OVERVIEW OF BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – FROM RUINS TO REIGN – GOD'S UNSTOPPABLE PLAN FOR ISRAEL'S RESTORATION

Introduction:

Today we come to the book of **Zechariah** – the second to last book in the OT. So it is easy to find – just go to Matthew and back up two books. It is the longest of the 12 Minor Prophets. Zechariah whose name means "*Yahweh Remembers*" was a younger contemporary of Haggai – so he shares the same background and historical setting information that we covered last Sunday. Both prophets were trying to stir up the returning exiles to complete the work on rebuilding the temple that had started back in 536 BC and then been halted for 16 years due to external opposition and internal divisions and spiritual complacency.

Haggai was more of a confrontational exhorter ("*Consider your ways*") while Zechariah was more of a comforting voice of hope and encouragement – focusing the people on God's faithfulness to His covenant promises. Someone has said that the message of Haggai was "*Take Part*" in the rebuilding program; while Zechariah came alongside and said "*Take heart*" – don't be discouraged or fearful despite the difficulty of the task.

The prophet had been born back in Babylonia and then brought back to Jerusalem by his priestly grandfather with the returning exiles under the political leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest. Jewish tradition attests that he was a member of the great synagogue that collected and preserved the canon of revealed Scripture. Jesus testifies in **Matt. 23:35** that Zechariah was murdered between the temple and the altar – so he paid a price for his faithful ministry.

David Roper:
The message revolves around the meaning of his name, for Zechariah means "*God remembers*". That would be important for the returned exiles to know. They felt at times that they were a forgotten people, that God had turned his back on them, and they needed to recall that God remembered. Actually, a number of priests during the exilic period were given this name, so it is evident that this was a thought which pervaded much of the nation of Judah at this time.

Try to put yourself in Zechariah's sandals. Imagine walking through a city devastated by war. Buildings collapsed. Streets empty. Hope scarce. Yet in the midst of the rubble stands an architect holding blueprints—not of what was, but of what will be. Those blueprints guarantee that destruction will not have the final word.

That is the setting of Zechariah. Jerusalem lies in ruins. About 50,000 people have returned from the Babylonian exile, but they are discouraged, threatened, and spiritually apathetic. Into that despair, God sends Zechariah—not merely to motivate rebuilding, but to **reveal God's sovereign blueprint for Israel's future glory.**

Above all Zechariah was a **visionary** – with tremendous insight from God into His future program for Israel and the role of the promised Messiah – mixing prophecies related to both the First Coming and the Second Advent of Christ. You have probably known some visionaries in one context or another – whether in the realm of work, or politics or even church leaders. Their fatal flaws are usually:

- Inaccuracy – not seeing the future from a realistic or big picture perspective,
- or Implementation failures – unable to motivate people or to execute their vision.

But when it comes to God, a visionary inspired by Him has a perfect track record. God sees the future clearly and always accomplishes His promised kingdom agenda.

What are some **qualities of a visionary** and how do we see those reflected in Zechariah?

- **Future-oriented Perspective** – imagining what could be; not constrained by what is
- **Clear sense of Purpose** – driven by a compelling "Why" – What is so important about the temple of God – he was anchored in his convictions and prophetic calling
- **Big-Picture Thinking** – focused on outcomes that will make the difference for the long term
- **Ability to Inspire and Motivate Others** – especially motivating thru hope and courage rather than fear; helping others to catch the vision and understand the role they need to play
- **Resilience and Perseverance** – translating vision into action that will persist until the project is successfully finished

Zechariah complements the message of **Daniel** – giving us the Jewish perspective of God's program for Israel during *the times of the Gentiles*.

> **Luke 21:24** "*Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*."

These Gentile times began back in 586 BC when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon conquered Jerusalem. Daniel lays out the 4 great world empires: Babylonians, Medo-Persia Empire, Greek and Roman – both the historic empire and the end times revived Roman empire. These *times of the Gentiles* will extend until the end times. The Jews currently have temporary control of Jerusalem but full regathering and control will not occur until the end times when the nation will be regathered, saved and usher in the Millennial Kingdom.

