

From Babylon to Jerusalem - (Zechariah) ch.13 & 14

by Zac Poonen

The sermon highlights the importance of distinguishing between true and false prophets, and the dangers of spiritual Babylon, where idolatry and deception lead people away from the truth.

Duration: 1:00:31

Scripture: Zechariah 12:10-14, Zechariah 13:7, Matthew 6:33, Mark 14:26, John 7:38

Topics: "From Babylon To Jerusalem"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the presence of unclean spirits in the world and the need to be aware of their influence. He highlights three main aspects of these unclean spirits: idolatry, false prophets, and deceiving spirits. The preacher emphasizes that Jesus himself warned against deception and false prophets multiple times in the New Testament. He also mentions that in the last days, deceitful spirits and false prophets will be particularly prevalent. The sermon draws attention to the importance of staying vigilant and not being misled by these deceptive forces.

Transcript

This is going to be our last study in the book of Zechariah. We'll turn to Zechariah chapter 13. If you will remember, we concluded our last study with Zechariah chapter 12 and verse 10 to 14, where he speaks about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

And right through the book of Zechariah we have been seeing how prophecy is fulfilled in a twofold way, spiritually in the church and literally among the people of Israel. We must keep that in mind always when we study Old Testament prophecy, that all these prophecies are fulfilled spiritually in the church and literally in the nation of Israel. And we find that this was literally fulfilled there on the day of Pentecost.

The people gathered together in Jerusalem and the Holy Spirit, the spirit of grace, was poured out. And grace is a word which is almost never found in the Old Testament. There are only one or two places in the book of Zechariah and both have connection with the New Testament Church.

One is Zechariah chapter 4, where it speaks about the candlestick and Zerubbabel putting the top stone, shouting with shouts of grace. And the other is here in Zechariah 12.10. The Holy Spirit is called the spirit of grace and of groaning, a longing for total freedom from all sin that dwells in the flesh. And then we saw

that there was a mourning that's spoken of there.

The Holy Spirit, as we considered in Romans 8, brings a groaning within us for the redemption of our body, for total purity, for a desire to be like Jesus in every aspect and area of our life. And this produces a mourning, a mourning in all people. And it is as a result of this mourning that God comforts us.

The word of God says, blessed are those who mourn, they shall be comforted. In that day, chapter 13 verse 1, a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for impurity. You notice the same phrase as in chapter 12 verse 10, the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

The same phrase, there it speaks of the spirit being poured out, and here it speaks of a fountain being opened for sin and for uncleanness. There it speaks about looking on him whom the Jews have pierced, and whom we have pierced too, through our sins. And that speaks of the blood, and here it speaks of the fountain in the Old Testament temple.

There were, in the outer court, there were two items. One was the altar, where the animals were slain and the blood flowed, and that's referred to in chapter 12 verse 10. And the second piece in the outer court was the laver, or it was like a fountain of water, where they washed themselves.

You know the New Testament speaks of blood and water. When Jesus' side was pierced, the blood and the water flowed. And this is speaking about that fountain.

There will be opened a fountain for sin and for uncleanness. And putting the two together, we see that the Holy Spirit is given to us in order that we might be freed from all the sin and uncleanness that dwells in our flesh. He makes that fountain effective in our lives.

In that fountain we can be cleansed. Cleansed is also a New Testament word. In the Old Testament, the word used in relation to sin was covered.

Psalms 32 says, How blessed is a man whose iniquity is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Forgiveness and covering. The sin was not taken away, it was covered.

It's very important for us to understand this distinction. In Hebrews 10.4 it says, The blood of bulls and goats can never take away sin. It could only cover it.

But when Jesus came with the New Covenant, as we read in Hebrews 8.12, there is a taking away of it, and he says, The sins and iniquities I will remember no more. And so we read in 1 John 1.7, the blood of Jesus cleanses us. There is no more remembrance of sin in the New Covenant.

And that leads on to being freed from the power of sin as well. So all this refers to that future day that's coming in the New Covenant. And it'll come about in that day.

I will cut off the names of the idols, verse 2, from the land, and they will no longer be remembered. And I will also remove the prophets, that is the false prophets, and the unclean spirits from the land. Now, Zechariah is preaching to the Israelites who've come back from Babylon.

And in this verse, we see three factors that led to the Israelites being sent to Babylon as a judgment. One is, their idolatry. They were sent to Babylon mainly because of their idolatry.

Now, the reason why we think of that is, because we see that we have to be careful of these same things, lest we end up in a spiritual Babylon. It was idolatry. They worshipped gods of wood and stone, that made God send them into Babylon.

And the equivalent today is primarily in the worship of mammon. It is through the idolatry of money and material things that Christians can end up in a spiritual Babylon, where money becomes an important thing. We considered that in an earlier study, that religious Babylon is a system that teaches you can serve God and money, when Jesus said, it is impossible.

It's impossible to love God and money. A man who loves money cannot be a part of the Bride of Christ, the true Jerusalem. And this is the idolatry that we need to beware of.

It says here, the idols will be removed. The second factor that led to the Israelites being sent to Babylon were the false prophets. There were the true prophets who warned the Israelites, like Habakkuk and Jeremiah and many of the earlier prophets, Isaiah, Amos.

