

ZECHARIAH – CHAPS 7-9 – Obedience Better Than Fasting; Disobedience Resulted in Captivity; Jerusalem, Holy City in the Future; Israel Defended Against Enemies; The Coming King; God Will Save His People

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:00pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numerous pastor/teachers.

Obedience Better Than Fasting (vs. 1-7)

Zec 7:1 Now in the fourth year of King Darius it came to pass that the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, on the fourth day of the ninth month, Chislev,
Zec 7:2 when the people sent Sherezer, with Regem-Melech and his men, to the house of God, to pray before the LORD,
Zec 7:3 and to ask the priests who were in the house of the LORD of hosts, and the prophets, saying, "Should I weep in the fifth month and fast as I have done for so many years?"
Zec 7:4 Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying,
Zec 7:5 "Say to all the people of the land, and to the priests: 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months during those seventy years, did you really fast for Me—for Me?'
Zec 7:6 When you eat and when you drink, do you not eat and drink for yourselves?
Zec 7:7 Should you not have obeyed the words which the LORD proclaimed through the former prophets when Jerusalem and the cities around it were inhabited and prosperous, and the South and the Lowland were inhabited?" "

Disobedience Resulted in Captivity (vs.8-14)

Zec 7:8 Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, saying,
Zec 7:9 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Execute true justice, Show mercy and compassion Everyone to his brother.
Zec 7:10 Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, The alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart Against his brother.'
Zec 7:11 But they refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stoped their ears so that they could not hear. p
Zec 7:12 Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts.
Zec 7:13 Therefore it happened, that just as He proclaimed and they would not hear, so they called out and I would not listen," says the LORD of hosts.
Zec 7:14 "But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations which they had not known. Thus the land became desolate after them, so that no one passed through or returned; for they made the pleasant land desolate."

Jerusalem, Holy City in the Future (vs. 1-23)

Zec 8:1 Again the word of the LORD of hosts came, saying,
Zec 8:2 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; With great fervor I am zealous for her.'

v. 1 Chapters 7 & 8 are a short historical interlude. *the fourth year* - It was December 4, **518 B.C.** This is the same period in which Haggai was speaking to the people in a very practical way.
v. 2 When they - The captives who still continued in Babylon. The house of God - The temple, which now half built began to be frequented. Regem - melech - It appears not who these were, but no doubt they were eminent in dignity and piety. To pray - To intreat the Lord for pardon of what was past, acceptance of them at present, and an answer to their enquiry.
v. 3 God had never given them fast days; He gave seven *feast* days. It was their own idea to fast. They had set aside days of fasting and days of weeping and mourning during their captivity, and they continued it after the Captivity, but God was not blessing them
vs. 4-5 Did you really fast for Me? God says to them, Did you do it to honor Me and to praise Me? Or did you do it as a legalistic sort of exercise that would build up something on the credit side which would make you acceptable to Me and cause Me to bless you?" God does not approve nor does He condemn the ritual. He inquires into their *motive*. **How much of your worship and time with the Lord, Holy Communion, is just ritual?**
vs. 6-7 For yourselves When, on the other hand, they kept the appointed feasts, in place of the fasts, was it His glory they sought? Or did they simply come together for social enjoyment, eating and drinking, without one thought of honoring Him whose power and grace they were supposed to be remembering? This is all the answer that was given for the moment.
v. 8 Zechariah gives the substance of their exhortations, as renewed to A ritual is wrong if the heart is wrong! Instead of quoting the former prophets himself.
v. 9 Spoke - To your fathers.
v. 10 Imagine evil - Neither think ill of, or with ill to, nor plot evil against one another.
v. 11 shrugged their shoulders - Withdrew their shoulder from the yoke of the law.
v. 12 by His spirit - By His holy spirit.
v. 13 The Lord by the former prophets called them to repentance and obedience: and they would not hear; his words, nor obey his voice: so they cried: when they were besieged in Jerusalem, and were carried captive into Babylon: and I would not hear, says the Lord of hosts; so as to deliver them out of the hands of their enemies;
v. 14 They laid the land desolate - By their sins.
vs. 1-2 His continued love for Jerusalem and their people. That He continues to have a plan for them, in spite of their backsliding and their sin in the past, to pour His blessings out on them. **This is tremendous news!!** Especially for those who feels because of their sin and poor decisions there is no hope –that God certainly won't use me!

