (Zech. 14:10–21).

5. There will be another great Holocaust. We are escalating and racing towards this as prophesied in Zechariah 14. We need to be wise, watch and pray!
6. The primary theme of Zechariah 14 is the transformation of Millennial Jerusalem into the world capital of Jesus and the bestowing upon Israel the mandate of world leadership over nations. This has always been God's plan. He has decided for Israel to be the prototype of God's holy nation.

C. Brief Overview of Zechariah 13:7 – 14:21

1. Zech. 13:7–9 — God's refinement of Israel;
2. Zech. 14:1–2 — The seige of Jerusalem and Jerusalem at the center of Global War at the End of the Age;
3. Zech. 14:3–5 — Jesus' return to deliver Israel;
4. Zech. 14:6–9 — Jesus is King of Kings over nations and Jerusalem is His capital city;
5. Zech. 14:10–11 — The transformation of Jerusalem;
6. Zech. 14:12–15 — Jesus' zeal over the condition and destiny of Jerusalem;
7. Zech. 14:16–21 — The glory of God in Jerusalem.

D. Israel's Suffering at the End of the Age (Zech. 13:7–9)

1. These three verses are intense, dramatic, highly controversial and offensive. They were probably the reason why the Jewish leaders murdered Zechariah.
2. It is important to know these three verses because they give us an understanding as to why God would allow what is going to happen in Zech. 12:1–3 and Zech. 14:1–3. We cannot avoid these controversial and offensive passages; the key is that we must wrestle to understand God's heart.
3. We must understand these three verses to have insight into why God engineers such drama.
4. They reveal God's strategy to awaken Israel to turn to the "Desire of All Nations" — Jesus Himself.
5. They give us details of how the remnant of Israel is refined through the fire unto salvation.
6. God has a consistent principle and pattern in His dealing with Israel and the nations. He deals with them through judgments and shakings.
 - a. His aim is to remove all things that hinder wholehearted love and obedience;

- b. In His wisdom and sovereignty, He knows just how much to shake;
 - c. He uses the least severe means to bring the greatest number of hearts to Jesus at the deepest level of love without violating free will.
7. “*‘Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, Against the Man who is My Companion,’ says the LORD of hosts.*” (Zech. 13:7a)

In this verse, God the Father speaks. There are huge implications to this verse. It talks about:

- a. Jesus as the good shepherd;
 - b. The Father coming “against” Jesus and striking Him
 - i. This is a picture of Jesus being crucified on the cross;
 - ii. Jesus’ crucifixion was both an act of man (Zech. 12:10) and an act of God (Zech. 13:7).
 - c. “*Awake, O sword*”
 - i. This is the Father’s command for a sword (of justice) to be awakened to execute the Messiah.
 - ii. The cross and the issue of salvation is not one of love but one of justice, because a righteous God cannot pardon sin until the debt is paid and justice has been served.
8. Jesus fully understands and is fully qualified to lead Israel through the suffering of Zech. 13:8–9 (Heb. 4:15; 5:8). Israel will have no right to accuse Jesus of not being able to understand because He was struck by the Father’s sword and has faced His wrath (Rom. 5:8–9).
9. God refers to Jesus using these three titles in Zech. 13:7:
- a. “*My Shepherd*”
 - i. God’s plan has always been for Jesus (God Himself) to be Israel’s King (Deut. 17:14–20). However, Israel was impatient and wanted a king for herself like the surround nations (1 Sam. 8:7; 12:12).
 - ii. Even after God chose David to be king, David knew that he still was not God’s ultimate Shepherd for Israel. In writing Psalm 1, David wrote of the future Shepherd of Israel who would be coming.
 - b. “*The Man*”
 - i. This is a prophecy concerning the great mystery of the incarnation in 1 Tim. 3:16.
 - ii. It emphasizes that God became flesh.