Micah had all warned the Israelites, but they were outnumbered by the multitudes of false prophets. And there were so many false prophets in the land. And the people listened to the false prophets, the kings listened to the false prophets, and the false prophets spoke smooth things and they never said a hard word in their message.

And that was another reason why the Israelites ended up in Babylon. And that's the other thing God says he's going to remove completely from the land in that day, the false prophets. And the third influence that led Israel to Babylon was the deceiving spirits, referred to here as the unclean spirits.

The three things mentioned there in verse 2, their idolatry, the false prophets, and the deceiving spirits that operated through the false prophets. And these are what we need to beware of even today. The idolatry of mammon, and false prophets, and deceiving spirits.

And particularly, as we approach the end, there are a number of verses in the New Testament. I just want to show you some of them. We have looked at them before, but it's good to be reminded of them again.

In Matthew 24, when the disciples came to Jesus and asked him, Lord, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of your coming in the end of the age? He said, four times. And as I read through that chapter, I cannot think of anything else that he repeated four times. There's one thing that he mentions four times in his reply, and that is a warning against deception, against false prophets, those who will deceive you.

In fact, that's the very first thing he said, in answer to that question. He said, first of all, see to it that no one misleads you. Verse 4. The second time, many will come in my name, saying I am the Christ, and will deceive many.

And the third time, in verse 11, many false prophets will arise, and will deceive many. This is one of the signs of the last days. False prophets, and false prophets cannot come in the name of some other religion.

That wouldn't be false prophets. They'd be exposed straight away. These are false prophets who come in the name of Jesus Christ.

Prophecy that's going to manifest itself in the name of Jesus Christ. Now, I just want to say this. There's a lot of prophecy in Christian circles today.

Tremendous amount, perhaps more than at any other time in the history of the Christian church. And in the midst of all this prophecy, we need to take heed to Jesus' warnings against false prophecy. There are so many Christians who don't take heed to the warnings of Jesus, and just blindly receive all these prophecies they hear in various charismatic meetings in other places.

The Bible says we've got to judge all prophecy, and discern whether it is according to the word or not. And the fourth time it says, in verse 24, false Christs and false prophets will arise, and show great signs and wonders, and deceive. And we know that other verse in 1 Timothy 4, 1, the Spirit speaks expressly that in the last days men will fall away from the faith, giving heed to deceitful spirits.

So deceitful spirits and false prophets are mentioned particularly in the last days. And 2 Timothy 3 says men will also be lovers of money in the last days. It's going to be difficult to be a Christian for men will be lovers of money.

So we see these three things that we saw in Zechariah 13.2 are specifically mentioned in the New Testament as dangers of the last days. The idolatry of mammon, false prophets coming in the name of Jesus Christ, and deceiving spirits. And therefore we need to be on our guard against these things if we are to escape spiritual Babylon.

Zechariah 13.3 and it'll come about that if anyone still prophesies, that is, falsely, then his mother, his father and mother who gave birth to him, will say to him, you shall not live, for you have spoken falsely in the name of the Lord. And his father and mother who gave birth to him will pierce him through when he prophesies. Now this is an Old Testament requirement.

If you turn to Deuteronomy chapter 13, we read there in verses 6 to 9, if your brother, your mother's son, or your son or daughter, or even the wife whom you cherish, or your friend who is as your own soul, entice you secretly saying let us go and serve other gods, of the gods of the people around you, verse 8, you shall not yield to him. Verse 9, you shall surely kill him. Whom should you kill? Your brother, your son, your daughter, even the wife whom you cherish.

It's an amazing word. It's something like Jesus spoke in Luke 14.26 about a man wants to be my disciple, he must hate father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters. Your hand shall be the first against him to put to death.

Now normally, a relative would like to protect the one whom he loves. But here it says there are going to be such radical fathers and mothers there that they're going to expose their own son if he's a false prophet. Their loyalty to the Lord will be so great that they will stand on the Lord's side even against their own beloved son if he falsely prophesies, if he does not lead people to the Lord.

And so we see here in Zechariah chapter 13 and verse 4, and it will come about in that day that these false prophets will be ashamed of their visions. That's another thing a lot of people are going to speak about in the last days, visions and dreams. But they're going to be ashamed, and they will not put on a hairy robe in order to deceive.

It's speaking about that ultimate situation where the Lord has his way in the church, where all deception is going to be exposed. That's the point. Deception is going to be exposed in the church which Jesus builds,

because the light of God's word is going to shine so strongly.

There are going to be false prophets, but they're going to be exposed. There are going to be deceiving spirits, but they won't have power in the church. They will be exposed and manifested through the preaching of the word.

And it speaks here about these prophets wearing hairy robes in order to deceive. You know the first person who wore a hairy robe was Jacob when he wanted to deceive his father. And here it speaks about these prophets.

It says about Elijah that he was a man who wore a hairy coat. And these prophets will try to imitate the great prophet Elijah by wearing a special type of dress. And thereby, by wearing this special type of dress, they will claim to be prophets.

