

# Studies in Zechariah 08 Zechariah 9:

by John W. Bramhall

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*The sermon explores Zechariah 9, emphasizing God's prophetic message regarding Israel's future conflicts and the coming of the Messiah.*

**Duration:** 54:34

**Scripture:** Zechariah 1:7-8, Zechariah 7:2-3, Zechariah 7:9, Zechariah 9:9-10, Zechariah 9:12

**Topics:** "Messiah's Mission", "National Repentance"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the book of Zechariah and its four divisions. The first division emphasizes the call for national repentance among God's covenant people, Israel. The second division consists of eight visions given to the prophet, revealing God's determined purposes for Jerusalem and the ultimate coronation of the Messiah as the king-priest. The third division addresses a question raised by a delegation of Jews regarding their imposed fasts, with the divine answer indicating that greater oppression awaits Israel. Finally, the speaker highlights verse nine, which presents the person of the Messiah and his world mission, emphasizing the greatness of his goodness and beauty. The sermon concludes with a prayer acknowledging the future deliverance of God's earthly people and the anticipation of redemption for believers.

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## Transcript

Shall we turn in the word of God to the prophecy of Zechariah, this morning reading in chapter 9. We come this morning to the last division of this great prophecy. May I again, for the, not for the sake of repetition, but because of the value of repetition to our hearts and minds, declare the outline of the book in its four great divisions. And I'm sure if you keep the divisions before your heart and mind, you will have a clearer understanding of each section in its presentation.

In chapter 1 and the first six verses, we have the call of God for national repentance in relation to his covenant people, Israel. When God speaks to his people, and particularly in times of declension and apostasy, there is always a divine call that they may return unto him in genuine repentance and confession. Then we found the second division, beginning in chapter 1, verse 7, going to the end of chapter 6, a series of eight divisions given to the prophet in one night, declaring God's determined purposes in relation to Jerusalem and his people, and the ultimate coronation and crowning of the Messiah of Israel as the king priest over the land and over the nation, as well as over the world.

Then we saw last night the third division of the book, chapters 7 and 8, which parenthetically, written two years later, after the first section, was a question raised by a delegation of Jews from the captivity, who from Bethel went up to inquire of the prophet Zechariah regarding the imposed facts that they had placed upon themselves. And then we saw the ultimate divine answer to the question regarding the facts, that God would, instead of making a time of fasting, ultimately again, in the consummation of the Messiah's glory, bring them to a time of joy and gladness and cheerful feasting. Now we come to the last great section.

It covers chapters 9 through chapters 14, and it deals directly with the future world powers, it deals with Israel, and it deals with the kingdom of the Messiah. We shall find these last chapters falling into two divisions, and introduced in chapter 9 by what is expressed as being the burden of the word of the Lord. We have the same expression in chapter 12, which is the last division of this portion.

And there we have another burden, for the prophecies of the last section are two separate burdens, and in them we find particularly the great colossal conflict of the end of the age, between the world powers, the nations of the world, and the nation of Israel, with the grand climax, the inauguration of the messianic kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now may I repeat what I stated in another way. Both of these great burdens at the end of the book, they treat of war between the nations and Israel.

And beloved may I solemnly and seriously declare, that you and I should be greatly aware that the trend of today is to the near climax of what we have in this last section of Zechariah. When there will be, now there has been, but when there will yet be, and in undoubtedly a very near coming day, war between Israel, and not only Egypt, not only Syria, not only the Arabic nations close to them, but with the world of nations. And if I may just repeat the words of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 24, when he declared of Israel, of his earthly people, ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

Now we go to chapter 9, shall we read it through. The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of Hadrach, and Damascus, shall be the rest thereof, when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the Lord. And Haman, of social border thereby, Tyrus, and Sidon, though it be very wide.

And Tyrus did build herself a stronghold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets. Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea, and she shall be devoured with fire. Ascalon shall see it in fear, Gazer also shall see it and be very sorrowful, and Ekron, for her expectation shall be ashamed.