Class Schedule from now to the end of July!

There will be no classes for four periods encompassing, June 8/9; June 15/16; June 29/30; July 6/7, due to conferences/travel schedule.
There will be classes – May25/26; June 1/2; June 22/23; July 13/14; 20/21; 27/28.

Chapters 1-6 The Prophet sees a Vision
 Chapters 7-8 The People asking a Question
 Chapters 9-14 The Prince coming with Salvation – In chapter 9, we come to the final section of the book. The flow is noticeably changed because many years have passed. Zechariah is writing now not as a young man but as a seasoned prophet. His emphasis is not so much on the temple, which has long been completed, or on theological questions but on the coming of Jesus Christ. This should not be surprising for it seems to me that the older we get in the Lord, the simpler life becomes as we realize it's all about Jesus. (Now we know there are two comings).

Vs. 2-6 - For many years, the people had fasted on four specific days supposedly in order to seek the Lord and to repent from the sin that landed them in Babylon. Here, with the temple going up and good things happening, they ask if there is a need to keep fasting. "Did you really fast for Me?" the Lord asks, "or were you fasting simply to prove your own goodness?" The question is still one that must be asked. **Why do we do what we do? Is it to assuage our guilt, showcase our goodness, or manipulate God? Mere formality will never do for God!**

Vs. 11-14 It wasn't because the people weren't fasting that the land was made desolate. It was because they weren't showing mercy and weren't obedient to the Lord. Therefore, I believe the word of the Lord is simply this: If you wonder why your walk is dry, why your heart, soul, and spirit are desolate, it might not be because you need to pray longer, fast more, or study deeper. **The real issue is never our displays of spirituality but rather our willingness to show mercy. Love is always the key.**

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Zec 8:3 "Thus says the LORD: 'I will return to Zion, And dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, The Mountain of the LORD of hosts, The Holy Mountain.'
Zec 8:4 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Old men and old women shall again sit In the streets of Jerusalem, Each one with his staff in his hand Because of great age.
Zec 8:5 The streets of the city Shall be full of boys and girls Playing in its streets.'
Zec 8:6 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'If it is marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, Will it also be marvelous in My eyes?' Says the LORD hosts.
Zec 8:7 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Behold, I will save My people from the land of the east And from the land of the west;
Zec 8:8 I will bring them back, And they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They shall be My people And I will be their God, In truth and righteousness.'
Zec 8:9 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Let your hands be strong, You who have been hearing in these days These words by the mouth of the prophets, Who spoke in the day the foundation was laid For the house of the LORD of hosts, That the temple might be built.
Zec 8:10 For before these days There were no wages for man nor any hire for beast; There was no peace from the enemy for whoever went out or came in; For I set all men, everyone, against his neighbor.
Zec 8:11 But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days,' says the LORD of hosts.
Zec 8:12 'For the seed shall be prosperous, The vine shall give its fruit, The ground shall give her increase, And the heavens shall give their dew— I will cause the remnant of this people To possess all these.
Zec 8:13 And it shall come to pass That just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, So I will save you, and you shall be a blessing. Do not fear, Let your hands be strong.'
Zec 8:14 "For thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Just as I determined to punish you When your fathers provoked Me to wrath,' Says the LORD of hosts, 'And I would not relent,
Zec 8:15 So again in these days I am determined to do good To Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear.
Zec 8:16 These are the things you shall do: Speak each man the truth to his neighbor; Give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and peace;
Zec 8:17 Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; And do not love a false oath. For all these are things that I hate,' Says the LORD."

