

# Zechariah 8-9

Bible Study

## Review

### Chapter 7

A delegation was sent **to ask** the priests and prophets: whether the Jews should continue to fast (and mourn) over the burning of Jerusalem and other calamities

These were national fasts called by the people not by God

God gave them **four responses**: in (2) Chapter 7:4 ; 7:8; (2) Chapter 8:1; 8: 18

Each response begins with: “the word of the Lord came to me”

God’s first response: “during those 70 years (of captivity) did you really fast for me—for me?  
(Ch. 7: 4- 5)

God’s second response (Ch. 7: 8-10)

“execute justice, mercy compassion everyone to his brother” ....

“do not oppress the widow, fatherless, poor....plan no evil in your heart against his brother”

v. 11-14 (summary of why they went into Babylonian captivity):

The people would not listen to God...he brought judgment ....and they were scattered

## Chapter 8

Chapter 8 ends the exhortation for Zechariah's day and time (rebuilding of temple and Jerusalem)  
.... and moves to the future

- Ends the first part of the book... (Chapters 9-14 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the book)

Chapter 8 is one of the great prophecies of the **promises** of God....for the **future**

In chapter 7 God **warned** the people of the need to obey...based on learning the lessons of their forefathers who did not obey and went into captivity

Now in chapter 8 God **exhorts** the people to obey from the heart by showing them the promises of the future to motivate them

Verse 1

**“Again** the word of the Lord of Hosts came...”

- The third of God's responses to the people...this time focusing of his promises

Verse 2

**“Zealous** for Zion (Jerusalem) with **great zeal**” .....(notice the repetition)

**“great fervor I am zealous”**

God is serious about what he is saying...he points to the future in the next verse

### Verse 3

Prophecy of the future (Beautiful promises)...why they should obey

(has not been fulfilled yet)...none of these descriptions here:

“I will return to Zion” (Jerusalem)

God (Jesus Christ) **will return** to Jerusalem....

“and  **dwell** in the midst of Jerusalem”

“Jerusalem shall be called the **city of Truth**” (God’s word/God’s way)

Today it is a city under siege

“shall be called the mountain of the Lord...the Holy Mountain”

A mountain in scripture is symbolic of **government**

➤ God’s government will be established there (Micah 4: 1) (Isa. 2:2)

### Verse 4

Description of security and safety for the elderly—long life

(Micah 4:4) “no one shall make them afraid”

### Verse 5

Description of safety and security for the young—abundant offspring

This is a millennial prophecy

### Verse 6

(Paraphrase) “This seems unbelievable to you—a remnant, small, discouraged as you are—but it is no great thing for me”

- Nothing is impossible for God (Mat. 19: 26)—“with God all things are possible”

Points to the future when the returning remnant will scarcely be able to comprehend the miracles taking place (v. 3-5)....

- But nothing is too hard for God

### Verse 7

Millennial blessings (v.3-5) must be preceded by the return and restoration of Israel to the land

Another prophecy of the future:

The remnant **shall return** from the east and **west**

The remnant of Zechariah’s day returned from Babylon, the east....not the west

- Points to the future (Isa. 11: 11)

### Verse 8

(first part) “bring them back” .... “dwell in Jerusalem”

- A physical restoration

“shall be **My people**” .... “I will be their God”

“in truth and righteousness”

- A spiritual restoration (Jer. 31: 31-34)

Verse 9

Moves from future prophecy.... to Zechariah's day

God encourages the people to be strong in finishing the temple building project...

“by the mouth of the prophets”--Through the prophets Haggai and Zechariah

➤ Today we need to be strong in finishing the spiritual temple building work

Verse 10

God reminded them of the state of affairs before they began the temple building project resumed

There was no profit for their labor...no benefit to man or beast

“No peace”—hindrance from the Samaritans and internal strife amongst themselves

(Feinberg) “When God's affairs are not cared for, our own fare badly”

Verse 11

God is ready to bless for obedience

“I will not treat...as in the former days”—when they were punished

Verse 12

Prosperity—vine giving its fruit

“seed” (margin)=seed of peace—times of peace—(partially fulfilled in that time)

God will shower his material blessings upon the remnant:

- Partially fulfilled in Zechariah's day—blessed for building on the temple
  - Greater fulfillment of peace and blessings in the future

Verse 13

Addresses Israel and Judah (middle of verse)