You find that in India with these people who try to imitate Sadhu Sundar Singh and wear saffron robes and grow their beards and all this type of garbage of deception. Imitating some man, some great man of God like Sadhu Sundar Singh, in order to get people to respect you in the same way when you don't have the same godliness or the same life or the same spiritual power. There's plenty of this going on today.

Hairy garments are not the popular thing these days. But in each country it's different. It can be a clerical robe which a man puts on.

It can be a cross around the neck instead of a hairy robe. It can be any of these things which are just put on in order to give people the impression that we are holy. That we are men of God.

That we are mouthpieces, a special dress. In those days it was a hairy robe. It takes various forms and various cultures and various centuries.

But we need to find the application of it today. Don't be deceived by the dress of a man just because he wears a particular type of dress and therefore you think he's a man of God or a prophet. Do not be deceived.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear. And this man is going to be exposed in the church. His own parents will stand against him and expose him because he's not a true man of God.

He's a hypocrite. He's a Humbug. There are going to be such people and they need to be exposed.

And Zachariah was certainly one man who was out there to expose them ruthlessly. And it says here, this man when he's exposed he will admit, verse 5, and say, well I'm not a prophet. I was never really called by God.

I'm a tiller of the ground for a man sold me as a slave in my youth and I could complete the sentence for him and I realized I could make more money as a full time worker than working as a servant. So I decided to put on a special dress and act as though I am a preacher. Does that sound familiar? Oh how familiar unfortunately in our country.

Of people who have gone into the Lord's work because they did not earn enough in their secular profession. Somebody sold me as a slave in my youth and I didn't get much money there. So I put on a hairy robe and became a prophet to earn his living.

And these Humbugs have got to be exposed in Jerusalem. Lest the spirit of Babylon possess Christianity. We have to stand against all this hypocrisy.

And one will say to him, what are these wounds between your arms? Now in the King James Version it says in your hands but the literal translation is between your arms. That means on your breasts. Between your two arms.

How did he get all these injuries? You see this man was a real deceiver. He knew that prophets are persecuted so he had some injuries and all and he just acted as though he had suffered for standing up for the truth. He was a A1 deceiver.

He had all the marks of a prophet to deceive. He was a deceiver. But he is exposed now and he says these are not really anything I got as a result of persecution.

These are that with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. He was exposed that his visions were a deception, his prophecies were a lie, his dress was put on to fool people and his injuries were all a hypocrisy. All with the intention of fooling people.

Now I believe this has great relevance for the time in which we live. Great relevance that if we are to build the church of Jesus Christ there needs to be a ruthless exposure of false prophets. People who claim to be men of God who do not have a life to back up their profession and men who have not heard from God.

Men who have gone into the church or the Christian ministry just because they did not earn enough in some secular job. That type of thing has to be exposed. And you can understand why a man like Zachariah was finally as the Lord says slain between the temple and the altar because he went around exposing all these false prophets.

They lost their means of a living when this man was around exposing all of them. And it says here in verse 7, now it refers to the true prophet of God. Here is the contrast.

Here is the description of this deceiver and here is now a description of the true servant of God, the shepherd of the flock. And he has the mark of the cross. Awake O sword against my shepherd.

That is God the Father speaking that there was a sword, a sword of judgment against sin. The same sword that stood in front of the tree of life when Adam was turned out of the garden of Eden, preventing man from ever coming to that tree of life. That sword, that flaming sword, finally it falls on someone.

God never intended it to fall on man. He intended it to fall on his own son. And it fell on his son.

Awake O sword. That sword finally falls. The time is near now.

Zachariah just prophesied about 500 years before it happens. The sword has arisen. Awake O sword against my shepherd and against the man.

Again Jesus Christ is called the man the emphasis on his identification with the human race is coming in our flesh as we have seen again and again in the book of Zachariah. And at the same time, not just an ordinary man, my associate, that means my fellow, my equal, the one who was equal with the Father from all eternity. My equal.

And there we have a clear Old Testament reference to the deity and the humanity of Jesus Christ and the one who is the true shepherd and the sword that strikes him. We read in Isaiah 53, it pleased the Lord to crush him, to bruise him. Awake O sword against my shepherd declares the Lord of hosts.

And he has the true marks of the wounds. There is a song, which is not in this song book, but in the other song book we had it, that I shall know him, I shall know him by the print of the nails in his hands. That means when I get to heaven and I see my savior, I will recognize him just like Thomas did, by the prints of the nails in his hands.

I just want to draw a connection there between that and the previous verse of the other false prophet who claims to have these injuries. I don't know whether you have heard of Roman Catholic men and women who claim to have prints of nails in their hands and the repetition as it were of the injuries of Christ in their body. Well I just want to say, I personally don't believe it.

I believe it is a tremendous deception of Satan. There is no one who can be equal to Christ in this matter of the wounds of the cross. No matter how saintly he was, a man he is, neither John nor Paul nor none of the apostles.

And we are not to be deceived by these humbugs and all these people who claim various things. We are not to be deceived brothers and sisters. There are false prophets who claim all types of things and claim to manifest certain injuries here and there, but we are to expose all of them.