<u>Hermeneutics:</u>

Sadly many conservative evangelical commentators and preachers fail to align themselves with the futuristic vision that Zechariah lays out for God's elected nation. They subscribe to the **amillennial** framework of end times events rather than the **premillennial** framework. In other words Christ has already established His kingdom at His first coming. There will be no ultimate regathering and salvation of the nation of Israel in the end times. There will be no 1,000 year Millennial Kingdom where Christ reigns in peace and righteousness from His throne in Jerusalem. They treat prophetic books like Zechariah from a subjective hermeneutic that sees the NT church replacing the nation of Israel when it comes to God's promises to Abraham and David – so instead of a literal interpretation, they would spiritualize or allegorize the details in the text. They deny any future for the ethnic nation of Israel. They struggle with the prophetic details when it comes to a book like Zechariah. They miss the whole point of the book. *Yahweh Remembers* – If the promises in the book related to the First Coming of Christ were fulfilled literally, it should be expected that there will be literal fulfillment of the promises that still remain related to His Second Advent.

Big Idea –
BY PROPHETIC VISIONS, MESSAGES AND BURDENS OF ULTIMATE RESTORATION AND TRIUMPH, ZECHARIAH ENCOURAGES THE NATION OF ISRAEL IN THEIR MISSION OF REBUILDING THE TEMPLE BY REMINDING THEM OF GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO FULFILL HIS MESSIANIC AND KINGDOM PROMISES

Zechariah 1:17 "*the Lord will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem*"

Though Israel is temporarily sidelined, her future restoration is certain – because God keeps His covenant promises.

Overview -- The Book of Zechariah is recognized as "the most Messianic, the most truly apocalyptic, and the most eschatological of all the writings of the OT" (ISBE, 1956 – referenced by Dr. John C. Whitcomb). It stands as God's remarkable witness to the folly of despising small beginnings. When God is sovereignly at work to accomplish His kingdom purposes, the ultimate end can far transcend the pitiful circumstances viewed from just a natural perspective. The small remnant of Jews that had returned from the Babylonian Captivity to rebuild the temple were faced with a discouraging task. Everywhere they looked there was the rubble to remind them of the faithlessness of their ancestors. Even the construction of the temple itself was but a sad contrast to the majestic state of Solomon's former edifice. But **God will again remember His people and accomplish His great promises.**

Under the encouraging ministry of Zechariah, the people were given a vision for the future glories that God still had in store for His covenant people. Their enemies were under God's future wrath as God would once again choose Jerusalem and accomplish all that He had promised. The Messiah would return in triumph to vanquish all opposition and establish His rule from His throne in the city of David. Despair was replaced with hope and a zeal to accomplish the task God had set before them.

Structure of the Book:

I. (1-6) 8 PROPHETIC VISIONS – KINGDOM CONTROL
REGARDING THE FUTURE OF ISRAEL AND JUDGMENT ON HER ENEMIES

written during the second year of the reign of Darius = **520 BC**, and the specific night of the visions was likely **February 15, 519 BC**.

1:1 "*In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo saying*,"

God reveals His divine plan – He is actively controlling history to bring about Israel's restoration, the judgment of the nations and Messiah's reign.

II. (7-8) 4 MESSAGES FROM THE LORD — KINGDOM CALLING
EXHORTATION TO LIVE RIGHTEOUSLY IN ANTICIPATION OF PROMISED PROSPERITY THAT WILL SPILL OVER TO THE GENTILES

Introduced by: "*Then the word of the Lord . . .*" (7:4, 8; 8:1, 18)
Takes place 2 years later

Responding to a question about the continuation of the fasts – God gives the prophet 4 messages:

1) Word of Rebuke
2) Word of Righteousness
3) Word of Restoration
4) Word of Rejoicing

III. (9-14) 2 BURDENS -- KINGDOM CONSUMMATION
ULTIMATE RESTORATION AND TRIUMPH

Introduced by: "*The burden of the Word of the Lord . . .*" (9:1; 12:1)
First advent -- rejection of Israel's coming king
Second advent -- acceptance of Israel's king

Jerry Harmon: The prophecy in chapters 9-14 was delivered about 40 or 50 years later. By this time, the temple has long been completed. Zechariah is now an old man. Israel is weak and they're still vulnerable under foreign domination. Nehemiah has not yet returned to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem during this time, and so they're vulnerable still to the surrounding nations. Powerful and aggressive neighbors still surrounded them. And the people worried, what if these neighbors attack us? What if they tear down the temple we worked so hard to rebuild? What if they invade us again and carry us all into captivity just as before? They feared really the future, what the future might hold. They weren't really certain about it.