And the king shall perish from Gazer, and Ascalon shall not be inhabited, and a basket shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth. But he that remaineth, even he shall be for our God, and he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jambuzai.

And I will encamp about mine house, because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth. And no oppressor shall pass through them any more, for now have I seen with mine eye. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy king cometh unto thee, he is just, and having salvation, lowly and lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon the colt, the pole of an ass.

And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle-bow shall be cut off. And he shall speak peace unto the heathen, unto the nations, and his dominion shall be from sea even

to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.

Turn you to the strong, O ye prisoners of hope! Even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee. When I have bent Judah for thee, filled the bowl with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man. And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning, and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.

The Lord of hosts shall defend them, and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones, and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine, and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar. And the Lord dear God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people, for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land. For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! Call shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the days.

May God have his blessing to the reading and the hearing of his word. Now as we come to this ninth chapter, we have without question of doubt in the introduction of it the first eight verses, which was not an application in the days of Zechariah, but we have within it a record of what took place years after the days of Zechariah. For in the context of the first eight verses, there is a world conqueror described.

And we can see in the presentation of this world conqueror a future type of the nations of the world gathered around Israel at the closing days of the Gentile age. But God presents the advance and the conquering of one who as a world emperor came to the foreground following the days of Zechariah. That particular person, and what gives us the opportunity to think so, is the description of his conquest in these verses, and the cities which he conquered.

It is the description of the conquest of Alexander the Great, when as the head of the Grecian empire he came later and laid these cities waste. And he was also determining to destroy the city of Jerusalem as was the usual procedure of those world emperors in that day. Yet God spared the city of Jerusalem from being at that time overpowered and destroyed as it was the determined purpose of the emperor's heart.

And we shall see what took place. But God describes his judgment upon that land that is described in the first eight verses, the land of Hadrach, and that came to pass in the days of Alexander the Great. Now let's look at them briefly please.

We find the name of the land of Hadrach introduced to us in connection with Damascus in the opening words of verse one. Now there has never been proof for centuries of such a city by the name of Hadrach, until in recent years archaeological discoveries dug down, as they dug down under the city of Damascus and its environment, they found the existence of a city, and from tablets that were discovered, the name of the city of Hadrach. So that it was an actual city, Hadrach, there was an actual city, Damascus, go with me to verse two, there were the actual cities of Haman, and the actual cities of Cyrus and Sidon, which were visited as being the objects of destruction and judgment in the day of Alexander the Great, according to the purpose of God.

But now let's please notice something in the context of these two verses. The end of verse one. For here we have, though Hadrach and Damascus, Haman, Tyre, Sidon, were cities of Gentile power, yet God at the end of verse one indicates his ever watchful eye to be over his people.

When the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the Lord. The indication is definitely, though surrounded by the Gentiles, the eyes of the Lord are ever watchful toward his earthly people. Now we find in verse three and four particularly, that there were two main cities of Phoenicia involved in that particular judgment of that day, Tyre and Sidon.

And the destruction of those cities, as well as Haman and Damascus, was accomplished by Alexander the Great. May I say just a word about the great city of Tyre? My understanding is I stand upon the shores of the Mediterranean where that city once stood, and you see that there was at one time a causeway going up from the mainland to that great city of Tyre that was built, as it were, in the midst of the sea. That causeway was at one time half a mile in width and stretched out, and the citizens of that city built the place so that it would be impregnable in the time of war.

Well, I think it was the Assyrians that besieged the city for five years and they never conquered it. Later on, Nebuchadnezzar, the Chaldeans, besieged the city of Tyre for thirteen years and did not overthrow it. But when you come to the conquest of Alexander, and this is where the prophetic word comes in its value, God declares in verse three and four, Tyre did build herself a stronghold, heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.

But God said, Behold, the Lord will cast her out, he will smite her power in the sea, and she shall be devoured by fire. And the word of the Lord was fulfilled by the conquest of Alexander the Great. And where the Assyrians were unable to conquer it through the space of five years, and the Chaldeans, even after a siege of thirteen years, Alexander the Great overcame the city within the space of seven months.

