

# The Minor Prophets #30

## Zechariah

*by: Ronald L. Dart*

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When you begin pondering the last days, as the Bible presents the last days, and you read what the prophets have to say about that time, you're inevitably drawn to the book of Revelation and what I find fascinating is how commonly the Old Testaments prophets are cited in Revelation. They're not mentioned in the sense of, well, as this prophet said or as that prophet said, but if you have one of those Bibles that have marginal references in it, you can easily find where so many things that are said in Revelation actually come from originally. It shouldn't be surprising in a way, because all the prophets had a sense of a judgment day, a time when God would tie up all the loose ends, and bring history to an end.

I don't know that they could have looked at the world or the universe and have imagined how things would end, although today we do know how this earth will end. They knew all too well, in all of this, that God had a special place in his heart for Israel. They knew the history of the things He had done to judge those who had afflicted Israel along with Pharaoh and others.

Knowing God's love of judgment, His love of mercy, knowing His forgiveness, they were not entirely surprised by many of the things that God revealed to them. They then must have known, in some element, that a lot of what they were writing down, while it might have some fulfillment in their own days, was actually aimed at the very last days of history. All this coupled with the logic of history told them time could not go on forever and thus there was a natural curiosity about how it all would end.

They knew that God would win. They knew that His balancing of the books was inevitable. They just didn't know how it all would come about and the way the end time events were revealed to them, strangely, really was not a lot of help. Events that were beyond their comprehension, even beyond their imaginations, had to be disclosed in terms that they could deal with.

Now that presents us with some difficult problems, because we don't have the frame of reference those ancient people had.

To them, many of the icons and images that you see, said something to them, that they no longer say to us. We have to study them, ponder them, and realize that just like them that really we only come to understand some of these events when they actually come to pass.

But here's the kicker, unless you do study them, unless you do ponder them, unless you do internalize them, you won't understand them when they come to pass.

### **God's Judgment**

In Zechariah, we've come to that time of God's judgment and it's described in terms that show no fulfillment to this day, some of these things have simply never happened.

Zechariah 12 verse 1 says this: "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretches forth the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him. {2} Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all the people round about, when they shall be in siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it."

Good grief do you realize what he's saying here, he's saying the time is out there when Jerusalem will be like a burdensome stone for all the people of the earth, and all the people of the earth gathered against it shall be cut to pieces.

### **Battle of Armageddon**

Now before I go on in Zechariah, I would like to remind you of a parallel passage in Revelation at a place familiar to everyone, you've heard of the battle of Armageddon. Most everybody has and actually the Biblical name for this battle is not Armageddon, it is the battle of the Great day of God Almighty. Armageddon or Har Mageddo is the name of a valley that runs down the Kishon River to Mount Carmel. You can actually stand on Mount Carmel and look out over the valley of Megiddo and ponder what has happened and what will happen there. Some major battles have been fought there but now it seems to be an assembly point for armies preparing to march on Jerusalem.

The description of what happens in that final battle, when the King of Kings and Lord of Lords comes riding in on a great horse, a horse is an icon of war, and starts wiping people out in that great valley. They came to fight Jerusalem and they died there, their eyes consumed away in their sockets and their tongue in their mouths and they died on their feet.

If you want an image of that, you can watch the movie "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and toward the end of the movie, there is a scene drawn exactly from this passage of scripture, as to what happened to these men.

But for now let's go on with Zechariah Chapter 12: "In that day, saith the LORD, I will smite every horse with astonishment, and his rider with madness: and I will open my eyes upon the house of Judah, and I will smite every horse of the people with blindness. And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall be my strength

in the LORD of hosts their God. In that day will I make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they will devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left."

The language which is a little different from Revelation but it is dealing, I think with the same time as the battle of Armageddon.

"Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem. The LORD shall save the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves over Judah." What a time, then he says.

Verse 9: "On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem."

As I said in the last program, if I were the Arab nations around them and I knew about this prophecy, I would think twice about some of the things I'm doing. Then they don't believe that God is the God of the Jews in the way the Jews do.

There is a big argument that goes back and forth between people as to whether Allah is the same as Yahweh and frankly it is not.

### **Jesus Christ is the Messiah**

He goes on to say in Zechariah 12 verse 10, "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication."

Then comes this astonishing statement.

"They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son."

They will look on me as the one whom they have pierced. Isn't that kind of familiar?

He continues in verse 11, "On that day the weeping in Jerusalem will be as great as the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of," (guess where), "Megiddo. {12} The land will mourn, each clan by itself, with their wives by themselves: the clan of the house of David and their wives, the clan of the house of Nathan and their wives, {13} the clan of the house of Levi and their wives, the clan of Shimei and their wives, {14} and all the rest of the clans and their wives."