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- c. *“My Companion”*
 - i. This highlighted the unique relationship between Jesus and the Father. Since before time began, Jesus had always been with the Father in close fellowship and communion (Jn. 1:1–3).
 - ii. Jesus shares in the divine nature because He is equal to God. The Pharisees were offended when Jesus claimed this about Himself in John 8:48–59.
10. The above gives us three powerful descriptions of who Jesus is:
- a. He is Israel’s Messianic King;
 - b. He is God incarnate (1 Tim. 3:16);
 - c. He is fully God, but at the same time, fully man.
11. *“Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered...”* (Zech. 13:7b)
- a. This is a prophecy regarding the immediate result of Israel rejecting the Messiah — her diaspora;
 - b. Jesus predicted this in Matt. 23:37–38 and Lk. 21:24 and Moses prophesied of it in Deut. 30:1.
12. *“...Then I will turn My hand against the little ones.”* (Zech. 13:7c)
- a. This verse is often viewed as negative. However, the word “against” can be better translated as “back on”, and interpreted to mean a turning back of God’s “hand of favour” upon Israel after her scattering.
 - b. It is a message from God to assure Israel that there will always be a godly remnant that is preserved even during the long dark years of dispersion (Matt. 26:31–32).
 - i. Paul taught the doctrine of the godly remnant of Israel (Rom. 11:1–5);
 - ii. Israel’s rejection of Jesus is not total and it is the sovereign will of God that Israel be scattered and blinded. However, there has always been a godly remnant.
13. *“It shall come to pass in all the land...that two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it.”* (Zech. 13:8)
- a. The context for this is at the End of the Age. Throughout Zechariah Chapters 12 – 14, “in that day” is mentioned 18 times to refer to the End of the Age.
 - b. To give a picture of the extent of the coming Holocaust: there are currently 18 million Jews worldwide. Two-thirds dying would amount to 12 million Jews.
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14. *“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.’”* (Zech. 13:9)

- a. The emphasis and focus should be on this because one-third will be radically born again and turn to Jesus.
- b. Six million Jews will turn to Jesus in the span of three and a half years. This will work out to be an average of 4762 converts per day.
- c. The reason for Israel’s suffering is for her refinement (Mal. 3:1–6). She cannot be given world leadership over nations until she is refined (Dan. 11:35; Dan. 12:10).

E. The Coming War Against Israel (Zech. 14:1–4)

1. **Zechariah 14:1–4** prophesies that Jerusalem will be temporarily captured and half its people will be taken captive.

2. *“Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst.”* (v.1)

a. *“The day of the LORD”*

- i. This refers to the long-awaited Day that has been set apart to show the nations God’s majestic power as He destroys His enemies and saves His people.
- ii. It is the Day of His wedding (Rev. 19:7) when He returns as a Bridegroom for His Bride.
- iii. It is the Day of His wrath (Matt. 25:31–32, Ps.2:9) when He returns as a Judge to judge nations.
- iv. It is the Day of the Lord (Joel 2:11) when He returns as a King to fight nations on behalf of His people — both Israel and the church.

b. *“Spoil will be divided in your midst”*

- i. Israel’s spoil will be divided by the Gentiles who attack the city;
- ii. This speaks of the temporal victory of the Gentiles;
- iii. Israel will be defeated only for a short season. The Gentile nations will not realise it because they will have a false sense of confidence.

3. *“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.”* (v.2)

- a. Jerusalem shall temporarily be captured by the Antichrist's armies;
- b. Half of Jerusalem will be taken into captivity, but the remnant of the people will be protected and shall not be cut off from the city;
- c. About 600,000 Jews currently live in Jerusalem.

F. Jesus Returns as King: Jerusalem Will Be His Capital City (Zech. 14:3–5)

1. **Zechariah 14:3–5** prophesies that Jesus will return as the King of Israel to deliver her from her enemies. This is the same event as the one prophesied in Zechariah 12:4–9, where horses will be blinded and armies will become mad.
2. *“Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle.”* (v.3)
 - a. God will show Himself as the divine Warrior who will fight for His people and trample on nations. Jesus will return as a Warrior King in the context of war (Isa. 61:2; 63:1–6, Rev. 19:17–21, Ps. 24:7–10).
3. *“And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. 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.”* (v.4)
 - a. This will be a re-enactment of Moses parting the Red Sea. As Israel is being cornered by eschatological Pharaoh — the Antichrist — Jesus will come as the greater Moses to split the Mount of Olives to allow the Jews to pass through and escape.
 - b. This will take place at the end of Jesus' 30-day procession at His Second Coming. The procession will include His moving across the sky and on land with His final destination in Jerusalem.
4. *“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.”* (v.5)
 - a. *“You shall flee”*
 - i. The Jews in Jerusalem will escape through this newly created valley after the Mount of Olives is split.
 - ii. They will flee with panic, as they would in an earthquake. When Jesus taught about moving mountains, He could have been standing on or near the Mount of Olives and pointing at it (Mark 11:1, 23).
 - b. *“My mountain valley”*
 - i. God calls this “His” mountain valley because it was He who will form it by an act of His power in a way that will mirror the division of the Red Sea (Ex. 14:22).