Now one can recognize not merely the power of Alexander the Great, but the determined judgment of God, and realize the destruction that ultimately came by the hand of Alexander, and which has been proved by even Professor George Rawlinson, one of the great archaeologists of the, well, the early part of this century and part of the past century, who thus found the evidence of tablets that were dug out of the ruins that recognize and acknowledge the destruction of the city by Alexander the Great. But now you go to verse five. The burden of this prophecy travels even further.

And may I say a word, which I omitted to do, regarding the expression, the burden of the word of the Lord. The burden of the word of the Lord. You find this expression in other prophecies.

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the minor prophets. The burden of the word of the Lord. And usually you find the word is directed to some particular judgment of a very serious character.

And the burden of God's judgment was not only for the cities and the nations that we have mentioned, but go to verse five, and we find even it travels down southward towards Philistia and four capitals of the Philistines are named. Ashkelon shall see it and see it. Gaza, or in the modern pronunciation they call it Gaza, also shall see it and be very sorrowful.

And Ekron, for her expectation shall be ashamed. And the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited, and a bastard, meaning a foreign element, not a native element, shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. And so the four capital cities of the Philistines came under the judgment of God, even in the days of Alexander the Great.

Now look at verse seven, please. For the seventh verse indicates that in those cities the sacrifices of idolatry would cease. I will take away his blood out of his mouth and his abominations from between his

teeth.

Briefly let me state, this is but a description of the bloody sacrifices that the heathen made in that land long ago. Very recently when we were by the hill of Megiddo, the archaeologists had dug way down, I think they had gone about a hundred feet down under the surface of that hill. And there they had exposed an old altar that perhaps had been reared by the Hittites.

It was comprised of stones in a circular formation, perhaps about twenty-five to thirty feet in diameter. But upon those altars of old, the heathens sacrificed their bloody sacrifices, sometimes of human beings. And God declares that in relation to Philistia, guilty also of those bloody idolatrous sacrifices, he would take them away.

And wherever you read the word abomination, it is in reference, in the Hebrew meaning of it, to the idolatry of that day. And he would take them from between his teeth. But then, now note something.

You have a prophecy not only of that day, but like many, if not all, prophetic scriptures, it can be propelled to a future day. For note the end of verse seven. He that remaineth out of these places, even he is going to be for our God.

And he shall be as the governor in Judah, and Ekron is a Jebusite. Now let me give you one illustration of its meaning. When David conquered the city of Jebus, that city which he named ultimately as Jerusalem, the Jebusites held the stronghold.

And when David conquered and overpowered them, though they were Canaanites, he did not destroy them, but he made them his servants. And here is indicated, and may I reflect with you upon this fact, when you read the prophecies of the end times, when you read of the nations that shall be in that millennial kingdom, and then join with Israel the blessings of the kingdom reign, you have often named the very nations that were Israel's enemies. Even Egypt, and Syria, and nations that surrounded them, Edom, Moab, and so on.

For you will find that even in the prophetic fulfillment of the final day, those nations that were Israel's enemies, but who are now subjugated permanently, God will permit them to dwell in the land, and to be at service to his people, and even have the measure of blessing under the millennial reign of the Savior, and the blessing of the kingdom in Israel. And thus here is the indication that not even from Philistia would he thus bring total destruction upon them, but those that remain would be as the servants to God and to his people. Now look in verse eight.

Now in the eighth verse, God declares a principle in view of all that was to take place, whether in the days of Alexander, or propelling it to the future day as we shall see, of great destruction to come. Yet he declares a principle of permanent protection for Israel. And I will lay camp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth, and no oppressor shall pass through them any more, for now have I seen with mine eyes.

Now let me give you two explanations, for I believe there is a double interpretation right here in this verse. The first half of the verse had a particular fulfillment in the days of Alexander the Great. I stated previously, it was the obvious purpose.

