

## PREFACE TO SECTION II

32. Modern Jews observe the fast of the fourth month in connection with \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
33. The fast of the fifth month is held in connection with \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_. It also remembers \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
34. The fast of the seventh month is now observed in remembrance of \_\_\_\_\_.
35. The tenth month fast recalls \_\_\_\_\_.
36. What do you conclude from the fact that these fasts are still observed by the Jews?
37. Verses 20-23 are a perfect picture of what is happening as the influence of the \_\_\_\_\_, beginning at \_\_\_\_\_ has brought the world the \_\_\_\_\_ once known only to the Jews.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### PREFACE TO SECTION II

The opening verse of Zechariah, chapter nine, marks the beginning of the truly apocalyptic section of the prophet's work. As has been previously indicated, the probable reason for the shift to this style of writing is to avoid a confrontation with the Medo-Persian authorities. We shall see that, in this last six chapters, Zechariah makes predictions which, if written literally, would have brought the wrath of an otherwise benevolent Darius down upon Judah perhaps to her permanent destruction. Daniel, written during the Babylonian captivity, and Revelation, written during the heat of Roman persecution are two further examples among others in the Bible of the use of apocalypsis in writing predictive prophecy for the purpose of protecting the readers.

Because of the sudden shift in style of writing between this and the first section of the book, the form critics of the Bible have had a field day with Zechariah. Their attacks have centered largely upon the date of writing and the identity of the author.

It is not within the scope of this work to answer these critics, except to say that there is no solid evidence, either internal or external to deny its place as part of the message of Zechariah. The sudden change in style is brought about by the content of the predictions. The change in subject matter is occasioned by the fact that, unlike the

first eight chapters, this section is not written to motivate the people to build. It deals with that which is to come after the building of the temple.

Having said this in defense of the second section of Zechariah, we must, for the sake of our own study, recognize that, in all probability, the second section of Zechariah was written much later in the life of the prophet than the first section. There are in it no problems relating to the building of the temple. The author does not use the first person singular, as he did in the first section, and most important, the historical viewpoint is entirely changed from the first part of the book.

A broad outline of the section will divide it into three major divisions: (1) the triumph of Zion through her Messiah (9:1-10:12), (2) the good and foolish shepherds (11:1-17) and (3) final events (chapters 12-14).

The third of these major divisions may be subdivided into (a) Judah's victory over the attackers and (b) the approaching Day of the Lord.

The final section of Zechariah is easier to follow if one keeps in mind (1) the prophet is concerned primarily with the final consummation of God's dealing with the Jews as a race and nation and (2) in the foretelling of this he interrupts himself frequently to deal with historic events which will intervene between his own time and the end time.

The coming of the Messiah must await the rebuilding of the temple, the invasion of the Greeks, and the Maccabean revolt. The final restoration of the Jewish nation must await the coming of the Good Shepherd, His rejection by the Jews, and the consequent dissolution of the covenant relationship with the Jews as a race. This will be followed by a break up of the nation and its dispersion throughout the world. Only then will the nation be re-established, and wail at the sight of Him Whom they have pierced and become the instrument of establishing the universal reign of Jehovah.

We must digress here to call attention again to Zechariah's influence on the New Testament. Most of this influence comes from the second section of the book.

In the first section we saw the recurrent references to the Branch. These are not directly quoted in the New Testament, but the concept of the Messiah as priest and King expressed in this figure plays a prominent role in the New Testament understanding of Jesus as Lord and Christ.

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The emphasis which we find in the second section of Zechariah are directly quoted in the New Testament as applying specifically to the events and the person of Jesus. The king riding on the ass (*Zechariah* 9:9) is seen as fulfilled literally in Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem (cf. *Matthew* 21:4-ff, *John* 12:15).

The betrayal of Jesus by Judas for thirty pieces of silver is seen as the fulfillment of *Zechariah* 11:12-f. (cp. *Matthew* 26:15, 27:9-ff)

When the Jews who insisted to Pilate that Jesus be executed looked upon the dying Savior, the Gospel writers saw it as the fulfillment of *Zechariah* 12:10. (cp. *John* 19:37, *Revelation* 1:7)

The smitten shepherd of *Zechariah* 13:7 is seen fulfilled in the crucifixion also. (cp. *Matthew* 26:31, *Mark* 14:27)

Jesus is also seen as the King who reigns from sea to sea (*Zechariah* 9:10) and the fountain for cleansing (*Zechariah* 13:1).

Other influences of Zechariah on the New Testament include the prophet's insistence upon honesty of God's people one with another (*Zechariah* 8:16 cp. *Ephesians* 4:25), as well as some of John's word pictures in Revelation, as for example the four horsemen (*Zechariah* 6:1-8 cp. *Revelation* 6:2-ff), the two olive trees (*Zechariah* 4:3-ff cp. *Revelation* 11:4), and the lampstand and seven eyes (*Zechariah* 4:2-10 cp. *Revelation* 1:12-f).

## Chapter XXXVII—Questions

### Preface to Section II

1. The opening verse of chapter nine marks the beginning of the truly \_\_\_\_\_ section of the prophetic work of Zechariah.
2. What is the probable reason for the shift to this style?
3. How have the critics attacked Zechariah at this point?
4. Suggest some answers to this criticism.
5. When was Zechariah 9-14 written in relationship to the opening chapters?
6. Give a brief outline of Zechariah, chapters 9-14.
7. The first half of the final section of Zechariah is concerned with \_\_\_\_\_.
8. The final half of this section is concerned with \_\_\_\_\_.
9. Discuss Zechariah's influence on the New Testament.
10. What are other Biblical examples of apocalyptic writing?