I. (1-6) 8 PROPHETIC VISIONS – KINGDOM CONTROL
REGARDING THE FUTURE OF ISRAEL AND JUDGMENT ON HER ENEMIES

The series of 8 visions bracketed by an Introduction focusing on the urgent need for Repentance and then a closing Climax

Provides prophetic reassurance that God has not abandoned His people.
1:14 "*I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem*"

(1:1-6) REPENT NOW -- HISTORY PROVES THAT THE LORD'S URGENT CALL TO REPENTANCE MUST BE RESPONDED TO RIGHT NOW
I. (:2-3) THE CALL TO IMMEDIATE REPENTANCE OFFERS THE ONLY ESCAPE FROM GOD'S IMPENDING WRATH
A. (:**2**) Sin Incurs God's Wrath
"*The Lord was very angry with your fathers*"

B. (:**3**) Only Repentance Can Restore the Fractured Relationship
"*Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Return to Me,' declares the Lord of hosts, 'that I may return to you,' says the Lord of hosts*."

Nature and Necessity of Repentance
Implied Timing of Repentance = Right Now – while you have opportunity
Blessings associated with restored fellowship

II. (:4) THE CONTRAST OF REJECTING THE COMMAND TO REPENT PROVES THE FUTILITY OF STUBBORN REBELLION

A. Negative Contrast Hits Close to Home – History Lesson

"*Do not be like your fathers*,"

Sad case when you are commanded to reject the behavior example of your Parents

B. Same Call for Immediate Repentance

"*to whom the former prophets proclaimed, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, Return now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds*.'"

Privilege of access to God's revelation through His messengers, the prophets
Faithful proclamation of the message of God
Same connection between sin and the fracturing of the relationship
Same necessity of immediate repentance – "*Return now*"

C. Tragic Closing of the Ears to the Pleas of God

"*But they did not listen or give heed to Me, declares the Lord*."

III. (:5-6a) THE CONTRAST BETWEEN MORTALITY AND ETERNITY VINDICATES GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO CARRY OUT HIS WORD

A. (:5) Limited Perspective of Mortal Men

"*Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever*?"

B. (:6a) Historical Vindication of the Eternal Word of God

"*But did not My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets, overtake your fathers*"

God will faithfully bring about all that He has prophecied –
Both the blessings and the curses

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IV. (:6b) THE CONFESSION OF REPENTANCE BRINGS FORTH THE FRUIT OF SUBMISSION TO GOD'S SOVEREIGN DISPOSITION – BUT WILL IT BE TOO LATE??

"*Then they repented and said, 'As the Lord of hosts purposed to do to us in accordance with our ways and our deeds, so He has dealt with us*."

Their forefathers ended up changing their mind about their own sinfulness and the Lord's charges against them. But it was not in time to benefit them. The message to the contemporaries of Zechariah is to **Repent NOW** while there is still time to participate in the blessings.

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(**1:7-17**) *VISION #1 – <u>GOD'S SURVEILLANCE</u> -- MAN ON RED HORSE AMONG MYRTLE TREES – HOW LONG? WHY DO THE WICKED PROSPER?*

BIG IDEA:
THE DAY IS COMING WHEN THE LORD WILL HAVE COMPASSION AND RESTORE THE FORTUNES OF HIS PEOPLE

This first of 8 visions serves to summarize all the others by presenting the major theme -- God sees the nations at ease while Israel suffers – and He **promises judgment and restoration**.

Introduced to the man riding the red horse (judgment) – identified in **vs. 11** as the **Angel of the Lord** – preincarnate Christ (distinguished from the interpreting angel speaking in **vs. 9**)

Myrtle trees associated with booth-making at the Feast of Booths and with messianic blessing

(:**16-17**) Word of Promised Restoration and Prosperity to Israel

1. (:16) Faithful Compassion Leads to Restoration and Growth

"*Therefore thus says the Lord, 'I will return to Jerusalem with compassion; My house will be built in it,' declares the Lord of hosts, 'and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem.*'"

2. (:17) Sovereign Choice Leads to Prosperity and Blessing

"*Again, proclaim saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts, My cities will again overflow with prosperity, and the Lord will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.*"

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(**1:18-21**) *VISION #2 – GOD'S SUPREMACY -- THE HAMMERING OF THE HORNS -- JUDGMENT AGAINST THE OPPRESSIVE GENTILE NATIONS*

BIG IDEA:

THE DAY IS COMING WHEN THE LORD WILL OVERTHROW THE GENTILE NATIONS WHICH HAVE SCATTERED AND OPPRESSED THE JEWISH PEOPLE

The "*time of the Gentiles*" will not last forever. In their pride and false sense of security, they judge themselves to be impenetrable. They have spread terror among God's people in scattering and oppressing them and obliterating all hope of deliverance. But God will terrorize them and ultimately overthrow their sovereignty to establish His own righteous reign.

Horns were symbols of power and pride. In the context of judgment each symbolizes either a nation or the head of that nation. Here the horns represent Gentile nations that attacked God's people.