In fact, according to secular history, according to the writings of Josephus, Alexander the Great determined he was going to destroy Jerusalem. The provocation for it was because the high priest of

Jerusalem refused to acknowledge him when he sent an emissary to demand allegiance from the people of Israel and Jerusalem. And the high priest was afraid of the power of the Egyptians, to which they were aligned, and in fear of him that day.

And Alexander the Great swore to his advisers he would destroy Jerusalem. And now God says, I will lay camp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by. And when Alexander the Great had conquered the cities that have been so named in this portion, and came upon his way toward Jerusalem, the high priest of that day knew, according to the Jewish history of Josephus, the high priest of that day, knowing the danger, called upon the people to gather together and pray unto Jehovah.

And so he, with his fellow priests and the people at large, they prayed unto Jehovah for deliverance. According to the story, the legend of Josephus, God gave to the high priest of that day a vision, that he should go out, not wait for Alexander the Great to come and enter the city, but to go out of the gates of the city with a priestly procession, and with the people of the city following him, go out and meet the coming conqueror, and meet him in robes of festival priestly glory that belong to him as well as to his country. And so the priest did.

And the people and priests followed the high priest. And Alexander the Great drew near and saw the procession. And his advisers as well as his generals expected that he would cut them off as he had declared he would.

But instead, Alexander the Great bowed down in obeisance to the high priest who was there present, according to Josephus' writing, with even the holy mitre upon his head that had written on it, Holiness unto our God. And they welcomed Alexander the Great and they accompanied him into the city and received him openly with gladness. And when the emperor was questioned by his general why he did not destroy them, he said, I had a vision that I would meet a man coming out of the city in such a manner as this.

And I realized it was of divine importance. And though he was, though undoubtedly he was a paganistic character, he recognized, as far as his conscience and heart was concerned, this was the hand of divine intervention. And the city was not destroyed.

Now, you know, I will encamp about my house because of the army, because of him that pacified, and because of him that returned it. And when Alexander returned from the conquest of those other cities, he spared Jerusalem, which was most unusual. Beloved, when you read the history of Jerusalem, as throughout its centuries, the conquerors of Jerusalem usually never spared the city, but tore it down and destroyed its inhabitants.

But then go further. The prophet is given a vision of a future day, when the Lord Jesus himself shall come, the Messiah, when no oppressor shall pass through them any more, for now have I seen with my eyes. Now, beloved, we have, we must apply the interpretation of the last part of this verse to a future day, when no oppressor shall pass through them any more.

Beloved, thank God for that coming day, for his dear people Israel. But that day is not yet present, and we know as we have stated and shall yet see even in greater detail, greater oppression awaits the nation of Israel in the land. Now we come to verse 9. Now verse 9, and I hope that you have seen as we've studied along, that how frequently there is suddenly the presentation of the person of the Messiah.

Breaking out from the chain of prophetic events that are foretold, there is suddenly a burst of glory to present the one who is the true Messiah of Israel, and the glorious coming King. And we have in the verses that are left in the chapter, the coming of Israel's Prince of Peace and his world mission. Now may I point out something? Wonderful to see it in Zechariah.

And this is where the Jews stumbled. You will find the presentation of the first advent of Christ, and the presentation of the second advent of Christ. We shall see tonight, God willing, one of the most precious truths about it in chapter 10.

But you will note, and please as a believer, note it carefully. You will find the presentation of the first advent of Christ, and also his second advent. For he is seen coming in to fulfill his sufferings before he comes again in his glory that will follow.

Now verse 9. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy King cometh unto thee. He is just, and having salvation. He is lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a coat, the sole of an ass.

Now beloved, may I point out, this is the one who God says is coming to be the agent, to be the person who will bring in peace. The one who will come with a mission of peace. And here are his credentials.

Now beloved, unfortunately, Israel stumbled over the credentials of the Messiah at his first advent. They failed to recognize his credentials. Now note what Zechariah writes of these credentials.

First he presents him, saying, Behold he is thy King. Thy King cometh unto thee. And then the credentials that he was the King follow.