The sword falls only on that true shepherd. He is the only one who has got the mark of the nails in his hands and his feet and his side. And we shall see when we get up to glory that there is no one else who has any wounds in his hands or feet or side except Jesus Christ our Lord.

He declares the Lord of hosts, verse 7, strike the shepherd that the sheep may be scattered and I will turn my hand upon the little ones. Now this, we can look at the New Testament fulfillment of it in Mark chapter 14. Jesus himself quoted this verse from Zachariah.

In Mark chapter 14 he said, after they broke the bread and drank the cup, Jesus said in verse 26, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said to them, you will all stumble, or as the King James version says, you will all fall away and you will all be offended, because it is written, I will strike down the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered. So there is a fulfillment there in the time when Jesus was crucified and we read later on that at the time of his crucifixion and they all left him, forsook him and fled and he was alone.

And there was the fulfillment of that verse in Zachariah chapter 13 that the shepherd was stricken on the cross and the sheep were scattered. But then we read in Zachariah 13, 7, the last part, I will turn my hand upon, not against as it says here, because in the margin it says, upon the little ones. And that speaks of the remnant, those who have the spirit of a little child, who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, those who are converted and become like little ones.

The Lord's hand will come upon the little ones and gather them together and he speaks about that remnant later on in chapter, in the same chapter 13 verse 8 and 9, it will come about and that land declares the Lord, two parts will be cut off and perish, the third will be left in it, I will bring the third part through the fire, refine them as silver is refined, test them as gold is tested and they will call on my name and I will answer them, I will say they are my people and they will say the Lord is my God. I want to put all

these verses together and we learn something very beautiful there. That when the shepherd is smitten, people are going to be scattered.

The cross is what brings the offense. And then through the offense of the cross, there are some little ones who are going to be gathered, who are willing to take and receive the offense of the cross and they will form the remnant. And this is true right through to the end of time, that the word of the cross is an offense to the natural man.

And the word of the cross is also an offense to many a believer. When we speak about death, about taking up the cross every day, about crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, about the world being crucified to us and we being crucified to the world, that word of the cross, there is an offense in it. It scatters the people, but through that offense, the Lord is able to sift out the wholehearted from those who are not wholehearted and he is able to gather together the little ones.

Jesus said, Blessed are those who are not offended in me, those who are converted and who have become like little children. He is able to gather them and he will send them through the fire. It will be holy and they will call on my name and I will answer them and I will say they are my people and they will say the Lord is my God.

I thank you Father, Jesus said, that you have hidden these things from the wise and the clever, from the clever and the intelligent and you have revealed them to the little ones. Those are the little ones who got the revelation of the Father, those who have been converted and humbled themselves like little children, they are the ones who are going to be gathered into that remnant. There is a prophecy in the book of Zephaniah, a few books back in the Old Testament, just two books earlier, Zephaniah chapter 3 verse 11, In that day you will feel no shame because of all your deeds which you have rebelled against me.

I will remove from your midst your proud, exulting ones. Those are the ones who are going to be scattered through the offense of the cross, the proud, exulting ones and you will never again be haughty on my holy mountain, but I will leave among you a humble and lowly people and they will take refuge in the name of the Lord. A humble and a lowly people will be left behind as a remnant.

That's what we see in the Old Testament prophecies. These things are written for our instruction upon whom the ends of the world have come. They are written to show us the characteristics that are going to be found in the remnant of God's people in the last days around the world.

And so we see this is spiritually being fulfilled these days in those whom God is gathering together to build the bride of Christ, the body of Christ around the world. At the same time we know that this will be literally fulfilled in Israel. Everything that is spiritually fulfilled in the church, literally will be fulfilled in Israel when the Lord will take them through the testing time and finally bring out into that millennial reign a remnant as we have seen the 144,000 when we studied Revelation 7. A remnant that will come through from the Jewish nation that will look on Jesus and see him as their Messiah when he comes back in glory and who would have gone through the fire and who will be his remnant from the Jewish people in that day.

That will be the literal fulfillment among them. And now we come to chapter 14. Zechariah chapter 14.

A day is coming the Lord says, a day is coming for the Lord when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. And that is true again for the church as well as for the Jews. What the Lord is saying is that what people have taken away from you will come back to you.

What people have forcibly taken away from you, God will make sure it comes back to you. We see that in the case of the Jewish nation and the land of Israel was taken away from them, God has given it back. The Lord said that about those who had given up lands and houses and father and mother and so many things they forsook for the gospel sake, for his sake, the Lord says they will get it back.

The meek will inherit the earth. The meek are those who allow people to take advantage of them. And when we are meek, people take advantage of us.

And because we want to follow the Lord, they take away our rights, they take away probably our goods as we read in Hebrews 10. But a day will come when all that we have lost for the Lord's sake, that people have taken away from us, the Lord is going to return it. A day is coming for the Lord when the spoil taken from you will come back to you.