(:21) The Sovereign Conquest of the Gentile Nations

"These are the horns which have scattered Judah so that no man lifts up his head but these craftsmen [blacksmiths] *have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations who have lifted up their horns against the land of Judah in order to scatter it*."

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(**2:1-13**) *VISION #3 – GOD'S SURVEYOR – GOD IS THE DEFENSE AND GLORY OF HIS ELECT PEOPLE -- EXPANDED JUDAH RESTORED AND PROTECTED BY*

THE LORD
BIG IDEA:
A DAY IS COMING WHEN THE LORD WILL RETURN TO PROSPER AND PROTECT JUDAH BY DWELLING IN HER EXPANDED MIDST (ESTABLISHING HIS GLORIOUS THRONE AT THE CENTER OF HER UNIVERSE)

The measuring line to lay out the future dimensions of the millennial city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls – because the Lord Himself will be her defense.

(:**5**) Presence of the Lord

1. To Sovereignly Protect
   "*'For I,' declares the Lord, 'will be a wall of fire around her*'"

2. To Sovereignly Rule
   "*'and I will be the glory in her midst.*'"

Cf. the Shekinah Glory that had departed from the temple

(:10-12) The Presence of the Lord Will Vindicate His Sovereign Election of the Nation of Judah

A. (:10a) Exhortation to Exalt
"*Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion*"

B. (:10b) Promise of Abiding Presence
"*'for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,' declares the Lord*."

C. (:11a) Expansion of Blessing to the Gentiles
"*Many nations will join themselves to the Lord in that day and will become My people*."

D. (:11b) Confirmation of the Identity of the Messiah
"*Then I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me to you*."

E. (:12) Vindication of the Lord's Sovereign Election of Judah
"*The Lord will possess Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem*."

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(**3:1-10**) *VISION #4 – GOD'S SALVATION – JOSHUA THE HIGH PRIEST -- THE BRAND PLUCKED FROM THE FIRE AND CLEANSED BY THE MESSIAH -- THE BRANCH*
BIG IDEA:
GOD'S ELECT ARE UNTOUCHABLE AND FIT FOR SPIRITUAL SERVICE BECAUSE OF THE CLEANSING FROM SIN PROVIDED BY CHRIST -- THE COMBINATION OF ROLES OF KING AND PRIEST IN ONE PERSON IS PREFIGURED IN JOSHUA (THE BRAND PLUCKED FROM THE FIRE) AND FULFILLED IN THE COMING MESSIAH (MY SERVANT THE BRANCH)

A powerful picture of justification by grace – anticipated Israel's future national spiritual cleansing as Satan is silenced.

Amazingly, the church saints have been blessed with the lofty calling of being both a priesthood (**1 Pet 2:5, 9**) and a people who will ultimately reign with the Messiah (**2 Tim 2:12**) when he returns to establish His kingdom. We have experienced the forgiveness of sins and have been clothed with the righteousness of Christ so that we are no longer under any condemnation – in fact we have the Lord Jesus as our **Advocate** before the throne of God to rebuke all of the attacks and accusations of Satan (the accuser of the brethren).

This passage gives tremendous insight into the **role of the Messiah**. He is seen here in his preincarnate existence as the **Angel of the Lord**. He is shown in various images as coming to save the nation in that future eschatological day when He will restore Judah to prosperity. This vision speaks to the restoration of the nation of Israel to her priestly role in ministering spiritual prosperity to the world. As cleansed vessels, no longer under any condemnation, and defended against the accusations of Satan, we are fit for spiritual service.

(:**1-2**) The Elect of God Have Been Rescued from Condemnation and Rendered Untouchable

> "*Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.* [2] *And the LORD said to Satan, 'The LORD rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire*?'"

(:**8-9**) The Messiah the Servant of the Lord is Coming as the Divine Branch and the One Stone to Save Judah and Restore Prosperity to the Land

> "'*Now listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who are sitting in front of you-- indeed they are men who are a symbol, for behold, I am going to bring in My servant the Branch.* [9] *For behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua; on one stone are seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave an inscription on it,' declares the LORD of hosts, 'and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day*.'"

Eugene Merrill: Remarkable about the stone of the present oracle is that it has seven eyes (**Zech. 3:9**). Seven in biblical numerology signifies fullness or completeness, so the seven eyes suggest omniscience or undimmed vision. In vision five (**Zech. 4:1-14**) the seven eyes are identified as the eyes of YHWH that "*run to and fro over the whole earth*" (**4:10**). This universal attention by YHWH is an affirmation of His **sovereign control**, His unlimited dominion.