v. 3 Shall be called the City of Truth - Her citizens shall love the truth and speak it, shall worship me in truth of heart, as well as in the true manner prescribed to them.
v. 4 Old men - Formerly war, or famine or pestilence, and wasting diseases, cut off men and women before they came to old age.
v. 5 And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls,.... Denoting a large increase of inhabitants, in a literal sense; and may spiritually signify the large numbers of converts, of new born babes, who are regenerated by the grace and Spirit of God, and are accounted of by the Lord for a generation:
v. 6 Marvelous - These things may seem strange to this people.
v. 7 the land of the East- Persia and Media, which lay east from Jerusalem, and were now masters of Babylon.
v. 8 In truth and in righteousness - This signifies both God's part, and their part; on God's part truth, on theirs, righteousness, obedience to God's righteous law. That has not yet happened. It isn't yet in righteousness that those people are dwelling in the land. **But that's going to change and they will be His people in truth and in righteousness.**
v. 9 "Let you hands be strong: - **Your place that God has for you is important!**
v. 10 Before these days - For eighteen years together. No hire - No profit by the labor of man or beast, no sowing or planting. Affliction - Distress, and want, through the barrenness, which attended all their labor.
v. 11 O I will not treat - That is, I will not deal with them as in former days.
v. 12 God brought prosperity to that nation for a period of time. The great judgment came upon them, of course, when they rejected the Messiah—Titus the Roman destroyed Jerusalem and scattered the people throughout the Roman Empire.
v. 13 So will I save you, and you shall be a blessing; be blessed in themselves with the above blessings of plenty and prosperity in outward things;
v. 14 I would not relent - I did not fail to do it.
v. 15 So - So with like steadiness of mind I have purposed to do well to you.
v. 16 Give judgment in your gates - True judgment. Peace - That may restore, and settle peace among you. Gates - The places of judicature, where the judges sat.
v. 17 for all these are things that I hate, says the Lord; as being contrary to his nature, and to his law; and is a reason why they should be hated and avoided by men.

What does the Lord want from you? It's good when your life is in harmony with God – when you love the things that He loves and hate the things that He hates.
 What are the things He want you to do? **v. 16** –
 • Everyone speak truth to your neighbor!
 • Give the right judgment in your gates for truth, justice and peace!
 These are things He hates!
 • Thinking evil in your heart against your neighbor!
 (**Zech. 7:10**)
 • Loving a false oath! (**Mt. 5:33-37**)

And when I read these things I say yes! That's great that's wonderful. I buy that, I don't have any problem with that as far as assenting to it. **My problem is doing it.** I say well yes, that's great I like that. I see the ideal, I assent to the ideal, I desire the ideal.

The problem is, in my flesh, I have no ability to attain to the ideal. That's where the power of the Holy Spirit comes in, and **through the power of the Holy Spirit I am enabled to be what I can't be, though I would desire and want to be.**

And so Jesus is saying if you'll just get your priorities right, put God first seek God first. These other things will be taken care of. God will take care of these other things.

Now great, thank you Jesus. But how can I live by that ideal?. Well He says, you really can't in your own effort or strength or power. But I'll tell you what. **You submit your life to Me. I will come, I will dwell within you and I will give you power through the Holy Spirit and through the power of the Holy Spirit I will enable you to do what you can't do in and of yourself. Great! That's exactly what I need!** The help, the strength and the power to do these things. And through the power of the Holy Spirit I can enter in to the life of the Spirit, the walk of the Spirit, being led by the Spirit. And so, the Lord is speaking to the people here of the ideal, that He desires.

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Zec 8:18 Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying,

Zec 8:19 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'The fast of the fourth month, The fast of the fifth, The fast of the seventh, And the fast of the tenth, Shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts For the house of Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.'

Zec 8:20 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Peoples shall yet come, Inhabitants of many cities;

Zec 8:21 The inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, "Let us continue to go and pray before the LORD, And seek the LORD of hosts. I myself will go also."

Zec 8:22 Yes, many peoples and strong nations Shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, And to pray before the LORD.'

Zec 8:23 "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you." ' ' "

Israel Defended Against Enemies (vs. 1-8)

Zec 9:1 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);

Zec 9:2 Also against Hamath, which borders on it, And against Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.

Zec 9:3 For Tyre built herself a tower, Heaped up silver like the dust, And gold like the mire of the streets.

Zec 9:4 Behold, the LORD will cast her out; He will destroy her power in the sea, And she will be devoured by fire.

Zec 9:5 Ashkelon shall see it and fear; Gaza also shall be very sorrowful; And Ekron, for He dried up her expectation. The king shall perish from Gaza, And Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.

Zec 9:6 "A mixed race shall settle in Ashdod, And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

Zec 9:7 I will take away the blood from his mouth, And the abominations from between his teeth. But he who remains, even he shall be for our God, And shall be like a leader in Judah, And Ekron like a Jebusite.