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE TRIUMPH OF ZION  
THROUGH HER MESSIAH

JUDGEMENT AGAINST ISRAEL'S ENEMIES . . . Zechariah 9:1-8

RV . . . The burden of the word of Jehovah upon the land of Hadrach, and Damascus shall be its resting place (for the eye of man and of all the tribes of Israel is toward Jehovah); and Hamath, also, which bordereth thereon; Tyre and Sidon, because they are very wise. And Tyre 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 dispossess her, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire. Ashkelon shall see it, and fear; Gaza also, and shall be sore pained; and Ekron, for her expectation shall be put to shame; and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited. And a bastard 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; and he also shall be a remnant for our God; and he shall be as a chieftain in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite. And I will encamp about my house against the army, that none pass through or return; and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

LXX . . . The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of Sedrach, and his sacrifice shall be in Damascus; for the Lord looks upon men, and upon all the tribes of Israel. And in Emath, even in her coasts, are Tyre and Sidon, because they were very wise. And Tyrus built strongholds for herself, and heaped up silver as dust, and gathered gold as the mire of the ways. And therefore the Lord will take them for a possession, and will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be consumed with fire. Ascalon shall see, and fear; Gaza also, and shall be greatly pained, and Accaron; for she is ashamed at her trespass; and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ascalon shall not be inhabited. And aliens shall dwell in Azotus, and I will bring down the pride of the Philistines. And I will take their blood out of their mouth, and their abominations from between their teeth; and these also shall be left to our God, and they shall be as a captain of a thousand in Juda, and Accaron as a Jebusite. And I will set up a defence for my house, that they may not pass through, nor turn back, neither shall there any

more come upon them one to drive them away; for now have I seen with mine eyes.

## COMMENTS

The theme of chapter nine is struck in verse nine. It is the coming of the Messianic King (*vs.* 9-17). The judgement of God against Israel's traditional enemies set forth in these opening verses are to be seen as preparation for that event. Not only God's dealing with these nations as the enemies of His people, but all his dealings in history prior to Messiah's coming were in preparation for it.

(Verse 1) The term "*burden* (more accurately "oracle") of *the word of Jehovah*" is reminiscent of Malachi. It is calculated to place the stamp of divine origin on the second section of the book. The method of inspiration seems to differ from that of the first section in that the prophet does not claim here to have seen a vision. Nevertheless, what he is about to say is not a matter of his own subjective understanding of historic events. He is speaking from God as one moved by the Holy Spirit. (cp. *II Peter 1:19-21, Hebrews 1:1*)

The first part of this oracle is concerned with the land of Hadrach, and its focal point is Damascus. (cp. *Isaiah 21:13*) Hadrach is a symbolic name for Syria. The name itself was a little used one applying to a region of Syria also called Bikathanen. It is the western interior part of the country surrounded by hills. Hadrach takes its name from this surrounding. The word means literally "enclosed."

The burden of Jehovah would focus on Damascus until that ancient enemy of Israel was utterly brought to its knees. History records the fulfillment of this prediction when Alexander the Great took the city, c. 344 B.C. It subsequently became Hellenized and is listed as the first of ten such cities which formed the Decapolis.

The parenthetical statement by which Zechariah explains this must not be overlooked if one would begin to understand the hand of Providence in the ebb and flow of history. The English text is misleading when it states, "*the eye of man and of all the tribes of Israel is toward Jehovah.*" The marginal rendering in the Standard Edition is more to the point, "*Jehovah hath an eye upon men and upon the tribes of Israel.*" The point being that God's covenant purpose to bless all the nations of the earth in Israel's Seed is the all determining factor in every historic development, even the defeat of one pagan nation by another.

(Verses 2-4) In rapid succession Zechariah deals with the future of the other enemies of Israel immediately adjacent to her. Tyre and Sidon were next in Alexander's plan to conquest. Sidon, as Damascus, surrendered peaceably, but Tyre was subdued only after a siege.

The city harbored a large squadron of mercenaries in the pay of the Persians. The resistance was so bitter that, when Tyre finally fell, Alexander departed from his usual policy of benevolence toward conquered cities and allowed his Macedonians to slaughter eight thousand Tyrians and sell thirty thousand into slavery.

(Verse 5) Ashkelon, seeing the fate of Tyre, surrendered without resistance. Thus the ancient seaport of the Philistines became, in turn, a Greek city to plague Israel no more.

Gaza, on the other hand, chose to resist the Macedonian conqueror. Durant records, "Gaza fought till every man in the city was dead and every woman raped."

Ekron, the southernmost of the Philistine cities, had hoped in vain that Alexander would be stopped by Tyre in his march through Palestine to Egypt. The hope was turned to disappointment as the Macedonian phalanx swept down the Mediterranean coast engulfing by either peaceful surrender or siege all who stood in its path.

The king of Gaza comes in for special attention by the prophet, as well he might, considering what lay in store for him. When Gaza fell, following a two month siege, and ten thousand of its inhabitants were killed while the rest were sold to the slave merchants who followed in the wake of Alexander's armies, special treatment was waiting Betis, the Persian satrap. This puppet "king" found himself tied to Alexander's chariot by two thongs through the soles of his feet and dragged through the city in one of the young conqueror's characteristic fits of revenge against one who resisted his forward march.

(Verses 6-7) Ashdod shall be ruled by an alien race. (The rendering "bastard" here is misleading.) (The Septuagint is more accurate.) It is a clear prediction of the reign of the Greeks and Romans, beginning with Alexander.