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(**4:1-14**) *VISION #5 – GOD'S SUPPLY -- THE GOLDEN LAMPSTAND AND 2 OLIVE TREES*
BIG IDEA:
GOD'S WORK SUCCEEDS ONLY BY THE ABOUNDING ENABLING SUPPLIED BY GOD'S ANOINTING HOLY SPIRIT

(:6-7) How Can Anyone be Adequate for Ministry? Two Key Principles:

1. (:**6**) Success Comes Only by God's Spirit

> "*Then he said to me, 'This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying, Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord of hosts*.'"

We cannot overemphasize the importance of the ministry of the Holy Spirit – despite what we see as excesses in some other movements – we do not want to overreact by minimizing His role

God's work is accomplished by divine power, not human strength.

2. (**:7**) Grace Can Remove the Greatest Obstacles

> "*What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of 'Grace, grace to it*!'"

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(**5:1-4**) *VISION #6 – GOD'S STANDARDS -- THE FLYING SCROLL – PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S CURSE AGAINST LAW BREAKERS*

BIG IDEA:

BECAUSE GOD TAKES SIN SERIOUSLY THERE WILL BE NO ESCAPING HIS CERTAIN JUDGMENT

Some people can get so involved in the work of the Lord that they imagine the requirements of holiness don't apply to them. They think that their religious activities should somehow give them a pass when it comes to certain aspects of obedience. The people of Zechariah's day who were committed to rebuilding the temple may have had such thoughts. Here God makes plain His view of transgression of His holy law. He will not hold anyone guiltless who breaks His covenant. His judgment will be certain and his judgment will be severe.

(:**3-4**) The Proclamation of God's Curse against Law Breakers –
The Certainty and Severity of God's Judgment

> *Then he said to me, 'This is the curse that is going forth over the face of the whole land; surely everyone who steals will be purged away according to the writing on one side, and everyone who swears will be purged away according to the writing on the other side.* [4] *"I will make it go forth," declares the LORD of hosts, "and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name; and it will spend the night within that house and consume it with its timber and stones."*

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(**5:5-11**) *VISION #7 – GOD'S SEPARATION -- THE WOMAN IN THE MEASURING BASKET*

BIG IDEA:

WICKEDNESS CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO EXIST IN THE HOLY ASSEMBLY --

WICKEDNESS WILL ULTIMATELY BE CONFINED (SEPARATED), REMOVED FROM THE MIDST OF GOD'S PEOPLE AND TEMPORARILY ENSHRINED IN BABYLON

A Jack- in-the-Box scene – a genie- in-the-bottle scene – here we have a woman who personifies wickedness being confined in an ephah and carried off to be worshiped in her own temple in Babylon. In the end times in preparation for the millennial kingdom, after God restores His people to their land, He will purge the land of wickedness and idolatry.

(:**10-11**) Wickedness will temporarily be enshrined in Babylon

> *And I said to the angel who was speaking with me, "Where are they taking the ephah?"* [11] *Then he said to me, "To build a temple for her in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, she will be set there on her own pedestal*."

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(**6:1-8**) *VISION #8 – GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY -- THE FOUR CHARIOTS – PATROLLING THE EARTH TO BRING JUDGMENT AGAINST ISRAEL'S ENEMIES*

BIG IDEA:

THE EXECUTION OF JUDGMENT (AGAINST ISRAEL'S WICKED ENEMIES) APPEASES THE WRATH OF GOD WHO WILL ULTIMATELY BE VICTORIOUS

God governs the nations to accomplish His redemptive plan. The wrath of God is going to be satisfied one way or another. Christ's propitiation upon the mercy seat via His substitutionary sacrifice on the cross can satisfy God's wrath for those who repent and place their faith in the Savior. But for those wicked enemies who refuse to submit to God's rule, God's wrath will ultimately be appeased via the execution of judgment. Israel's enemies found this to be the case. After having been used by God in a disciplinary fashion, they demonstrated their heart of unrighteousness and cruelty in excessively tyranizing God's people. This final night vision in the book of Zechariah shows God's judgment going forth against these nations.

[(:**7-8**) The Basic Execution of their Mission – God's Wrath Will Be Satisfied

A. (:**7**) Mission Defined = Patrolling the Earth for Judgment

> "*When the strong ones went out, they were eager to go to patrol the earth. And He said, 'Go, patrol the earth.' So they patrolled the earth*."

B. (:**8**) Mission Executed = Appeasing the Wrath of God

> "*Then He cried out to me and spoke to me saying, 'See, those who are going to the land of the north have appeased My wrath in the land of the north*.'"]