- ii. The Lord will split this mountain so that half of it moves to the north and half to the south, creating a vast east-west valley.
- iii. The valley will stretch as far as Azal, which is at least 10 to 20 miles east of Jerusalem.
- c. *“And all the saints with You.”*
 - i. Jesus will return with His raptured and victorious saints (1 Thes. 3:12–13, Rev. 19:14).

G. Announcement of Jesus as King Over the Earth (Zech. 14:6–9)

1. **Zechariah 14:6–9** describe and highlight:
 - a. The Kingship of Jesus as seen through miracles of darkness, light and living water (Ps. 24:7–10);
 - b. Jerusalem as the new capital of the world;
 - c. The epicentre from which “garden-of-Eden-type blessings” will spread progressively to the whole world in the Millennium. The transformation of nations will be progressive in the Millennium (Isa. 9:6–9);
 - d. The healing waters and a mysterious light at night (Isa. 4:5; 30:26).
2. *“It shall come to pass in that day that there will be no light, the lights will diminish.”* (v.6)
 - a. *“No light”*
 - i. It will be a day of gloom with utter darkness;
 - ii. Darkness shall come upon the Antichrist’s global empire (Rev. 16:10);
 - iii. The light of the sun, the moon, and stars will be darkened (Isa. 13:10; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15; Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24; Lk. 21:25; Acts 2:19–20).
3. *“It shall be one day (unique day or unique moment) which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen that it will be light.”* (v.7–8)
 - a. There will be a sudden and unique illumination that will take place “*at evening time*”. It is prophesied about in Isa. 24:23 as well.
 - b. This unique day and moment is known only to the Lord. Only God can understand this (Zech. 14:7).

- c. This unique and mysterious light will introduce God's new order for the created world (i.e. the sun, moon, animals, vegetation, soil, topography, etc.).
- 4. *"In that day it shall be that living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea (i.e. the Dead Sea) and half of them toward the western sea (i.e. the Mediterranean Sea); in both summer and winter it shall occur."* (v.8)
 - a. A river with supernatural healing properties will flow out of the temple;
 - b. It is the same river that Ezekiel saw in Ezek. 47:1–12;
 - c. Its water will flow east to the Dead Sea and west into the Mediterranean Sea (Ps. 46:4; 65:9).
- 5. *"The LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be — 'The LORD is one,' and His name one."* (v.9)
 - a. All the kings of the earth will worship and serve Him;
 - b. He *"is one and His name one"*, means that Jesus will be the only one acknowledged as God on the earth (Jer. 3:17).

H. The City of The Great King (Zech. 14:10–11)

- 1. These verses are primarily about the drastic change of topography and landscape of the city of Jerusalem.
- 2. *"All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba (northern Judah) to Rimmon south of Jerusalem (southern Judah). Jerusalem shall be raised up and inhabited in her place from Benjamin's Gate (north wall) to the place of the First Gate (north-east corner) and the Corner Gate (north-west corner), and from the Tower of Hananeel (north wall) to the king's winepresses (south wall)."* (v.10)
 - a. Jerusalem and the land around it will become as flat as a plain, while the whole area will be physically elevated to make it the perfect place to establish a world capital.
 - b. The prophets (i.e. Isaiah, Micah and Ezekiel) prophesied that in the last days the Lord's house would be established on the top of the mountains and be exalted above the hills (Isa. 2:2).
 - c. At the command of the Word of Jesus, Jerusalem will both be levelled and raised or elevated to a height that surpasses all the other mountains. The topography of the whole region will be greatly altered.
- 3. *"The people shall dwell in it; and no longer shall there be utter destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited."* (v.11)

- a. Jerusalem will be the safest city in all of history. No enemy will ever disrupt the peace in Jerusalem again.
- b. Throughout history, Jerusalem has endured 36 wars, been invaded over 50 times, conquered 20 times, reduced to rubble 17 times and rebuilt 18 times.
- c. God promises that from that time onwards, there will finally be peace and safety there forever because the Prince of Peace will be ruling over Jerusalem.