He is just, declaring the righteousness of his person and of his character. And then another credential. He possesses salvation.

I wonder if you remember the words of Simeon in Luke chapter two. When the mother of Jesus brought the babe in to the temple, and Simeon took the babe up in his arms, and blessed him, and then said, Lord, now let us thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. O beloved, it is nice to know that salvation is in the person of Christ.

For Israel, for you and for me, well did Peter say in Acts 4 verse 12, Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none of the name unto heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. And salvation was one of his credentials. First, righteousness.

Second, salvation. And O beloved, the joy of seeing that blessed one when he was here, in his humiliation, in the time of his sufferings, he was the righteous one. He was the one in whom salvation rested, and upon whom alone salvation could be founded, even for Israel.

But know something, and you know this is where there was another great stumbling block. He was lonely. He was lonely.

O beloved, the nation of Israel was not looking for a lonely Messiah. If he had come in power to conquer, if he had come to lead an army and deliver them from the Romans, they would have followed him. But they missed one of his credentials, loneliness.

O beloved, isn't that a wonderful credential? All that you and I might take to our hearts, he that humbles himself shall be exalted. And at his first advent, he came in loneliness, and you and I know, very faithfully know, and clearly understand, as we read the account of Luke, he rode into the city upon the coat that was a foal of an ass. And there was fulfilled, to the very day, the prophecy according to Sir Robert Anderson, as you read in his book of Messiah the Prince, and in life concerning the prophecy of Daniel.

And he proves, without question of doubt, that Daniel's seventy weeks of prophecy, seventy weeks of years, actually were fulfilled to the day when Christ rode into Jerusalem upon the foal of an ass. And the King was there. And he proved his credentials to the nation, but the nation was blind and saw it not.

O beloved, what a prophecy! O the joy of seeing the first advent of the Lord Jesus, his credentials were proved at his first coming to the earth. But then note, as we go to verse ten, I want you to note something. Though he comes on a mission of peace, peace not only for Israel, peace that will be peace for the world.

Oh, you remember Isaiah wrote, there is no peace except my God to the wicked. And he repeated it in the latter section of his great prophecy three or four times. There is no peace, there is no peace.

My beloved, the nations of the earth, they can do all they will. They will never bring in peace, as you and I know, until the Prince of Peace will establish peace upon the earth. But I want you to notice the method of establishing peace in verse ten.

For this is the method of peace when it shall be established. I will cut off the chariot of Ephraim, and the horse of Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off. Now, may I point out, I believe the reference is not to the chariots of Ephraim, or the horses of Jerusalem, and the battle bow of Jerusalem, but I believe what the Lord is implying through the prophet is this.

The chariots of war at the end will surround Jerusalem. The chariot, and the horses of battle, and the battle bow, there will be the surrounding of the nations around Israel at the closing of the age. And says the Lord, I'm going to cut them off.

I'm going to cut off the chariot. Go with me to Psalm forty-six, will you please? The forty-sixth Psalm. For in this forty-sixth Psalm you have a description of the coming of the Messiah, and his deliverance of the people and the nation of Israel.

Now will you please read with me verse eight and nine. Psalm forty-six. Time doesn't permit the reading of all the Psalms.

But it is actually a description of the coming of the King to set up his kingdom, and destroy the nations that are battling against his people Israel. And in verse eight, Come behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth.

He breaketh a bow, he cutteth a spear in thunder, he burneth a chariot in the fire, and he will say to the nations, Be still, and I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. Now beloved may I say, the law will never demand the writing of a treaty. The law will never demand, as nations are trying to do today, the making of an agreement not to use nuclear weapons and so on.

Do you know what the Lord's going to do? He's going to destroy every instrument of war. Praise his name. Every instrument of warfare will be destroyed, and it will be a great destruction.

He'll cut them up in his power. Talk about atomic bombs and name anything that you wish. In the realm of nuclear physics and modern warfare of these days, I want to say frankly and faithfully and determinedly, he's going to destroy every weapon of warfare.

Hallelujah. His method of peace. His method of peace.