Biblehub.com: This patrolling signifies a divine presence and intervention in the world, ensuring that God's plans are carried out. It serves as a reassurance to the faithful that God is in control and actively working to bring about His purposes. The act of patrolling can also be seen as a precursor to the final judgment, where God's justice will be fully realized, as depicted in the eschatological visions of Revelation.

Lambert Dolphin: The mission of the horses and chariots supplies the **central theme** to all eight visions, for they acted as a pair of book-ends at the front and back of the visions. Together, the

eight visions say more than that the temple must be rebuilt and the leadership revived; they argue that God's kingdom in the whole world would be renewed and governments that had opposed His kingdom would be totally vanquished.

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(**6:9-15**) *CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS – THE ULTIMATE KING-PRIEST*
<u>BIG IDEA</u>: CLOSING EPILOGUE
THE COMING MESSIAH WILL REIGN AND MINISTER PEACE AS BOTH KING AND PRIEST FROM THE TEMPLE WHICH HE WILL BUILD

I. (:**9-11**) THE CROWNING -- THE SYMBOLIC CORONATION OF JOSHUA

<u>II. (:**12-13**) THE COMING BRANCH -- THE MESSIANIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BRANCH = THE ULTIMATE PRIEST-KING</u>

> "*Then say to him, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the LORD.* [13] *"Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the LORD, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.*'"

III. (:**14-15**) THE CULMINATION OF PROPHECY -- THE MEMORIAL CROWN AND VALIDATION OF DIVINE PROPHECY

II. <u>(7-8) 4 MESSAGES FROM THE LORD</u> — KINGDOM CALLING --
EXHORTATION TO LIVE RIGHTEOUSLY IN ANTICIPATION OF PROMISED PROSPERITY THAT WILL SPILL OVER TO THE GENTILES

> **Introduced by: "*Then the word of the Lord . . .*" (7:4, 8; 8:1, 18)**
> Takes place 2 years later

<u>Illustration</u>: Imagine a husband who never misses an anniversary—but only gives the same generic card every year. No special handwritten note. No display of affection. Technically faithful, but relationally distant.
That is the spiritual condition of Israel in **Zechariah 7**.
They are asking about <u>religious observance</u>, but God is concerned about <u>relational obedience</u>.
These chapters show us that external religion without internal repentance never satisfies God, yet future restoration is guaranteed because of His covenant faithfulness.

Responding to a question about the continuation of the fasts – God gives the prophet <u>4 messages</u>:

INTRODUCTION: "Ritual or Relationship" — Zechariah 7:1–3
After decades in exile, a delegation from Bethel arrives with a sincere-sounding question: *Should we keep fasting as before?*

- The fast commemorated the destruction of the temple
- The temple is now being rebuilt
- The real question is: *Do we still need to mourn?*

The question wasn't about whether God delighted in their fast, but whether their ritual still needed to be observed. They ask about tradition, not transformation.

I. A WORD OF REBUKE — "DEEDS WITHOUT DEVOTION" (Zechariah 7:4–7)

"*Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me…*" (**7:4**)

God exposes Hypocritical Religion – ritual that is disconnected from devotion

Outline

- **A. Their Ritual Was Self-Centered (v. 5):** "*Was it really for Me that you fasted*?"
- **B. Their Religion Was Superficial (v. 6):** They ate and drank for themselves, not for the LORD.
- **C. Their Reminder Was Scriptural (v. 7):** God had already spoken through earlier prophets.

Application:

Spiritual ceremony becomes *idolatry* when separated from obedience.

(cf**. Isaiah 1:11–17; Amos 5:21–24**)

Dispensational Note:

In context, this was a rebuke to post-exilic Israel, but prophetically, it warns that in any age—**ritual without heart devotion is worthless**.

II. A WORD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS — "RITUAL WITHOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS IS FUTILE" (Zechariah 7:8–14) – Reminder of Covenant Responsibilities

"*And the word of the LORD came to Zechariah…*" (**7:8**)

Outline

- **A. The Command of God (v. 9):** "*Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy*."
    - Execute true justice
    - Show kindness and mercy
    - Do not oppress the vulnerable
    - Do not devise evil in your hearts
- **B. The Compassion of God (v. 10):** "*Do not oppress… and do not devise evil*."
- **C. The Consequence of Disobedience (vv. 11–14):** Rejecting God's Word led to their scattering.

Cross References:

- **Micah 6:8** — "*What does the LORD require of you…*?"
- **James 2:17** — "*Faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead*."