There is a day coming when the Lord will reward us for being meek and the meek will inherit the earth as Jesus said. Then verse 2 and 3 speaks about that final battle of Armageddon that is going to be fought around Jerusalem, that final battle when we studied that in Revelation 16, when we considered Revelation 16, the battle where the armies will surround Jerusalem and I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle and the city will be captured. Now we have seen this double fulfillment, all the nations against the church, you shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake, the hosts of evil, all the hosts of evil against the church, the gates of hell fighting against the church but they will not prevail against it and literally also around the city of Jerusalem and we see it increasingly happening.

We see before our own eyes in these days the stage being set for all the nations of the earth turning against Jerusalem. But you see this beautiful word, the Lord says in verse 2, I will gather. Now we think it's just all these nations, just the devil stirring them up against the Jews, that's right.

But even though it's the devil who stirs them up against the Jewish people and against Israel and Jerusalem, yet the Lord is sovereign. We know that it was the devil who stirred up people to shout out, crucify him, crucify him when it came to Jesus. But we also know as Peter said on the day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2, it was all according to God's predetermined plan that it happened.

It was God who said in Zechariah 13 verse 7, awake O sword against my shepherd. Even though it was the devil who stirred up the people, God uses even the evil intentions of the devil to fulfill his purposes and God uses even the evil intentions of the devil in stirring up people against the Jewish people to fulfill his purposes. For example, one of the main factors that led to the establishing of the Jewish nation in the land of Israel, many factors, but one of the main factors was worldwide sympathy that came for the Jewish people as a result of the 6 million Jews that were massacred by Hitler in Germany.

Now that was the work of the devil. The devil stirred up Hitler to kill 6 million Jews. But what was the result of that? There was a worldwide sympathy for the Jews and that resulted in the Jews getting their homeland.

God always uses the plans and schemes of the devil to fulfill his own purpose. And that's what we see here. I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle.

That's God's purpose. And the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, half of the city exiled, the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city and then the Lord will go forth. That speaks of the second coming of Christ right in the middle of that battle against the forces of the Antichrist

and defeating and destroying them in order to establish his kingdom on earth and his throne in Jerusalem.

The Lord will go forth and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. The Lord is a man of war, we read in the Old Testament. Many a time prophets had spoken to the people of Israel, you will not need to fight in this battle, just stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.

That's what Moses told the Israelites when they were being chased by the Egyptians of the Red Sea. That's what the prophet told Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20. And many other prophets spoke in the same vein.

David said that to Goliath, the Lord, the battle is not mine, it's the Lord's, and he will deliver you into my hand. And it will be exactly like that in the last day. All this is to be true even in our midst now.

We need to understand that every battle the Lord fights and wins for us, even today. It's not just that final battle, but every battle now as well. We do not fight.

Jesus said, my kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight. And every believer who fights proves thereby that he belongs to this world.

A believer, if he claims to be a follower of Jesus Christ, should not fight. Jesus said, my kingdom is not of this world, otherwise my servants would fight. It's only those whose kingdom is of this world who fight for material things, for their rights, for their privileges, for money, for property, and all these things, for position and honor.

No, what the Lord wants to give us, he will give us. Let people take it away, the Lord will return it to us at the right time. He will fight for us, and we have to only stand still and see the salvation and the deliverance the Lord works for us.

And in that day when Jesus comes, here is a clear description of his second coming as to exactly where he will land on this earth. In that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. You remember it was on the Mount of Olives, we read in Acts 1, verse 11, that Jesus ascended up into heaven.

And on that very spot from which he ascended up to heaven, on that very spot, he's going to come down from heaven to the earth, just outside the city of Jerusalem, in the Mount of Olives. That's the spot on this earth where Jesus is going to come down and his feet will stand there. And the Mount of Olives, as soon as Jesus' feet stands on the Mount of Olives, it is going to be split into two.

In its middle, from east to west, and there will be a large valley. And the Mount of Olives will be flattened so that half the mountain will move north and the other half will move to the south. And you will flee by the valley, by the mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azrael.

Yes, you will flee, just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah. Then the Lord, oh my God, this is Zechariah being taken up in excitement, he says, the Lord, and he says, oh my God, you'll come. And all the holy ones, all the saints, this is the resurrection from the dead, the saints of the ages, and those who are living, who are caught up without dying, will come with him.

We take caught up and we'll come with him down to the earth. When we studied the book of Revelation, we read about this earthquake in Revelation 16. We read there in verse 18, there were flashes of lightning at that battle of Armageddon spoken of in Revelation 16.

And there was a great earthquake, and it's described here as such a great earthquake that has never ever taken place in the history of man on the earth. Such a mighty earthquake, and the great city was split. And there it is.

This is going to be fulfilled when Jesus comes. It's going to be the greatest earthquake the world's ever seen. And the Mount of Olives will be flattened.

And in that day, we have also studied in the book of Revelation that the sun will not shine and the moon will not give her light. Jesus said about that and spoke about that in Matthew 24. The same thing we see here in Zechariah 14.6. The book of Zechariah is something like the revelation of the Old Testament.

It'll come about in that day that there will be no light. The luminaries, that is the sun and the moon, will dwindle. But it doesn't mean it'll all be dark because there will be supernatural light, because the Lord himself will give light in a supernatural way.