He's not going to pat them on the back and say, now do better. He'll say, wait a minute, I'm taking all this away from you. Destroying every weapon of warfare.

Hallelujah, what a day that will be when he comes and does it. And the joy of knowing there will be a kingdom of peace. Now note what happens.

Then he shall speak peace unto the nations. You know when the nations get together for peace? Right behind them, the greatest powers, they've built up armaments. And by the power of their armaments, they demand or seek to inflict upon others peace.

Wait a minute, says the Lord, before there's going to be peace on the earth, I'm going to destroy all your weapons. Then he shall speak unto the nations, as we read in Psalm 46, be still and know that I am God. He's going to tell them to hush up.

And what a day that will be, with his authority and power bringing peace. May I just suggest, as you read on, his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth? I suggest the reading of Psalm 72, the prayer of David for King Solomon. But in that prayer of David, there is a messianic interpretation that you cannot miss.

Psalm 72, telling of the kingdom of peace and reign over all the earth in that coming day. And what a joy it will be to see its final fulfillment. Now will you note verse 11? Verse 11 gives us a promise of strength to Israel.

Now note, as for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I've sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. And here we can recognize there's only one people who have a God-given covenant, and that people is Israel. And he declares to them and of them that thus they will be delivered.

And the blood of the covenant, which is the basis of his dealings with his people, he has never forgotten. And he declares I'm going to send your prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. One can recognize the similarity to the pit that Joseph was in when his brethren placed him within it.

And the Lord recognizes by the blood of that covenant, that is an eternal covenant with him and with the nation of Israel, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the Mosaic covenant, and that which he has promised he will bring their deliverance. Now note verse 12, for in verse 12 he encourages them to be prisoners of hope. Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope.

Even today do I declare that I will rent a duct. And here is a message of hope and deliverance for his earthly people. Prisoners of hope, prisoners of hope, my beloved every pious Jew today, is undoubtedly a prisoner of hope.

What is he hoping for? Though virtually a prisoner bound by the nations in their hatred, nevertheless he's hoping for the coming and the deliverance of the nation by the Messiah when he appears. Prisoners of hope, prisoners of hope. And when he comes I will declare that I will rent a duct unto thee.

Now the expression double is used in two ways in relation to Israel. God sometimes uses it in relating the fact of doubling their punishment. And he also uses the expression in doubling their blessings.

Can I give you one illustration from the book of Job? When you get to the end of the book of Job, you know Job lost everything in the early part of the book. And he passed through a time of critical trial and testing. And then when, at the end of the book, Job comes into fellowship with God in a closer way, through that final trial, God blesses him double.

Gave him twice as much as he had when at the beginning it was all taken away. Now beloved you can say the same thing for Israel. God says I will indeed rent a double unto thee.

And then he goes on to say, as we read in verse thirteen, he will give them strength to war. When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bowl with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man. Now I'm sure you can recognize that the name of Greece is mentioned again.

But you may I point out, from the first part of the chapter, God uses that particular interpretation regarding the Grecian invasion, and he again uses the word. Thus for you and for me to realize, not merely Greece, but rather the nations of the end time that will be gathered around Israel in the closing days, God says, I'm going to enable Judah to fight, I'm going to enable Ephraim to fill the bowl, and I'm going to raise up my sons against thy sons, and make thee as the sword of a mighty man. Now will you read on, for I want you to notice that though God will be their defender, he will give Israel particular and special strength for the war of that day.

Note verse fourteen and fifteen, I want you to note something wonderfully clear, the Lord shall be seen over them, his arrow shall go forth as the lightning, the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with the whirlwinds of the south. Now may I point out something that's precious, we'll see it in another chapter later, and I recall speaking to a Jewish guide, as we were speaking concerning the defense of Jerusalem and Israel, and I read to him the words that are found in the later chapter of Zechariah, that I said, you will fight as a people, you will be enabled to fight like David, but I said, the Lord also is going to fight for you too. And you have the same truth here, you have the fact that in verse thirteen, Judah will bend the bowl, Ephraim will fill the bowl, and the sons of Zion will be made as the sword of a mighty man.