I. God's Promise to Bring Destruction to Israel's Enemies (Zech. 14:12–15)

1. Zechariah elaborates on the promise that Jerusalem will be safe.
2. This reveals the zeal of Jesus to bring peace, safety and security to Jerusalem.
3. Chronologically, these verses describe what follows after Zech. 14:3–8.
4. The Lord will destroy the enemy by using four different means:
 - a. Through a plague (Zech. 14:12);
 - b. Through panic (Zech. 14:13);
 - c. Causing fear-crazed Gentiles to turn against one another (Zech. 14:13);
 - d. Through Israeli soldiers anointed for battle (Zech. 14:14a).
5. *“This shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongue shall dissolve in their mouths...”* (v.12)
 - a. *“All the people”*
 - i. The Lord will execute vengeance on each individual person who fought against Jerusalem, stole her goods, raped her women, and took her citizens captive (Zech. 14:1–2).
 - b. *“Plague”*
 - i. The flesh, eyes, and tongues of the enemy soldiers will dissolve even as they stand there on their feet. The plague will also kill many of their animals (Zech. 14:15).
6. *“In that day a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will...raise his hand against his neighbour's hand;”* (v.13)
 - a. Great fear will take hold of those who come against Jerusalem and God will cause them to fight amongst their own soldiers.

7. *“Judah also will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be gathered together: gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance.”* (v.14)
 - a. God will reverse the earlier situation by taking the spoil of the Gentiles in Zech. 14:2 and giving it to the Jewish people.
8. *“Such also shall be the plague on the horse and the mule, on the camel and the donkey.”* (v.15)
 - a. This gives more details and is related to what the Lord promises to do in Zech. 12:1–4 — to blind the horses of those who fight against Jerusalem.

J. God’s Zeal for the Supremacy and Preeminence of His Son (Zech. 14:16–19)

1. Zechariah 14:16–19 give us insight into:
 - a. The conversion of the Gentiles and Gentile nations who then unite with Israel to worship Jesus;
 - b. God’s zeal for the supremacy and glory of His Son, who will be worshipped by all nations.
2. *“And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.”* (v.16)
 - a. *“Everyone who is left”*
 - i. The unsaved survivors of the Tribulation (who refused to worship the Antichrist) who stood against Jerusalem will be radically converted to become worshippers of the God of Israel.
 - ii. Scripture prophesies that “those who are left” will receive salvation and populate the Millennial earth (Isa. 4:3; 10:20; 11:11; 49:6; 65:8; 66:19; Jer. 31:2; Ezek. 20:38–42; 36:36; Amos 9:9–10; Joel 2:32; Zech. 12:14; 13:8; 14:16).
 - b. *“To worship the King”*
 - i. All the Gentile survivors of the Tribulation will go up to Jerusalem annually to worship Jesus as King and to participate in the Feast of Tabernacles.
 - c. *“To keep the Feast of Tabernacles”*
 - i. The Feast of Tabernacles (also known as the “Feast of Booths / Ingathering”) is the one feast that God will require all to participate in. It is the only feast that all nations will be required to observe. This feast celebrates:
 - The Lord’s provision (food and crops);
 - His redemption from slavery;

- The ingathering of the harvest of the nations to Jesus;
 - His tabernacling among His people.
3. *“And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain. If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.”* (v.17–19)
- a. The Lord will require all nations to come up to Jerusalem to worship Jesus annually. Through this, they will acknowledge Israel’s national supremacy on the Millennial earth.
 - b. In the same way that the Lord judged Israel’s rebellion and compromise by withholding rain, any family or nation who neglects to obey this command shall have no rain for their crops (Deut. 28:23–24).
 - c. The Lord will not make any exceptions for this requirement to keep the feast.