The pride of the Philistines has to do with the peculiar form of idolatry practiced in Philistia which included the drinking of the blood of sacrificed animals. Hence, when the Philistines are conquered by Alexander, Hellenized by the Ptolemaic dynasty of Egypt, and subsequently converted to Jehovah, the blood was taken "out of his mouth."

The law made the drinking of blood an abomination (cf. *Genesis* 9:4, *Leviticus* 7:26). When in Philistia "the son of the stranger joined himself to the Lord" (*Isaiah* 56:3) the abomination would be taken

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"from between his teeth," and the Philistine also became part of Jehovah's faithful remnant! Just as the Jebusites, the original inhabitants of Jerusalem had been incorporated into the people of Judah (*II Samuel 24:16*, etc.) in a subordinate position (*I Kings 9:20,21*), so the Philistines, traditional enemies of Israel are to ultimately be assimilated as proselytes. Again history vindicates prophecy.

(Verse 8) The prophet reassures his readers, who have worked to rebuild the temple, that when all this is taking place around them, they, and their work will be protected by the Lord. History records that Alexander's conquest of Jerusalem was by invitation. He did not oppress them, but rather afforded them privileges. No Jew was injured.

THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH KING . . . Zechariah 9:9-17

RV . . . 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 riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal 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 nations; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. As for thee also, because of the blood of thy covenant I have set free thy prisoners from the pit wherein is no water. Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee. For I have bent Judah for me, I have filled the bow with Ephraim; and I will stir up thy sons, O Zion, against the sons of Greece, and will make thee as the sword of a mighty man. And Jehovah shall be seen over them; and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning; and the Lord Jehovah will blow the trumpet, and will go with whirlwinds of the south. Jehovah of hosts will defend them; and they shall devour, and shall tread down the sling-stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, like the corners of the altar. And Jehovah their God will save them in that day as the flock of his people; for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted on high over his land. For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the virgins.

LXX . . . Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; proclaim it aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, the King is coming to thee, just, and a Saviour; he is meek and riding on an ass, and a young foal. And

he shall destroy the chariots out of Ephraim, and the horse out of Jerusalem, and the bow of war shall be utterly destroyed; and there shall be abundance and peace out of the nations; and he shall rule over the waters as far as the sea, and the rivers to the ends of the earth. And thou by the blood of thy covenant hast sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit that has no water. Ye shall dwell in strongholds, ye prisoners of the congregation: and for one day of thy captivity I will recompense thee double. For I have bent thee, O Juda, for myself as a bow, I have filled Ephraim; and I will raise up thy children, O Sion, against the children of the Greeks, and I will handle thee as the sword of a warrior. And the Lord shall be over them, and his arrow shall go forth as lightning: and the Lord Almighty shall blow with the trumpet; and shall proceed with the tumult of his threatening. The Lord Almighty shall protect them, and overwhelm them with sling-stones; and they shall swallow them down as wine, and fill the bowls as the altar. And the Lord their God shall save them in that day, even his people as a flock; for holy stones are rolled upon his land. For if he has anything good, and if he has anything fair, the young men shall have corn, and there shall be fragrant wine to the virgins.

## COMMENTS

The predictions of this section find their immediate meaning in the Maccabean revolt and their ultimate fulfillment in the coming of Jesus. The victory of Judas Maccabee over Antiochus Epiphanes led the prophet quite naturally to exultation over God's final victory through the Messiah.

For the sake of clarity we shall deal with the two aspects of this section separately, first as it applies to the Maccabean revolt, and afterward as it applies to the coming of Jesus Christ.

In order to understand the prophecies concerning the Maccabean war with the Seleucid Emperor Antiochus IV, it is helpful to review the history of Hellenism in the near east immediately following the death of Alexander the Great.

After nine years in Asia, Alexander began to doubt the wisdom of Aristotle's instruction to him to treat the "barbarians" as slaves. He found in the aristocratic elements of Persia a refinement seldom seen among the temperamental and warring Greeks. He doubted that his uncouth Macedonians could replace these Persian nobles in successful administration of the conquered peoples of the orient.



He began to think of himself not as a Macedonian emperor ruling a conquered Persian empire but as a Graeco-Persian emperor ruling over Greeks and Persians as equals.

Pursuant to this policy Alexander married a Bactrian princess and encouraged his officers to follow his example. He opened the Persian land to Greek colonists and gave large doweries to his soldiers who would marry middle eastern women.

All this marked the beginning of the Hellenization of that part of the world which included the holy land and which was vital to the development of events in the Seleucid empire following the death of Alexander.

Another factor in Alexander's reign was to greatly influence the subsequent history of the holy land. He did not choose a successor. When he was dying in Babylon following a drinking bout at the age of thirty three (323 B.C.) he was asked to whom he would leave his empire. He answered simply, "To the strongest."

Alexander's empire had no solid root. He was a Macedonian attempting to be Greek and he became almost a Persian. His attempt to Hellenize the orient resulted in no strong bond designed to hold the empire together. It was consequently no strange thing that it came apart, so to speak, shortly after his death.

The division came in five parts. Antipater took Macedonia and Greece; Lysimachus ruled Thrace; Antigonos, Asia Minor; Ptolemy, Egypt; and most significant for our purposes, Seleucus took Babylon, including Palestine as far south as the southern border of Samaria.

A struggle ensued between Seleucid Asia and Ptolemaic Egypt for control of what the Romans would later call Palestine. The original division gave Palestine south of Samaria to Ptolemy and it became part of Egypt. The Seleucids never agreed to this division, desiring full control of the trade route which passed through Damascus and Jerusalem.