Now beloved, I don't know how you feel about this, but I think most of us who are believers were amazed, astonished and marveled at the sixth day war. There's no question of doubt. As far as the Israelites, I don't know how many, if many, acknowledged the divine intervention of their Jehovah.

But I want to point out something very interesting in the words that follow. The Lord in verse fourteen declares, I'm going to help defend you, and blow the trumpet, and so on. Now look at verse fifteen.

The Lord of hosts shall defend them, and they shall devour and subdue. Not with sling stones, really, they are subduing the sling stone. They are subduing the weapons, the offensive weapons that are arrayed against them.

And I don't want to give you the thought, even in the sixth day war, the amazing quick destruction of the enemy's weapons was the hand of God, in addition to the skill of His people, without question of doubt. But did you know, the next expression, very particularly, they shall drink and make a noise as through wine. And I think some of my brethren here, that have been over there, and particularly seen the victory of

that six day war, will confess that the people, the young people and soldiers of that particular moment, were intoxicated with the victory, and exhilarated by the joy of their victorious conquest.

And God says in that coming day, they shall also in like manner, thus defend Jerusalem, and celebrate it as a noise through wine. And they shall be filled like bowls at the corners of the altar. And may I point out this fact.

There you can recognize the holy character of that war. The holy character of the closing war, when God uses descriptive words concerning the golden bowls relating to the altars of the altar of Israel. My, I think the Mohammedans have something to say about the holy war, don't they? God associates His altar with the closing days of battle in that coming conflict.

But then, I want you to know this follows in verse sixteen. You have salvation, you have peace, and you have prosperity. Note, and the Lord their God shall save them in that day.

The Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of His people. The enemies will be destroyed as sling stones. Israel will be saved in that day as the flock of His people.

And then note, they are exalted. They shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon the land. Enemies destroyed, Israel exalted as beautiful, precious stones, gems within a crown.

A crown of beauty and a royal diadem in the hand of their God. And when the conquest is accomplished and their exaltation manifested, then you have the explanation and the gratification declared at the end of the chapter. Behold how great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty.

And may I say, this is the great goodness of their God. This is the great beauty of their God, their Jehovah that they shall see. My beloved, they will indeed in that day be able to say with a psalmist's old taste and see that the Lord is good.

Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. And what joy to realize the goodness of God they will acknowledge. For they shall not only acknowledge His goodness, they will acknowledge His beauty.

I think of David as he said in Psalm 27, verse 4, One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that will I seek after that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, that I may behold the beauty of the Lord, the beauty of Jehovah, and inquire in His temple. My beloved, what a day that will be when Israel, the remnant that are redeemed and delivered, will acknowledge the goodness of Jehovah their Messiah, in the greatness of His goodness, and in the beauty of His person. When you think of their confession in Isaiah 53, we didst see Him smitten, stricken of God, and afflicted.

We saw no beauty in Him. But in that day, how great is His goodness, how great is His beauty. What shall you and I say? Oh, that you and I who have been brought by the Spirit and know the blessed Savior, shall we not say in our own hearts, from the depths of our own soul, how great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty.

May God help you and me to see Him, that one who was the lowliest of men, who brought righteousness and salvation through His mediatory work by going to the cross, and is now exalted, and you and I are in Him forever. May we see how great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty, for His name's sake shall we pray. Blessed Father, we vow with thanksgiving to acknowledge what will someday take place, the deliverance, the final deliverance of Thine earthly people.

And yet, Lord, we are reminded that we Thy people today are waiting for a deliverance too. When we shall be redeemed, and the fullness of our redemption will take place, for even we which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we groan within ourselves, waiting for the redemption of the body, the coming of our Lord. Lord Jesus, we have to say, whether for Israel, whether for Thy private church, whether for the nations at large, Lord, we wait for Thee to come.

And we say and even so come, Lord Jesus, in Thy precious and worthy name. Amen.

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