Zec 9:8 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.

v.18 The word of the Lord: here begins a new prophecy, respecting the abrogation of Jewish fasts, and the calling of the Gentiles.

v. 19 Thus says the Lord - This verse is a final decision of the case: provided they do these things required, Zec 8:16-17, then shall the fasting cease, and turn into joyful feasts. The fourth month - Wherein the city was taken by the Babylonians. The fifth - In which the temple was burnt. The seventh - Wherein Gedaliah was killed. The tenth - On the tenth day whereof the king of Babylon's army sat down before the city.

v. 20 People - Multitudes. **This is again the future. It's going to come to pass, it hasn't yet.**

v. 21 I myself will go also - The invited, shall with as much zeal embrace the motion, as others made it.

v. 22 In Jerusalem - Literally understood, you have the first fruits of them mentioned, Act 2:10-12. Mystically, Jerusalem is the church of Christ. To pray - To perform all gospel - worship.

v. 23 Ten men - That is, many men. All languages - No nation is any longer excluded. A Jew - To whom the gospel was first preached. We have heard - And now see, and are assured. That God - The true God, the only true God, whom to know is life eternal. **Glorious day. My prayer is that it isn't too far off.**

v. 1 The rest thereof - This burden shall lie long as well as heavy on Damascus. Towards the Lord - For as all men's appeals in cases of wrong are to heaven, so they who have been wronged by Syrian injustice, look to heaven for right. Exactly the path that Alexander will take about 150 yrs. later.

v. 2 which borders on it - Shall be so near the storm, that they shall not quite escape. Very wise - Each of them are subtle, and think by craft to save themselves, but God derides their wisdom.

vs. 3-4 Everyone felt that Tyre was impregnable as it was situated out on its island fortress. Alexander besieged it for seven months and finally conquered it by scraping the ruins of the old city into the sea to build a causeway out to the island city. After taking Tyre, Alexander moved down into the Philistine country. (Cf. Ez. 26:1-6)

v. 5 It is interesting to see how God's Word was literally fulfilled. Alexander the Great destroyed these cities and broke the power of the Philistines.

v. 6 A mixed race - Strangers, who have no right of inheritance.

v. 7 his blood out of his mouth, the meaning may be, that they shall no more thirst after blood, nor drink it; nor breathe out threatenings and slaughter against the saints, or persecute the people of God: or that they should no more offer the blood of their sacrifices upon the altars to their deities, or eat things sacrificed to them:

v. 8 I will camp around - To defend it from all its enemies. **Now that's future you see, because oppressors have passed through them since the time of Alexander the Great and the fulfillment of this prophecy. Its complete fulfillment is yet future.**

WORSHIP THE KING

*O worship the King, all glorious above,
O gratefully sing God's power and God's love;
our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days,
pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise.*

*O tell of God's might, O sing of God's grace,
whose robe is the light, whose canopy space,
the chariots of wrath the deep thunderclouds form,
and dark is God's path on the wings of the storm.*

*Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite?
It breathes in the air, it shines in the light;
it streams from the hills, it descends to the plain,
and sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.*

*Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail,
in thee do we trust, nor find thee to fail;
thy mercies how tender, how firm to the end,
our Maker, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend.*

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The Coming King (vs. 9-10)

Zec 9:9 (First Coming) "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.

Zec 9:10 (Second Coming) 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.'

God Will Save His People (vs. 11-17)

Zec 9:11 "As for you also, Because of the blood of your covenant, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.

Zec 9:12 Return to the stronghold, You prisoners of hope. Even today I declare That I will restore double to you.

Zec 9:13 For I have bent Judah, My bow, Fitted the bow with Ephraim, And raised up your sons, O Zion, Against your sons, O Greece, And made you like the sword of a mighty man."

Zec 9:14 Then the LORD will be seen over them, And His arrow will go forth like lightning. The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet, And go with whirlwinds from the south.

Zec 9:15 The LORD of hosts will defend them; They shall devour and subdue with slingstones. They shall drink and roar as if with wine; They shall be filled with blood like basins, Like the corners of the altar.