From 312-198 B.C. the Ptolemies were able to resist the Seleucid attempts to wrest Judea from them by force. The Jews were allowed a large measure of local self-government. The ruling elements were the hereditary high priest and the gerousia or Council of Elders which had been established by Ezra and Nehemiah. The pattern of Orthodox Judaism from that time to now was set by the regulations passed by this body of seventy and called Dibre Soferim.

In effect this regulation simply attempted to prevent the Jews from succumbing to the Hellenistic pressures with which they were surrounded. Art, music, dress, customs, and most of all religion were

over-shadowed by the synagogue chant of the rabbis, "Shammai Israel, Adonai eleenu, Adonai echod," "Hear O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is One."

A concerted effort was made by the Hellenists to break down this resistance. Judea was ringed with a series of Greek settlements in league with the trans-Jordanian Decapolis. Each of these tantalized the Judeans with temples to Greek gods and goddesses, Academies, schools, gymnasiums and nude games.

The extent to which the Hellenizing efforts succeeded is seen in the fact that several young Jews submitted to surgery to remove the sign of the covenant so they would not be ridiculed when participating in the games.

Historians believe three factors prevented the complete overwhelming of the Jews by Hellenism. The persecution of Antiochus IV which drove the Orthodox underground and polarized public sympathy in their favor, the protection of the Romans which came at the request of the Maccabees, and the power and prestige of the Law of Moses which even the most Hellenistic Jews agreed came from God.

The persecution began in 198 B.C. when Antiochus III finally defeated the Ptolemys and Judea became part of the Seleucid Empire. Antiochus III was received by the Jews as a liberator, but their joy was short-lived. His successor Antiochus IV proved to be a veritable despot. He appointed as high priest one Jason who was a leader of Hellenistic sympathizers in Jerusalem. An order came from Antiochus at Jason's request for the establishing of Greek institutions like those of the Decapolis in Jerusalem itself.

Unhappy with Jason for the slowness with which the Hellenizing of Judea was proceeding, Antiochus replaced him with Menelous. Menelous proceeded to get to the core of the matter. Jehovah was made one with the Greek Zeus and sacrifices were offered to them according to the Greek practice rather than the Jewish law.

Such shocking practice brought predictable consequences. The majority of the Jews swung to the Chasidim, or anti-Hellenist party. Antiochus IV declared himself Epiphanes or "God made manifest."

In 168 B.C. Antiochus was defeated by the Ptolemaic Pharaoh Popilius, and Jerusalem received the mistaken report that he had been killed. Their celebration was cut short by Antiochus himself appearing on the scene.

Convinced that the Jews had been responsible for his failure in Egypt, he slaughtered thousands of them, robbed the temple, restored Menelaus whom the Jews had deposed and rededicated the temple to

Zeus. He ordered the destruction of the altar, replaced it with a Greek altar and then committed the ultimate blasphemy by sacrificing a pig on it! Jews were forced on pain of death to eat pork so sacrificed. Jerusalem was razed by flames and the Jewish population was sold into slavery.

The entire reign of Antiochus Epiphanes was, and still is, known as "the abomination of desolation," in Jewish historical writings.

During all this, the Chasidim preached guerilla resistance. Among those who went underground was one Mattathias of the house of Hasonai of the tribe of Aaron, and his five sons Judas, Simon, Eleazor, Jonathan and Johannan Caddis.

Mattathias began the active revolt by killing a Jew who was approaching the altar to offer a swine, and shouting, "Whoever is zealous for the Law, and wishes to support the covenant, let him follow me." He had set the stage for every Jewish Zealot from then until now.

Upon Mattathias' death, leadership of the revolt passed to Judas who was called Maccabee, "the hammer." Judas was a saint in prayer and a terror in battle. Against great odds he defeated the Greek mercenaries at Emmaus. The victory was complete, yet Antiochus was not convinced. He sent an even larger force to wipe out the rebels.

These were in turn wiped out at Mizpah. In 164 B.C. Judas cleansed and rededicated the temple and restored the priestly services.

Upon the death of Antiochus Epiphanes in 163 B.C., his successor, Lysias, offered the Jews full religious freedom if they would disarm. The Chasidim consented. Judas refused, asserting that to be really religiously free the Jews must be politically free. This difference was the beginning of civil strife which produced the party of the Pharisees, who agreed with the Chasidim and the Sadducees whose political ambitions matched those of Judas.

Civil war ensued with the Maccabeans now persecuting those of the Hellenistic faction. Israel was engulfed in civil strife.

Judas was slain in 161 B.C. His successor, brother Jonathan, was killed in 143. The only surviving brother carried the favor of Rome and with the help of that growing power established Jewish independence in 142 B.C. Thus establishing the Hasmonian dynasty.

This period of independence prevailed, although torn by internal strife, until the coming of the Roman Legions seventy nine years later.

In *Zechariah 9:9-10* the prophet begins to rejoice. Now that the temple is built and the land has returned to Jehovah, the appearance of the Messianic King seems imminent. We will have more to say shortly about this King and His appearance.

In 9:11-f the joyous coming of the Messiah is postponed by the stark reality of the present grim situation. The struggle with Greece must first be won. The disbursed are encouraged to return to their home land and join in the struggle. They have the promise that they will prevail (v. 13). Jehovah Himself will fight for them (v. 14-15). He will save them as His people (v. 16). The sling-stones of the Maccabees will eat the flesh of the Seleucids. The victorious rebels would be drenched with blood like the horns of the altar (v. 15) and in their victories they would shine like the glittering jewels of a crown (v. 16).

The fierce description of the struggle for independence from the Hellenizing Seleucid Greek empire ends on a note of praise to God for His goodness.