What are they all weeping about? To me this sounds like that inevitable moment in history, when all these people realize at last, that Jesus was indeed their Messiah.

John in Chapter 19 and verse 33 speaks of that moment in time, when the Roman soldiers came to Jesus hanging on the cross with the purpose of breaking his legs so He would die. They came to Him and saw that He was dead already and they didn't break His legs. {34}

"One of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side and there came out blood and water, {35} And he that saw it bare record. {36} And these things were done, that the scripture be fulfilled, "a bone of him shall not be broken," and again another scripture says, {37} "They shall look on him whom they pierced," borrowed straight from Zechariah 12 verse 10.

### **Idols and Demons**

Zechariah 13: "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness."

The imaginary here is either of the fountains filled with blood that wipe away sins or perhaps the water of Baptism.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, says the LORD of hosts, that I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembered: and also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land."

You know sometimes, as you read through this, there is a spirit of unreality almost in these things then something comes along to help you understand exactly what he's saying here.

I ran across an interesting item in a magazine, "Biblical Archeology Review" that called this particular passage to mind. You know that excavations have been done all over Palestine dating back to whatever era that archeologist think are interesting and when they can find time to look into them. There are tells down there, places in old cities and places, that they still have not dug into. There is just too much history to dig it all up, but whenever you find a dig that reaches back to the period of Israel before the Babylonian exile, these digs turn up little idols and cult objects all over the country. You may have seen some of the pictures of this little female figure holding her bosom in both hands as though she is the mother Goddess that feeds the whole world. She is the Asherah. They found those little things everywhere but when they excavate periods after the exile, when Israel had returned back into the land from Babylon, they find none of those idols. It seems Israel had learned the lesson about other gods.

This prophecy even talks about a time, when all the demons leave the land and you no longer have that to deal with. They were still there when Christ came on the scene and He began to cast them out and to clean the landscape.

### **False Prophets**

Verse 3 of chapter 13, "And it shall come to pass, that when any shall still prophesy," (somebody is going to attempt it anyway,) "then his father and his mother that begat him shall say to him, you shall not live; because you are speaking lies in the name of Yahweh: and his father and his mother that begat him shall thrust him through when he prophesies."

They're going to put an end to this type of stuff.

Verse 4, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the prophets shall be ashamed every one of his vision, when he hath prophesied; neither shall they wear a rough garment to deceive: But he shall say, "Oh me a prophet, no! I'm not a prophet, I'm a farmer; my father taught me to keep cattle from my youth." And someone shall say to him, "Well what are those wounds in your hands then?" Then he shall answer, "Oh those. Well, I got in a fight in the house of my friend and was injured."

Now you may not know, it was a practice in some cults back in the old days for the prophets to cut themselves, it was an aid in bringing out about a kind of prophetic ecstasy. If you want to see an example of it, it's when Elijah encountered the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel and their contest was to see who was really God. They danced around that altar and they cut themselves, so the prophets who used to be prophets will pretend they never were and lie to save their lives.

Verse 7: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn my hand upon the little ones."

There is even a little bit of a reflection of this in the death of Jesus, who when he died everyone fled.

"And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts shall be cut off and die; but the third part shall be left, and I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them like silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It's my people: and they will say, Yahweh is my God."

### **The Day of the Lord**

Zechariah Chapter 14: "Behold, the day of the LORD comes, and your spoil shall be divided in the midst of you. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city."

The day of the Lord comes. Generally speaking when you find 'the day of the Lord,' you're looking at the end of history, you're looking at the last days, I mean the last, last days when He uses this expression. And this is one of the prophecies that lead me to fear that there's going to be yet another holocaust, with terrible loss of life for the people who live in Jerusalem.

During the years when Jerusalem was divided in two, I remember in 1964, my wife and I went down on our first visit to the Holy Land, and we had gone all over Jordan looking at the

place, and then finally we were ready to go over to the Jewish part of the city, and you couldn't get anybody to carry your bags, you had to carry your own bags, from the Arab side of the city to the Jewish side of the city. We used to look at that and think, half of the city and wondered if it connected in anyway to what we are reading here?

Verse 3, "Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle."

Now we have come to the crises, when men have fought against Jerusalem, men have destroyed, they have killed and slaughtered; now the Lord's judgment comes. He will fight against those nations like he fought in the day of battle.

"And" {4} "in that day His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there will be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall move toward the north, and half of it will move toward the south."

Does anything come to mind here? Do you recall the last day of Jesus on earth. It's described in the first chapter of the book of Acts and not in the Gospels. He went out to the Mount of Olives with His disciples and while He talked with them, He was taken up and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, two men suddenly stood by them in white apparel, and they said, "You men of Galilee, why are you standing here gazing into heaven, this same Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, He shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go." So apparently, He will return to the same place He left, but when He does return and His feet stand on the Mount of Olives, His power will split the mountain in two and a great valley will open up.