Zec 9:16 The LORD their God will save them in that day, As the flock of His people. For they shall be like the jewels of a crown, Lifted like a banner over His land—

Zec 9:17 For how great is its goodness And how great its beauty! Grain shall make the young men thrive, And new wine the young women.

v. 9 your King - The Messiah. He is just - The righteous one, who cometh to fulfil all righteousness. Having salvation - To bestow on all that believe in him. **Great prophecy. Your king is coming Rejoice! Shout for joy! Your King is coming.** In **Psalm 118:24-26**, the psalmist said, *this is the day that the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now save now.* Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. And He goes on to talk about the stone which the builders rejected. The same has become the chief cornerstone. **This is the work of God it is marvelous in our eyes.**

Interesting. He is speaking, this is the day that the Lord has made. (cf. Mt. 21:5-9)

v. 10 I will cut off - When the Messiah comes as the Prince of Peace and sets up His kingdom, He will need no external force. Neither chariot, bow nor sword, brought salvation to him, neither shall they be mentioned in the day of His conquest. From the River – to the ends of the earth!

v. 11 O As for you - Oh Jerusalem; these words are Christ's words to her. By the blood - By my blood, in which thy covenant as confirmed; 'tis God's covenant as made by him, 'tis Zion's covenant as made for her, 'tis Christ's also as made in him. Sent forth - I have delivered the Jews out of Babylon:

v. 12 Return to - The prophet exhorts the Jews to hasten to Christ, who is the salvation and high tower of the church. Prisoners of hope - Captives, yet not without hope. Even to - day - In this day of lowest distress. Double - Twice as much good as thou hast suffered evil.

v. 13 For I have bent Judah - In the day's when Judah shall be in my hand as a strong bow, already bent. Ephraim - Ephraim, the remainder of the ten tribes (which returned with Judah) shall be for a supply of warriors; as the quiver filled is a supply of arrows to the bow - man.

vs. 14-15 This is a picture of how it is going to be *until* Christ comes. Man is not going to bring the Millennium to this earth! **1 Cor. 15:51-52**

v. 16 "In that day" is an expression which Zechariah will use a great deal in chapter 12. "That day" is the Day of the Lord, which will begin after the church makes its exit from the earth by way of the Rapture. It ushers in the Great Tribulation period, and it ends, we believe, after the seven years of tribulation when the Lord Jesus Christ will return to establish His Kingdom here upon this earth. Then upon this earth will be the thousand-year reign of Christ.

v. 17 its goodness - Infinite goodness is the fountain of all the good done for this people. His beauty - How wonderful the beauty of Divine Providence in Israel's deliverance and salvation? Corn - Plentiful harvests shall make the young men cheerful in sowing, reaping, and eating the fruits thereof. The glorious, glorious Day of the Lord!

v. 9 – A marvelous prophecy! On a donkey. But even further. In Daniel the ninth Chapter as the Lord through the angel was explaining to Daniel the future of the nation of Israel and the city of Jerusalem, He said there are seventy sevens that are determined upon Israel and upon the holy city. To finish transgressions, to make and end of sin, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to establish the everlasting kingdom, and to anoint the most holy place. Now understand, from the time the commandment goes forth to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem to the coming of the Messiah, the prince will be seven sevens and sixty-two sevens, or four hundred and eighty-three years. Sixty-nine sevens or four hundred and eighty-three years.

From the time the commandment goes forth to restore and rebuild Jerusalem to the Messiah, the prince. The commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem was given by Artaxerxes to Nehemiah on March 14, 445 B.C. 483 years later, in the Babylonian calendar, 360 year, which would come out to a 173,880 days. Would bring you in our Julian calendar to the date, April 6, 32 A.D. The very day that Jesus made the triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

So that triumphant entry into Jerusalem was really one that was preceded by some fascinating prophecies. He's going to be riding on a donkey. Watch it! Riding on a donkey. Not a white stallion. He's lowly, riding on a donkey.

At the age of thirty-three, Alexander rode upon his mighty steed, Bucephalus, surrounded by soldiers whose shields were shining, whose spears were glistening. Yet Zion's King, also thirty-three, came riding on a donkey. Why did Jesus ride on a donkey? Why didn't He come with an impressive display of might? Because in so doing, **He is humble, touchable, relatable.** In fact, so seemingly ordinary was Jesus that, even though He had been in the public eye for thirty-three years, the soldiers evidently needed Judas to identify Him (**Mark 14:44**).

Your King is coming. This is the day the Lord has made. And what did the Lord say as He looked at Jerusalem and was weeping as He sat on that little donkey? "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem. If you had only known the things that belong to your peace in this thy day, but they're hid from your eyes and you're going to be dispersed."