### THE MESSIANIC ASPECT OF ZECHARIAH . . . 9:9-17

It is indeed not strange that Zechariah should mingle his prophecy of Maccabean independence with that of the coming of Christ. The defeat of the Seleucids marked the last foreign presence in the holy land prior to that historic period in which Christ finally came. The excited rejoicing of the prophet is indeed understandable.

On the other hand, it is equally easy to see how the Jews of later times reading such intermingled predictions could cast their longed for Messiah in the mold of Judas Maccabee. The desire for political independence as a base for religious freedom would be as strong under Caesar as under Antiochus Epiphanes.

Nevertheless, when the Messiah did come, He scorned such a militarily attained and supported political kingdom to fulfill God's ultimate purpose in blessing all the nations of the earth. It required His own resurrection from the dead to establish His Messianic identity in view of His renunciation of this worldly power and ambition.

(Verse 9) Zechariah calls upon the theocratic people, "Daughter of Zion . . . Daughter of Jerusalem" to rejoice at the coming of her king. (cp. *Psalm 2:11*) He is not at all what she expected, but He is Messiah.

He is just, a characteristic attributed by the prophets to the Messiah in connection with salvation (cp. *Isaiah 45:21, 53:11, Jeremiah 23:5,6*).

In contrast with Antiochus, whom the Jews mistakenly welcomed as a savior from Egyptian oppression but who came to destroy, the Messiah King will come to save.

He is lowly and He comes riding on an ass; not the symbol of humiliation as some have supposed but the symbol of peace, as the

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horse was a symbol of war. Messiah will lead no armed revolt. He will not receive His kingly dominion from Satan (cp. *Luke 4:6-7*) but by going the way of the suffering servant.

This verse finds its literal fulfillment in Jesus' final entry into Jerusalem. (cp. *Matthew 21:4-5*)

(Verse 10) Ephraim, symbolic of the northern tribes, and Jerusalem, symbolic of the southern are to be restored at Messiah's coming. The people will be restored to their full promised dominion (*Genesis 15:18*) from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean.

And beyond, He shall speak peace to all nations, His dominion shall be to the ends of the earth.

The Jews understood such passages to indicate that the Messiah would conquer the world, as had Alexander. Jesus showed the true sense when He commissioned His apostles to preach the gospel to the uttermost part of the earth.

(Verses 11-17) With the words, "as for thee also," Zechariah turns to the coming deliverance from Greek oppression. It will be because of the covenant that the people will be rescued from the threat of complete extinction by Hellenization.

### Chapter XXXVIII—Questions

#### The Triumph of Zion Through Her Messiah

1. The theme of chapter nine is struck in verse \_\_\_\_\_.
2. This theme is the coming of the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The term "burden of the word of Jehovah" is calculated to \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The first part of the oracle is concerned with the land of \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Hadrach is the symbolic name for \_\_\_\_\_.
6. This prediction was fulfilled c. 344 B.C. by the invasion of \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_.
7. God's purpose to \_\_\_\_\_ is the all-determining factor in every historic development.
8. List the traditional enemies of Israel mentioned in chapter nine, and give the symbolic name of each as given by Zechariah.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ was the southern-most of the Philistine cities mentioned here.
10. What world conqueror fulfilled this predictive passage? (9:1-8)
11. The predictions of this section find their immediate fulfillment in what historic event?

12. The ultimate fulfillment of this passage is found in the coming of \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Describe the events leading to the Maccabean revolt.
14. To what three factors do historians attribute the failure of the Greeks to completely Hellenize the Jews?
15. Following the death of Alexander, the land of Palestine became at first part of what empire?
16. Antiochus IV was called Epiphanes meaning \_\_\_\_\_.
17. Who were the Chasidim?
18. Whom did Antiochus Epiphanes blame for his defeat at the hand of the Egyptian Ptolemies?
19. What, in Jewish history, is referred to as "the abomination of desolation?"
20. Who was Mattathias?
21. Who was called "the hammer?"
22. Upon the death of Antiochus IV, Lysias offered the Jews complete religious freedom if they would lay down their arms. Why did they refuse?
23. What caused the Jewish civil war following their victory under Judas Maccabee?
24. What was the origin of the party of the Pharisees?
25. What was the origin of the Sadducees?
26. What finally ended the internal strife which followed the Maccabean revolt?
27. In 9:11-f the joyous coming of the Messiah is postponed by\_\_\_\_\_.
28. Why does Zechariah mingle the prediction of the coming of Christ with that of the Maccabean revolt?
29. Show how the Jews in later times confused these two predictions.
30. What was Jesus' attitude toward the desire of the Jews for a military independence and a political kingdom?
31. Contrast Antiochus IV with the Messiah King.
32. What is the symbolism of the ass upon which the Messiah would ride?
33. What New Testament event fulfills this prediction?
34. Beyond the traditional boundaries of Israel, the Messiah will speak peace to \_\_\_\_\_.
35. The Jews understood such passages to indicate that \_\_\_\_\_.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

## ISRAEL RESTORED

## ZECHARIAH, CHAPTER 10:1-12

RV . . . Ask ye of Jehovah rain in the time of the latter rain, even of Jehovah that maketh lightnings; and he will give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field. For the teraphim have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie; and they have told false dreams, they comfort in vain; therefore they go their way like sheep, they are afflicted, because there is no shepherd. Mine anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the he-goats, for Jehovah of hosts hath visited his flock, the house of Judah, and will make them as his goodly horse in the battle. From him shall come forth the corner-stone, from him the nail, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler together. And they shall be as mighty men, treading down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle; and they shall fight, because Jehovah is with them; and the riders on horses shall be confounded. And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them back; for I have mercy upon them; and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am Jehovah their God, and I will hear them. And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine; yea, their children shall see it, and rejoice; their hearts shall be glad in Jehovah. I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them; and they shall increase as they have increased. And I will sow them among peoples; and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and shall return. I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; the place shall not be found for them. And he will pass through the sea of affliction, and will smite the waves in the sea, and all the depths of the Nile shall dry up; and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart. And I will strengthen them in Jehovah; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith Jehovah.