III. A WORD OF RESTORATION — "FROM BROKENNESS TO BLESSING" (Zechariah 8:1–17)

"*Again the word of the LORD of hosts came…*" (**8:1**)

Outline

- **A. Revived Relationship (v. 3):** "*I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem.*"
- **B. Renewed Reality (vv. 4–5):** Peaceful streets, safety for young and old.
- **C. Redeemed Remnant (vv. 7–8):** "*They shall be My people*."
- **D. Righteous Responsibility (vv. 16–17):** "*Speak the truth… do not devise evil*."

Dispensational Note:
This points to Israel's **future millennial restoration**, when Messiah reigns from Jerusalem (cf. **Zechariah 14:9–11; Isaiah 2:3–4**).

IV. A WORD OF REJOICING — "FASTING TURNED TO FEASTING" (Zechariah 8:18–23)

"*And the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying…*" (**8:18**)

Outline

- **A. Their Fasts Changed to Festivals (vv. 19):** Mourning becomes joy.
- **B. The Nations Come to Worship (vv. 20–22):** Gentiles seek the LORD in Jerusalem.
- **C. The Favor of Fellowship (v. 23):** "*We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*"

Dispensational Note:
This climaxes in the **millennial reign** of Christ when Israel becomes the *spiritual center* of the nations (**Isaiah 60:1–3; Zechariah 14:16**).
In this age, believers experience spiritual fulfillment of that joy, but the literal consummation awaits the Kingdom Age.

CONCLUSION — "From Ritual to Relationship, From Fasting to Feasting"
Closing Illustration: Candlelight Funeral Home / Candlelight Inn
(kept the same clientele – they have just aged to the point of death)
A funeral and a feast may take place in the same building—but everything changes:

- Mourning to Feasting
- Tears to Laughter
- Sense of Loss to Sense of Fullness

That is what **Zechariah 7–8** promises.
God will take Israel's mourning and turn it into joy—not because they earned it, but because **He is faithful**.

Final Challenge:
God still asks us, as He asked them to examine their worship: *"Was it really for Me?"*
Let our worship move beyond ritual to righteousness, beyond fasting to feasting in His presence

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III. <u>(9-14) 2 BURDENS</u> -- KINGDOM CONSUMMATION
ULTIMATE RESTORATION AND TRIUMPH

Introduced by: "*The burden of the Word of the Lord . . .*" (9:1; 12:1)

(9-11) First Advent -- Rejection of Israel's coming king

<u>(**9:9-10**) The Prophecy of the Coming Righteous Messiah to Reign in Peace over the World from Jerusalem</u>

1. (:**9a**) Announcement of the Coming Messiah
    a. Anticipatory Tone of Triumphant Rejoicing
        "*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!*
        Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem!"

b. Long-Awaited Physical Union of Covenant Ruler and Covenant People
"*Behold, your king is coming to you*"

John MacArthur: The two advents of Christ are here compressed as though they were one as in **Is 61:1-3** (cf. **Lk 4:16, 21**). Actually, **v. 9** refers to His first coming and **v. 10** is His second. OT prophets didn't see the great time period between the two comings. The church age was a "mystery" hidden from them (cf. **Eph 3:1-9; Col 1:27**).

2. (:**9b**) Snapshot of the First Coming of the Messiah
a. His Unblemished Character = Righteous
"*He is just*"
There are no character flaws that anyone could criticize;
Cf. the requirements for an elder – here you have one who is truly Blameless

b. His Noble Mission = Accomplishing Salvation
"*and endowed with salvation*"

c. His Humble Demeanor (cf. Philippians 2)
"*Humble, and mounted on a donkey,*
Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

3. (:**10**) Snapshot of the Second Coming of the Messiah
a. Establishment of Peace
"*I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem;*
And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations"

b. Exercise of Worldwide Dominion
"*And His dominion will be from sea to sea,*
And from the River to the ends of the earth."

(**10:6-12**) Redemption, Regathering and Re-establishing Can Only Come from God – God Strengthens His People to be Firmly Established in the Promised Land
Repetition: "*I will strengthen them*"

A. (:**6**) Promise of Restored Remnant
1. Reunion -- Reunited as One Kingdom
a. Southern kingdom
"*I will strengthen the house of Judah*"
b. Northern kingdom
"*And I will save the house of Joseph*"
2. Restoration -- Restored to the Land
"*And I will bring them back*"

3. Reason = Compassion
"*Because I have had compassion on them*"
4. Reversal of Rejection
"*And they will be as though I had not rejected them*."
5. Responsiveness of Personal God
"*For I am the Lord their God and I will answer them*."