It'll be a unique day which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night. Well, we don't know exactly what will happen, and it says here it's only known to the Lord, so we better wait to see how that will be. We don't want to try and speculate on that, but we know it'll be light.

Because it says here that at evening time there'll be light, it won't be dark. There'll be some wonderful way in which it'll be light even at evening time. And it'll come about in that day that living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea.

It'll be in summer as well as in winter. Now if you have ever read Ezekiel chapter 47, you read in Ezekiel 47 about a river that flows out from the temple. That's a description of the same river that's mentioned here in Zechariah 14 verse 8. Living waters flowing out of Jerusalem, and there's a very beautiful description there in Ezekiel 47.

If you turn back for a minute to Ezekiel 47, you see there about this river that flows out from the temple. It begins as a little trickle. In the last part of verse 1 it says the water was flowing from the right side of the house from the south of the altar.

And the water was trickling from the south side. And it says here, Ezekiel went into that river, verse 3, first of all up to the ankles. Second step, he went a little further and he came up to the knees, verse 4. Then he went a little further and the water came up to his loins.

Then he went a little further and it came up to the level where his feet had to come off the ground and he had to be carried by the river in the direction the river wanted to take him. And that's described more fully there and it says here the waters, wherever the waters go, it says in verse 8 of Ezekiel 47, everything will become fresh and everything will live and become fresh wherever the river goes, verse 9. And it will produce fruit in the trees on its banks, verse 12. Now this is the river spoken of in Zechariah 14, verse 8. Now the reason I showed you that passage in Ezekiel 47 in relation to Zechariah 14, verse 8, is because of something that Jesus said.

Now let me repeat again, this is going to be literally fulfilled. In the day that Jesus stands on the earth there will be a literal river, I believe, that flows out of Jerusalem exactly like it's described here. But I also believe that it has a fulfillment in the church today.

If you turn to John chapter 7, you know that Old Testament verse we have looked at in Proverbs 25, verse 1, which says, it is the glory of God to conceal a matter and it's the glory of kings to search out a matter. God has concealed things in his word and his glory is there. And we who are kings, he has made us kings and priests, are to search out that matter, that is our glory.

And we can never search out these hidden treasures in God's word if we are not diligent in the study of the word. And I'll tell you one area where we need to be a little diligent in the study of the word, and that is in looking up some of the Old Testament references when they are quoted in the New Testament. For example, when you read in the New Testament a quotation from the Old Testament, it's always good to look up that Old Testament reference and see what it says.

But a lazy Christian will never do that. He just reads through and he never gets anything. But when you compare and study the Old Testament reference quoted in the New Testament, very often we get a wealth of truth there.

And here it says in John 7.38, have you ever noticed this? He who believes in me, this is where Jesus said, if any man is thirsty, let him come to me and drink, verse 37. Verse 38, he who believes in me, and notice this phrase, as the scripture said, that is the Old Testament, from his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water, and this he spoke of the Holy Spirit. Now we know that the Holy Spirit is referred to as rivers of living water.

But the question is this, have you ever in your study of the scriptures tried to find out where does it say that in the Old Testament? Where does it say in the Old Testament about rivers of living water? And I'll tell you, I've looked through the entire Old Testament for that verse, and there's no verse exactly like it. Very often the New Testament quotations are not exactly as it is in the Old Testament, but the only place in the Old Testament where this word living water is used in relation to a river, Jeremiah uses it in relation to God, saying God is a fountain of living waters in Jeremiah 2, but where it's used to refer to a river of living waters, the only place where that phrase living water is used in the Old Testament, is Zechariah chapter 14, verse 8. That's the only place. That's the only place in the entire Old Testament where you'll find that.

And I believe Jesus was referring to that when he said in John 7, verse 38, as the scripture has said, out of his innermost being. Why out of his innermost being? Let's turn to Zechariah 14, verse 8. Living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, the temple of God, as we saw in Ezekiel 47. Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit? And from, we saw in Ezekiel 47, from the inside of that temple, those waters flow.

From the innermost being, these living waters are going to flow. And so that use of that verse by Jesus teaches us that these Old Testament prophecies do have a spiritual fulfillment for us today in the church. So that it's not just some typology that we are inventing.

Jesus himself spoke about it. It's actually for us. These things are written for us.

And that's just good to know that, that Jesus spoke about these living waters that are going to flow out from the church of the living God, from the true Jerusalem, the bride of Christ, the Jerusalem spoken of in Revelation 21, the Jerusalem that is above, which is the mother of us all, as we read in Galatians, in chapter 4. And we see here, what is the result of this living water is going to be? It's going to flow, it says in Zechariah 14, verse 8, towards the east and towards the west, to the uttermost parts of the earth. And the only time that Jesus ever spoke about the uttermost parts of the earth was also in relation to the Holy

Spirit. Acts 1.8, the Holy Spirit, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be my witnesses, Jerusalem, Judea, starting at Jerusalem, from there it will flow out to Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

That is the work of the Holy Spirit, to take this message through the church to the uttermost parts of the earth, to the east and to the west, from Jerusalem. And that's exactly what the apostles did. Paul went west and Thomas came east, and others went in these directions, and the word of God went to the uttermost parts of the earth, and it will be in summer as well as in winter.