LXX . . . Ask ye of the Lord rain in season, the early and the latter; the Lord has given bright signs, and will give them abundant rain, to every one grass in the field. For the speakers have uttered grievous things, and the diviners have seen false visions, and they have spoken

false dreams, they have given vain comfort: therefore have they fallen away like sheep, and been afflicted, because there was no healing. Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I will visit the lambs; and the Lord God Almighty shall visit his flock, the house of Juda, and he shall make them as his goodly horse in war. And from him he looked, and from him he set the battle in order, and from him came the bow in anger, and from him shall come forth every oppressor together. And they shall be as warriors treading clay in the ways in war; and they shall set the battle in array, because the Lord is with them, and the riders on horses shall be put to shame. And I will strengthen the house of Juda, and save the house of Joseph, and I will settle them; because I have loved them; and they shall be as if I had not cast them off: for I am the Lord their God, and I will hear them. And they shall be as the warriors of Ephraim, and their heart shall rejoice as with wine: and their children also shall see it, and be glad; and their heart shall rejoice in the Lord. I will make a sign to them, and gather them in; for I will redeem them, and they shall be multiplied according to their number before. And I will sow them among the people; and they that are afar off shall remember me: they shall nourish their children, and they shall return. And I will bring them again from the land of Egypt, and I will gather them in from among the Assyrians; and I will bring them into the land of Galaad and to Libanus; and there shall not even one of them be left behind. And they shall pass through a narrow sea, they shall smite the waves in the sea, and all the deep places of the rivers shall be dried up; and all the pride of the Assyrians shall be taken away, and the sceptre of Egypt shall be removed. And I will strengthen them in the Lord their God; and they shall boast in his name, saith the Lord.

## COMMENTS

In chapter nine, verses nine through ten, Zechariah exalted at the coming of Messiah. In 9:11-17, he interrupted his rejoicing to predict the victorious struggle with the Greeks which would precede His actual coming. In chapter ten, he returns to the theme of Zion triumphant through the Messiah.

(Verse 1) The key to this chapter seems to be "in the time of the latter rain."

To understand the symbolism here, we must know something of the climate of the holy land. During summer it almost literally never



rains. From May first through October fifteenth, one can almost guarantee no rain will fall.

The rainy season, from October to May, comes in three parts. They are known as the first or former rains, the winter rains, and the latter rains. The former are the light rains of October and the early days of November. These moisten the soil after the summer drought and allow the planting of winter grain.

The heaviest rains are the winter rains, which fall during December, January and February. The bulk of the water in the land comes from these rains.

Most vital to the completion of the harvest are the *latter rains*. These perfect the fruit and grain just prior to harvest, and so are most welcome and celebrated of all. (cf. *Joel 2:21-24*)

In a land where water is always in such critical supply as in Palestine, it is not surprising that rain should become a favorite symbol of divine blessing. (eg. *Isaiah 44:3-4, Hosea 6:3, Psalms 72:6*)

It is essential that the rains come, it is equally essential that they come at the proper time. Lack of rain at the right time results in complete crop failure. The *latter rains* are essential to the *final* perfection of the crop. Without the *latter rain* all that has developed through the former and winter rains will be lost.

By "rain in the time of the latter rain," Zechariah means God's blessing at the critical point in the history of His people when the fruit of His purpose was nearly ripe for harvest. The coming of the Messiah would usher in the fulfillment of God's purpose in Israel. Now that the people are back in the land and the temple is restored, the harvest season is rapidly drawing near.

God had planted the seed in the call of Abraham. His blessings upon the patriarchs were the "former rains." His continued blessings upon them through the centuries since Moses had nourished them as the winter rain. Now they must ask for the rain in the time of the latter rain in order that God's harvest may be realized in the coming of the long-awaited Christ.

(Verse 2) The prophet is concerned that prayer for the latter rains be made to Jehovah. Previous to the captivity their ancestors had asked the blessing of other gods.

The *teraphim* were household idols or images. (cp. *Genesis 31:19,30, Judges 7:5*) In light of *I Samuel 19:13* it seems they bore the likeness of some human figure. They also took the form of the signs of the Zodiac and other instruments of astrology. Hosea had used

the word to describe the idolatrous state of the people prior to the captivity. (*Hosea 3:4*)

Zechariah's use of the term here indicates his desire that the returned people not repeat the error of their fathers. The blessings required for the realization of Jehovah's purpose must come from Him. All else is vanity.

The *diviners* have had false visions. In the mystery religions associated with Baal various absurd methods were used to conjure up supernatural information concerning future events. Hallucinations were drunk as potions and the mind-expanding "trips" of the diviners were considered as divinely directed visions.

Other devices included the shooting of arrows to predict the direction of a person whose name was engraved thereon. (eg. *Ezekiel 21: 21*) The declaring staff, or divining rod, employed by some present-day superstitions finds its origin in these practices.