B. (:**7-8**) Prosperity of Restored Remnant – Strength / Joy / Numbers
1. Strength
"*Ephraim will be like a mighty man*"
2. Joy
"*And their heart will be glad as if from wine;*
Indeed, their children will see it and be glad,
Their heart will rejoice in the Lord."
3. Numbers
"*I will whistle for them to gather them together,*
For I have redeemed them,
And they will be as numerous as they were before."

C. (:**9-10**) Providence of the Restored Remnant
1. (:**9**) Renewed Allegiance
"*When I scatter them among the peoples,*
They will remember Me in far countries,
And they with their children will live and come back."
2. (:**10**) Sovereign Disposition
"*I will bring them back from the land of Egypt*
And gather them from Assyria;
And I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon
Until no room can be found for them."

D. (:**11**) Pathway for the Restored Remnant – Defeating all Obstacles
"*And they will pass through the sea of distress,*
And He will strike the waves in the sea,
So that all the depths of the Nile will dry up;
And the pride of Assyria will be brought down
And the scepter of Egypt will depart."

E. (:**12**) Plan for the Restored Remnant – Strengthened to walk in righteousness
"'*And I will strengthen them in the Lord;*
And in His name they will walk,' declares the Lord."]

(12-14) Second Advent -- Acceptance of Israel's king

(**12:6-9**) The Destruction of Israel's Attacking Enemies
A. (:**6**) Destruction of Enemies Leads to Security for God's People in Jerusalem

1. Two Images of Destruction
    a. A Firepot
        "*In that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood*"
    b. Flaming Torch
        "*and a flaming torch among sheaves*"
2. Contrast between the Devastation of Israel's Enemies and the Security of God's People
    a. Devastation of Israel's Enemies
        "*so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples*,"
    b. Security of God's People
        "*while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem*."

B. (:**7**) Jerusalem Not Magnified Above Judah
"*The Lord also will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not be magnified above Judah*."
Lesson: Salvation is from the Lord – not from the fortified capital city of Jerusalem

C. (:**8**) Jerusalem – the City of David -- Magnified
"*In that day the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the Lord before them*."
Lesson: The Lord can make both the weak and the strong to be victorious warriors (like King David) under the leadership of the Sovereign Messiah

D. **(:9**) Enemies of Jerusalem Destroyed
"*And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem*."
Lesson: The Lord will fulfill His promise of destruction.

(**12:10**) National Conversion of Israel = Accomplished by the Spirit of God
1. Divinely Targeted towards Israel
    "*I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem,*

2. Divinely Initiated
    "*the Spirit of grace and of supplication*"

3. Divinely Focused – Looking Upon their Rejected Messiah and Bitterly Mourning
    "*so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn*."

Firstborn or an only son = of highest value; most precious

(**14:4**) A Day of Supernatural Upheaval Centered Around the Mount of Olives

"*In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south*."

(**14:6-11**) That Day of the Lord Will Be Unique in Many Respects

A. (:**6-7**) Unique Illumination -- Special Lighting and Darkening Effects

"*In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. For it will be a unique day which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light*."

B. **(:8**) Unique Provision -- Continual Flow of Living Waters

"*And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter*."

C. (:**9**) Unique God -- Enthronement of the Lord Alone Over all the Earth = Key Verse

"*And the Lord will be king over all the earth; in that day the Lord will be the only one, and His name the only one*."

D. (:**10**) Unique Topography -- Topographical Changes Further Elevating Jerusalem

"*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 of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses*."

E. (:**11**) Unique Security -- Security for those Living in Jerusalem

"*People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security*."

CONCLUSION:

Don't give up on God's future plans for His elect nation Israel. Nothing will thwart God's kingdom agenda.

Zechariah lifts our eyes from the rubble of present discouragement to the certainty of future glory.

- From ruins to reign.
- From rejection to redemption.
- From discipline to delight.

"*Even so, come, Lord Jesus*."

KINGDOM CONTROL		CALLING	CONSUMMATION
8 Night Visions		4 Messages	2 Burdens
1) God's Surveillance	Man among Myrtle Trees	REBUKE	First Advent -- Rejection of Messiah
2) God's Supremacy	Hammering of 4 Horns		
3) God's Surveyor	Man with Measuring Line	RIGHTEOUSNESS	
4) God's Salvation	Cleansing of High Priest		
5) God's Supply	Lampstand and Olive Trees	RESTORATION	Second Advent -- Acceptance of Messiah
6) God's Standards	Flying Scroll		
7) God's Separation	Woman in Basket	REJOICING	
8) God's Sovereignty	Four Chariots		
APOCALYPTIC		ETHICAL	PREDICTIVE
Chaps. 1-6		**Chaps 7-8**	**Chaps 9-14**