Every season is convenient for the rivers of living water to flow from the church. There is no convenient season for this. In summer or winter, it's never going to be frozen, it's just going to flow all the time.

It's a very beautiful picture way back there in the Old Testament of the flowing out of the Holy Spirit through the church, the body of Christ. But as I said, it's going to be fulfilled literally in that final day when Jesus establishes His kingdom in Jerusalem too. In verse 9, the Lord will be king in that day over all the earth.

Today He's not accepted as king, today it's spiritually fulfilled in the church, but one day it will be literally fulfilled on this earth. In that day, the Lord will be the only one. Today there are many, but in that day He'll be the only one, the only king, and His name will be the only name.

Today in the church, we use the name of Jesus Christ. There is power in that name, wonderful power. Demons fear and flee and tremble at that name.

But the world doesn't recognize it, they despise that name. But in that day, there will be only one. His name will be the only name.

At His name, every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Now, brothers and sisters, it's very important that these things are literally fulfilled in the church today. That is, in the church, His name today must be the only one.

And there we have to take a stand against the exaltation of human personalities, which, unfortunately, is so prevalent in Christendom. It's not only the name of Jesus Christ. It's the name of so-and-so Christian leader.

I am of Peter, I am of Paul, I am of Apollos, and all the 20th century equivalents of that. I am of this, and I am of that, and I am of Luther, and Wesley, and X, Y, or Z. No, that's not the body of Christ. In the body of Christ, the Lord is the King, and His name is the only one.

We are gathered around the name of Jesus Christ. No human being ever is going to take that place, in our hearts, or in our lives, or in our devotion. His name will be the only one, and we have to jealously preserve that in the church.

Never allow the exaltation of human personalities in the church. No great preacher, no great prophet, no great healer, no great apostle. His name will be the only one.

It will be like that all over the world one day. We might as well get prepared for it in the church. And if it's not going to be like that in our midst, then we cannot be the Jerusalem that God wants us to be.

And all the land will be changed into a plain, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem, but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place. Jerusalem will be abundant like a city set on a hill, like the church today should be, a city set on a hill, standing up, different from the world around. It says Jerusalem will be up above, all the rest will be a plain, a picture of how the church should be today, exalted above, not like the nations, not like the heathen, different.

Standing up is different. That's how we must be as the church, and that's how Jerusalem will literally be in that final day, from one end to the other, and the people will live in it, and there will be no more curse, for the full benefit of Christ having become a curse for us on Calvary's cross will then be realized on the earth, and Jerusalem will dwell in security. All this we are already experiencing spiritually in the church.

There is no more curse, and there is security, it says in Jerusalem. The people in Jerusalem will dwell in security. There is no need for insecurity in the church today.

If there is one place on earth which is secure, it is the true Jerusalem, the church. There are people who go from this place to that place, thinking this place is dangerous. I'll tell you, the only safe place on earth is the church of the living God.

That's the only secure place. In the church, there is security. The safest place we can be, when outside it, we'll be exposed to evil spirits, exposed to demonic influences, exposed to all types of evil and deception.

But in the church, there is security. We are protected, and that's why we need to value the fact that God has given us a living church in which we can find security. Never, never, brothers and sisters, let's take it for granted as though this is something I deserve.

It's so easy, after some time, that we get so familiar with these things that we take these things for granted, and we lose the sense of thankfulness and wonder that God has given us a place where we have security. Praise God, there is no need for a single person in Jerusalem, in the true church of God, to feel insecure. As much as there will be security in that day when Jesus reigns in Jerusalem.

Even so, today He reigns in the church. And it must be just as real to us today that Jesus reigns in our midst, as it will be in that day when He comes in glory and sets up His physical throne in Jerusalem. It's not going to be more secure for me that day.

It shouldn't be. I must be just as secure in the love of God today as I'm going to be in that day when I sit in Jerusalem with Jesus physically reigning on the earth. It shouldn't be more secure then.

No, it's just the same today. Your heavenly Father knows you need all these things. Your hair of your head will not perish without your Father knowing about it.

You are more value than many sparrows and all these things give me such a tremendous sense of security. There, I'm secure in God's love. He who touches you touches the apple of my eye, the Lord says.

And then it speaks about that judgment on Armageddon. This will be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the people who have gone to war against Jerusalem in the battle of Armageddon, their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet and their eyes will rot in their sockets and their tongue will rot in their mouth. There are people who say this is the result of nuclear warfare, but I tell you God can do that without any atomic bombs.

He can punish people with their flesh rotting on their feet and their eyes rotting in their sockets without any nuclear weapons. And it will come about in that day that a great panic from the Lord will fall on them, on all these people who have come to that battle around Jerusalem, the forces of the Antichrist, and they will seize one another's hand and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another. And Judah also will fight at Jerusalem.

And the ultimate result, like it always has been in the battles that Israel won in Old Testament times, will be that the wealth of the surrounding nations will be gathered, gold and silver and garments in great abundance. And this plague will be on horse, mule, camel, donkey, all the cattle that will be in those camps. It speaks of that final judgment on those people in Armageddon.