The result of such ridiculous superstitions is to cause those who follow them to go their way like stray sheep. Isaiah had said of the pre-exilic people whose religion was shot through with Baal worship, "All we like sheep have gone astray." (*Isaiah 53:6*) Jesus would look with compassion on His contemporaries when He saw them "as sheep having no shepherd." (*Matthew 9:36*)

(Verse 3) The *shepherds* are the spiritual leaders of the people, the *he-goats* the civil leaders. Previously those who held these positions had led the people after false gods. God's anger is kindled against such leadership. He will not allow it to go unpunished.

Jehovah has personally visited His flock. They are no longer to be victimized by such leadership. Here we again see Zechariah's Messianic insight. In the coming of the Messiah, Jehovah visited His flock, the house of Judah.

The Hebrew *Yaweh* (Jehovah) literally means "the one who is." He is ultimate reality understood as a Person. The Septuagint uses the Greek *Kurios* (Lord) to translate *Yaweh*. This word is applied to Jesus by those who were familiar with its Old Testament meaning. The conclusion of the apostles was that He is "both Lord (*Kurios*) and Christ." (*Acts 2:36*) Jesus is Jehovah, Emanuel, God with us.

He visited Judah, the Jews, and the result was the setting aside of the shepherds (*ie.* spiritual leaders, priesthood) and the rejection of the he-goats when the political system which was national Israel was wiped out by the Romans.

The sense of Zechariah's statement here is the declaration of Jehovah's intention to accomplish the ultimate deliverance of His people.

(Verse 4) The Jews were no longer to be subject to foreign rule. "From him," *ie.* from Judah, shall come its ruler. The Maccabean deliverers from Antiochus Epiphanes fulfilled the primary meaning of this prophetic promise, but it looks forward to the Messiah.

The figure of the corner-stone is one of the best known of those applied to the Christ in the New Testament. Jesus applied it to Himself. (*Matthew 21:42, Mark 12:10, Luke 20:17*) Peter applied it to Him (*Acts 4:11, I Peter 2:7*) as did Paul (*Ephesians 2:20*).

The *nail* was in reality a large peg in the center of the tent upon which were hung most of the valuables of the nomadic shepherd. In prophetic type the glories of the people hung on Juda Maccabee. In point of factual fulfillment, they hang on the Messiah.

God's people will not need to depend upon any worldly alliance. He will Himself be their battle bow. (cp. *Psalms 45:4-5, Revelation 6:2*)

(Verses 5-12) This section must look beyond the Maccabean period as well as beyond the post-Babylonian restoration for its fulfillment. To see its real meaning we must bear in mind several significant terms used here by Zechariah, and we must keep in mind that he deliberately does *not* use certain other terms.

*First*, in this entire chapter the term Judah is used consistently, *never Israel*. Judah signifies the Jews as a political-ethnic group, whereas Israel, which does not appear here, is the covenant name for those whose relationship to God is based on faith rather than national or racial origin.

*Second*, the house of Judah is joined by the house of Joseph. Judah is, technically, the southern kingdom while Joseph is the ten northern tribes.

*Third*, the Hebrew verb here translated "I will bring (them) back" is a compound word which includes also "I will place them." (cp. *Jeremiah 32:37*)

*Fourth*, the reason for the restoration here is not merit on the part of the Jews, but "I have mercy upon them."

*Fifth*, "they shall be as though I had not cast them off. for I am Jehovah their God, and I will hear them."

We are dealing with God's ultimate intention for the Jewish people. *Jew* and *Israel* are now two separate concepts. Jew means the nation, the race. Israel means God's covenant people. In the Messianic age, especially in the writings of Paul, this distinction becomes very sharp. The church, composed of obedient believers from every race, is now God's Israel.

But what of the Jews?

(Verse 5) One cannot be dogmatic when dealing with apocalyptic prophecy. On the other hand, one cannot afford to be blind to what is taking place presently in the middle east. In four wars fought since the birth of the present state of Israel, not only those who warred against them, but the entire world has been confounded by the repeated victories of the Israelis against overwhelming odds.

(Verse 6-7) The term "Israel," applied to the modern state of the Jews is a misnomer, because the present state is Jewish. It ought more accurately be called Judah, meaning covenant people. The Christian church is Israel.

In this modern Jewish state the house of Judah (the ancient southern kingdom) and the house of Joseph (the people of the ancient northern kingdom) are indistinguishable. Few modern Jews, excepting those named Cohen (priest) or Levi, know their tribal origins.

The Jews, as a race and as a national entity, were cast off *per se* upon their rejection of Jesus. There is no other historic fulfillment of this threat to cast them off. Today they are as though they had not been cast off. Again there is no historic fulfillment of Zechariah's prophetic promise to bring back and place them until the establishment of the modern state of Israel.

Today's Jewish Israeli does indeed rejoice. Their hearts are glad in Jehovah. Specifically they rejoice because they believe (both Orthodox and Reformed) that the recent history of the Jewish state marks the beginning of the Messianic age. The irony of their rejoicing is not in their recognizing of the coming of the Messianic age, but in their misinterpreting the preparation for His *return* as preparation for His *first* appearing.

(Verses 8-12) In western Jerusalem today there is a grotesquely beautiful memorial to the Nazi holocaust in which six million Jews were exterminated. The building is built in the form of the gas chambers of the concentration camps. The stones in the walls are symbolic of the corpses piled high in their desperate attempts to escape the unexpected gas. An eternal flame burns in a wrought iron brazier to symbolize the cremation room, and on the black marble floor in gold letters are the names of Auschwitz, Buchanwald, and all the other horror chambers in which helpless men, women and children died for being Jews.

In the basement room are larger-than-life reproductions of Nazi anti-Jewish propaganda, and pictures of the concentration camp barracks: a record of utter nauseating barbarism.