### **Jesus Christ Returns**

Verse 5 of Zechariah 14, "And you shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal: yea, you shall flee, like you fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and Yahweh my God shall come, and all the saints with you."

A Christian reader will recognize this right away. This is the return of Jesus, it says in the Bible, that all the saints will be caught up and meet him in the air (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17) and then He will return to the earth with them. His feet will rest on the Mount of Olives and His power will split it in two.

"And" {6} "it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: {7} But it shall be one day known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."

Now the interesting thing about this, we begin to come to a time that seems to be suggestive of the last verses of Revelation.

Now I have to stop here and talk a little bit about time relative to the prophets. You know, we go through this life experiencing linear time, things happen one after another and time passes at the same rate everyday of our lives. We seem to think that when we get older that time is passing faster, but it's not, just look at your watch. Look at the second hand, it runs just like it always has done. Time is unidirectional, it's constant, it's something we can depend on.

Only in recent years, thanks to our good friend Einstein and a number of other individuals, we learned that time is not a constant, that it varies with speed and that time can speed up and time can slow down. There is no hint that it can run backward but that's another subject for another time. What you need to understand is that Time through the prophets isn't linear, it's really in a lot of ways, more like a dream, you might even say, it's more like a nightmare, because nothing is connected and there is no sequence of events that you can just follow through. The thing is, that in these visions, they see things that sometimes have one event in history and one event in the future. Sometimes you find them that have events in both places and you have to find the time that you're in, by context and by comparison with other scriptures. So here we are at a time way out ahead of us. What happens there?

Looking ahead to that day, Zechariah saw in verse 8 of chapter 14,

"It shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half toward the former sea, and half toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter it shall be."

You look all the way down to the book of Revelation in the end time and you find something similar to this happening, living water going right out from Jerusalem even into the Dead Sea making it live again.

### **Jesus Will King Over All the Earth**

Zechariah 14 verse 9, "And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day there shall be one LORD, and his name one. { 10 } All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem, and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate to the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses."

Everything is going to be different. Now you run into problems when you try to be too literal in your interpretation of these prophecies. They are spoken to a people to whom all these places and all these things were relevant. Yet it seems evident as you read them that they are looking way out into the future and that the actual fulfillment will be different from anything we will be able to imagine, all this is doing is telling us in the terms we might understand what's coming.

"Men" {11} "will dwell in it, and there will be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited."

It's been a long time since that was true.

"And" {12} "this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all those people that have fought against Jerusalem."

Do you remember all those people that assembled up in the valley of Megiddo, at Armageddon, who came marching against Jerusalem?

"Their flesh shall consume away while they stand on their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongues shall consume away in their mouth." Ugly, but effective. {13} "It shall come to pass in that day, that a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; they shall lay hold everyone on the hand of his neighbor and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor."

You know this is one of those remarkable things that God has used throughout history, He turns our enemies against one another and they kill one another.

Verse 14, "And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the nations round about will be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance."

Kind of a shocking thing to even think about isn't it?

"And" {15} "so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be the plague in these tents." This is fascinating.

### **All Nations to Worship Jesus As King of Kings and Keep the Feast of Tabernacles**

Verse 16 of Zechariah 14, "And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. {17} And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain."

Basically that is everybody, and the way he puts it is a little chilling when he says the ones that are left of those nations. Now this is really odd, if you're one of those people, who believe the holy days of the Bible were ended at the cross or that they were only for Jews, you're going to have to think this one through. How is it then that all these people, are going to be rolling up here at this time at the very end of the ages, to keep the Feast of Tabernacles?

I've talked about this at some great length in my book with the title, "The Thread, God's Appointments with History." I might have titled that book, "Everything You Wanted to

Know About the Biblical Holy Days and Didn't Know Exactly What to Ask" You can get it by ordering it from CEM or by ordering it at Amazon.com, "The Thread God's Appointments with History."

Now listen to what he says about this.

Verse 17, "And it shall be that whosoever will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain."

OK, they're all going to have to keep the Feast of Tabernacles or there's going to be sanctions if they don't, this is not voluntary, you have to do it.

"And" {18} "if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, who have no rain; there's going to be the plague, and the LORD will smite the heathen that don't come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles."

It should be clear enough what God is aiming at, everybody is going to worship God the same way and I have no question in my mind that that worship will include the Biblical Festivals, because they are symbolic of Gods plan, every single one of them points to Christ and His ministry and His work and we will learn from them.

Verse 19, "This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that don't come not up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. {20} In that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS TO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar. {21} Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them and cook in them and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts."

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