And then after that battle is over, the Lord establishes His kingdom in Jerusalem for one thousand years. We studied that in Revelation chapter 20. And we saw that during that one thousand years there will still be sinners on the earth.

There will still be people who do not submit to the Lord. And at the end of the thousand years some of them will still rebel against the Lord. Amazing that people would rebel against Jesus even after seeing Him physically reign on the earth for a thousand years.

But that's how it's going to be. It's going to be God's exposure of the utter wickedness and corruption of the human heart. It says here, then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations, that after all this judgment is over and the battle of Armageddon is over, and the vials of wrath of the wrath of God that we considered in Revelation 16 have been poured out, and then the nations that are left will go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths or the Feast of Tabernacles.

This is in the millennium. In Deuteronomy 16 verse 16 it says that there were three great feasts that the Israelites had to celebrate in Jerusalem. Three times all the men in Israel had to come to Jerusalem.

Three great feasts. They had seven feasts, but three of them were great feasts. One was the Feast of Unleavened Bread or Passover, speaking of Christ's death on the cross.

Second was the Feast of Pentecost, speaking of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. And third was the Feast of Tabernacles, speaking about the millennial reign of Christ when He comes in glory. Three great things.

The cross, the death on the cross, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the second coming of Christ. These were the three great things that were symbolized by those three feasts and three things that must be always prominent in our own thinking. The death on the cross, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the second coming of Christ.

And this is what is referred to here, the Feast of Tabernacles, referring to the millennial reign of Christ. And here it speaks of the sinners in verse 17, 18, and 19. It'll be that whichever families do not go up to Jerusalem, because they've got the spirit of rebellion still in them, the spirit of Lucifer, the Lord of Hosts, there'll be no rain on them.

And if the family of Egypt that does not need any rain because they've got the River Nile flowing through it, if they don't go up and their rain doesn't fall, then their plague will come on them like it came in the days of Moses. And the Lord will smite the nations who don't go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. And this will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations who don't go up to celebrate the Feast

of Tabernacles.

That is, who do not come to worship the Lord. Verse 20 and 21, In that day there will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, Holy unto the Lord. We've considered in Exodus 28 and verse 36, how when Aaron had to have a turban with a little band on it, on which it was written, Holiness unto the Lord, that was only the high priest.

But here it says even the bells of the horses are going to have holiness unto the Lord. And the cooking pots in the Lord's house will be just like those holy bowls before the altar. Every cooking pot, verse 21, in Jerusalem and Judah will be holy to the Lord of Hosts.

And all who sacrifice will come and take of them and boil in them. In the Old Testament there were certain vessels which were holy, and you couldn't just take an ordinary cooking pot and take it and offer your sacrifice. You had to take those holy vessels in the temple to take the meal offerings, etc.

But here it says in the final day, everything is going to be holy. It's not that this thing is going to be holy and this thing is not going to be holy. We have a foretaste of that in the church, where we read in 1 Corinthians 10.31, whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

It's not that certain things are holy and certain things are not. It's not that Sunday is a holy day and Monday to Saturday are not holy days. That's not a New Testament teaching.

There are people who live in that Old Testament way. One day is a Sabbath. Well, that's fine.

We don't want to judge them according to Romans 14. It says we've got to accept them. But that's not the highest.

Every day is holy unto the Lord. And it's not that I'm to be more holy in the meeting and the rest of the time I can be something different. This is hypocrisy.

Everything, the cooking pot, there we worship God and that's holy. And here in the meeting, that's holy too. That's how it was with Jesus.

Whether he was making stools and benches or preaching a sermon, he was just the same. Holiness penetrated every area of his life and that's how it must be in the church. And in that day, there will no longer be a merchant in the house of the Lord of Hosts.

What Jesus did in turning out the merchants when he came into the temple, and which all his true prophets have done for 20 centuries in the history of the church, turned out the merchants, turned out the people who make money in the name of religion, turned them out, turned them out, turned them out, turned them out. What Jesus started 20 centuries ago and which all the prophets in the church have done for 20 centuries, finally the net result will be every merchant will be turned out. Every man who mixes God and money will be turned out and everything will be holy.

Notice that emphasis in that last verse in Zechariah. That the Babylonian merchantmen will find no more place in Christendom. Think of the money people make in the name of Christmas around the world, in the name of Jesus Christ.

Millions, millions, millions. And the stupidity of people who waste money in the name of Jesus Christ like this. All these merchants will be turned out in so many other subtle ways, people for whom godliness has

become a means of gain.

And it's very interesting that Zechariah concludes on that note. No more merchants, no more people who come to the church to seek their own gain. And because he preached like that, he was slain between the temple and the altar.

But it's worth it, brothers and sisters, to be slain between the temple and the altar and to stand as a true prophet of God. That's our calling as a church, to stand true to God's standards, to his principles, to stand against Babylonian merchantmen, to stand against false prophets who come with their false visions and special clothes. To stand against all this hypocrisy and to say the Lord alone will be the king.

His name alone will be exalted. And thus in these days too, we can build a church as the body of Christ and prepare it to be that bride without spot or wrinkle that's going to be presented to him on the wedding day.

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