To visit this shrine, in the midst of the modern miracle that is today's Jewish nation, is to know the meaning of "*I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them; they shall increase as they have increased.*" The word "hiss" should more accurately be translated "whistle." The Lord will call the Jews as the shepherd whistles for his sheep. Those who were sown among the peoples because of their rejection of the Christ, have indeed remembered Jehovah in far countries. True, they are plagued with their share of self-acclaimed atheists, as are all nations, but throughout the world and in the concentration camps of Europe they have paid dearly for remembering their God. It was their attempts to keep His law which stamped them as peculiar enough to foster the kind of racism and bigotry to which Nazi Germany subjected them.

It is true, the Jews stood outside Pilate's judgement hall and cried for the blood of God's Son to be upon their heads and the heads of their children. (*Matthew 27:25*) But enough is enough. "*Except the Lord of Sabbaoth had left us a seed, we had become Sodom and Gomorrah.*" (*Isaiah 1:9*, cp. *Romans 11:29*)

No time in history, since Zechariah, has seen a mass return of Jews to the ancient homeland until the years just following the second world war. It seems He has "brought them back" and "placed them." The reason is not merit, but mercy for the sake of the fathers.

Paul tells us "I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, (we Gentile believers) that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in . . ." (*Romans 11:25*) Modern historians are describing the age since World War II as the "post-Christian era." The term is a misnomer, but it is evidence of a significant historic phenomenon. The time when most Gentiles were willing at least to admit the influence of Christ on their culture, if not actually to accept Him personally, is past. In my opinion we are witnessing the end of Paul's "time of the Gentiles," as the primary participants in the program of God.

It is too soon to evaluate this in terms of eschatology, but there can be little doubt we are witnessing some very significant events in today's state of Israel.

*Zechariah 10:10* predicts God's bringing of Jews from Egypt, Assyria, Gilead (modern Jordan) and Lebanon at a time when ". . . place shall not be found for them." One hears much today about a million and a half Arab refugees who were driven from their homes in the establishment of the modern Jewish state. There is no way to

morally justify this, and no reason to assume it was God's will. But, it is not so commonly known that the United Nations' partitioning of Palestine also displaced some 700,000 Jews in the surrounding Arab lands. These have been assimilated into Israel, but "a place was not found for them" in the lands named here by Zechariah.

The exact meaning of *Zechariah 10:11* in the present middle eastern situation is difficult to ascertain. Egypt's much touted Aswan dam, which was supposed to be the means of a great economic revival in that nation has proven to be something less than an unmixed blessing. Marshes which once bred an abundance of game are now dried up. The death-dealing microscopic parasites which have always been a danger to those who would stick their feet in the Nile have reached near epidemic proportions. The Delta is receding since the river is no longer rushing into the Mediterranean, and the fishing grounds off the mouth of the Nile have been all but abandoned. Can this be what is described here by the prophet in connection with the restoration of the Jewish state?

The pride of Assyria has indeed been brought down in the Israeli defeat and occupation of the Golan heights overlooking the Galilee.

(Verse 12) If we are correct, if what we are seeing in the middle east is a fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy, there is a more and greater development yet to come. The world would indeed be confounded if the Israeli's should fully realize that it is God Who has wrought in and for them . . . if they did actually begin to "walk up and down in His name."

## Chapter XXXIX—Questions

### Israel Restored

1. In this chapter Zechariah returns to the theme \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The key to the chapter seems to be "in the time of the latter rain." Explain the climatic circumstances in the holy land which give rise to this term.
3. What is peculiarly essential about the *latter* rains as opposed to the former and winter rains?
4. What event in the Old Testament history of the Jewish people answers to the "former rain?"
5. What to the "winter rain?"
6. What were the teraphim?
7. What is Zechariah's desire concerning the prayers of the people?

8. What was the result of praying for protection to false gods?
9. Who are the shepherds of verse three? the he-goats?
10. What is the literal meaning of Yaweh (Jehovah)?
11. Show the relationship of this meaning of Jehovah to the term Lord applied to God in the Septuagint and to Jesus in the New Testament.
12. What was the result, in relation to the spiritual leaders, of Jesus' visit to Israel?
13. Discuss the "corner stone" in verse four.
14. Discuss the "nail" in verse four.
15. Verses five through twelve must look beyond \_\_\_\_\_ as well as \_\_\_\_\_ for its fulfillment.
16. In Zechariah 10, \_\_\_\_\_ and never \_\_\_\_\_ signifies the Jews.
17. The uniting of Joseph and Judah represents the uniting of the old \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ kingdoms.
18. The Hebrew word translated "I will bring them back" is a compound word which also includes \_\_\_\_\_.
19. The reason for the Jewish restoration described in chapter ten is not merit but \_\_\_\_\_.
20. In this chapter we are dealing with God's ultimate \_\_\_\_\_.
21. Jew and \_\_\_\_\_ are two separate concepts.
22. Jew means \_\_\_\_\_.
23. Israel means \_\_\_\_\_.
24. The \_\_\_\_\_ composed of obedient believers from every race is now God's \_\_\_\_\_.
25. The Jews as a race were cast off upon \_\_\_\_\_.
26. The modern Israeli Jew believes that the present Jewish state marks the beginning of the \_\_\_\_\_.
27. The word "hiss" really means \_\_\_\_\_ (10:8)
28. What is meant by "Except the Lord of Sabbathath had left us a seed, we had become as Sodom and Gomorrah?"
29. Discuss this chapter in light of the current developments in the middle east, particularly the holy land.
30. In your opinion, what would be the effect upon the world if modern Israel were to openly declare that their victories have been wrought by God in fulfillment of prophecy?