K. Israel Will Be a Holy Nation unto The Lord (Zech. 14:20–21)

1. Israel will be the first nation in all of history who will walk holy before God in every area of her life. Israel will walk in holiness in her:
 - a. Public life;
 - b. Religious life;
 - c. Private life
2. *“In that day ‘Holiness to the Lord’ shall be engraved on the bells of the horses. The pots in the LORD’s house shall be like the bowls before the altar.”* (v.20)
 - a. The “bells on horses” represent life on the streets in Jerusalem and symbolise public life.
 - b. The ordinary cooking pots in the temple will be as holy as the bowls used to sprinkle the sacrificial blood on the brazen altar. These symbolize religious life.
3. *“Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts...In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.”* (v.21)

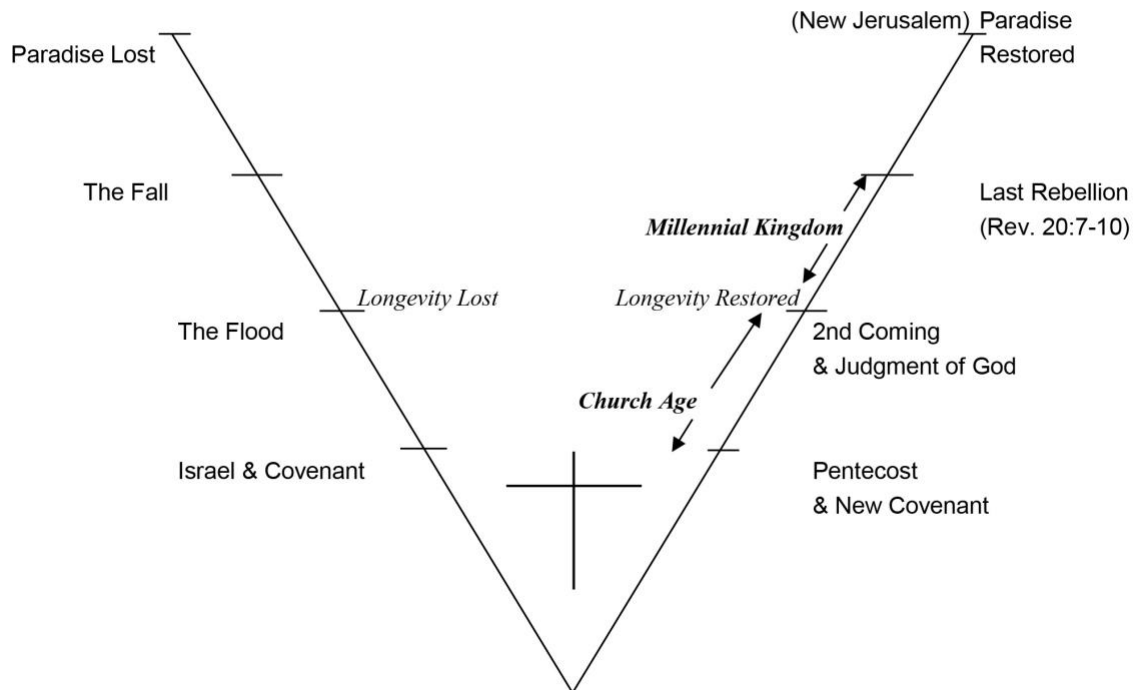
- a. The pots throughout Jerusalem and Judah represent Israel's private domestic life. Every family in Israel will be set apart to the Lord.
- b. "Canaanite"
 - i. Speaks of a type of behaviour, not a particular bloodline;
 - ii. The Canaanites throughout Israel's history represented those who were ungodly and those rebellious towards God;
 - iii. This means that any person who rebels against God will never be allowed to enter Jerusalem again.

L. Conclusion

1. God's original purpose for Israel is that they live as a holy nation of priests unto Him (Ex. 19:6).
2. For the first time, the world will see an entire nation with every individual radically dedicated to Jesus.
3. Jerusalem will be the world capital and will truly be The Holy City.
4. God's zeal has been manifested and the Lord will cause the counsel of His will to come to pass (Zech. 8:2–3).
5. How then should we respond?
 - a. Stand with Israel because God is not neutral (Zech. 8:2);
 - b. Pray for Israel (Isa. 62:6–7) because it is God's requirement;
 - c. Be a voice to prepare the church (Rom. 11:25).

Israel, the Church and the Kingdom of God

Decline and Restoration of Man



Decline and Restoration of the Church