Israel went into captivity (721)—scattered never returned

(Tribe of Judah returned from Babylon...Israel was in a scattered condition following the Assyrian captivity)

God addresses in verse 13 their example to the nations:

Verse 13 (first part)

Their example of disobedience was a “curse”

- Past fulfillment
- Future fulfillment

V. 13 (middle part)

“I will save you... “shall be a blessing”

God will save both Israel and Judah in the future –will be an example to the nations

(last part v. 13) “Do not fear...let your hands be strong”—take heart to God’s sure words of promise

V. 14-17

God addresses Israel’s moral responsibility, to be an example

Verse 14

God reminds them of their father's sins which resulted in judgment  
"your fathers provoked me to wrath"

Verse 15

So now he would bless for their obedience and renewed effort in building the temple and Jerusalem

Verse 16-17

Outline of their moral responsibility as a **model nation**:  
➤ Leads to peace

Verse 16

Speak the truth to your neighbor

Give proper judgment -- truth, justice and peace

this is what God wants to see instead of their national fast days of mourning over the captivity

Verse 17

Love your neighbor instead of thinking evil

False oaths was a sin of that time (Ch. 5: 3-4)

Verse 18

“the word of the Lord of Hosts came to me saying”  
(4<sup>th</sup> response to the people asking about continuing the national fast)

Verse 19

God’s **final word** on these fast days of mourning **the Jews had established** (not God)

4<sup>th</sup> month- for the capture of Jerusalem (they mourned)  
5<sup>th</sup> month-for the destruction of the city and temple (mourned)  
7<sup>th</sup> month-assassination of Gedaliah (a governor) (mourned)  
10<sup>th</sup> month-beginning of the siege of Jerusalem (mourned)

(middle of verse)

At the time of the millennium those fasts will be turned into times of joy and feasting

(The chapter finishes pointing to the millennium)

Verse 19 (last part)

“Therefore” –God instructs: (final point)  
“love truth and peace”...More important than mourning

- the condition that marks joy and feasting

Verse 20

Prophecy of millennium when conversion of the nations takes place....  
“People s shall yet come”

(after Israel has been restored and with the right spiritual condition)  
And now setting the right example

Verse 21

They will willingly leave their cities to go worship God

Verse 22

“Strong nations....many peoples” ....to seek God in Jerusalem  
(Isaiah 2: 3; 60: 3; 66: 23)

Verse 23

Israel will be a model nation...other nations will seek after them

10 men refers to an infinite large number

“shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man”: to follow and share in their blessings

“we have heard that God is with you”—right example now being set

## Chapters 9-14 Background

Chapters 9-14 form the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the book of Zechariah

Chapters 9-14—prophecy predominantly focus of **end time**/return of Christ  
“in that day”—18 times

Many references to the Messiah—both his first and second coming

Probably written in Zechariah’s old age perhaps around 480 BC

480 BC Persia in conflict with Greece....Greece was emerging as a power

It begins with a prophecy of Alexander the Great’s conquest (**330’s**)..... about 150 years later than Zechariah wrote

## Chapter 9

### Verses 1-8

A prophecy of Alexander the Great and his conquest of the eastern Mediterranean coast:

- Syria
- Tyre and Sidon (Phoenicia)
- Philistine cities

In the midst of judgment (v.1-7)...Israel finds deliverance (v.8)

Emphasis on the destruction of **Tyre**  
(Ezekiel 26-28) (Isa. 23)

▪ **Tyre in prophecy is associated with Babylon:** rebellion/false religion/Satan/merchant power

The destruction of Tyre here is a forerunner of the destruction of end time Babylon (Rev. 18)

- When Babylon (Beast power) falls it leads to the return of Jesus Christ (v. 10)

**Alexander's march is a type of Christ judging the nations before he returns**

### Verse 1

“the **burden** of the word of the Lord”

Burden= oracle (margin)...(Expositors)—“lifting up of the voice”

Hadrach and Damascus located in Syria

“(For the **eyes** of men—(all people)...And all the tribes of Israel **Are on the Lord**)”

➤ Future reference...when he judges the nations

Also: Watching as he judges certain people...at the hands of the Greeks (Alexander)

### Verse 2

Hamath bordered Damascus in Syria

### Verse 2 Last part

Now that Syria had been conquered Alexander turns his forces to the cities of Phoenicia:  
Tyre and Sidon

Tyre and Sidon are cities of the ancient Canaanites...The Greeks called them “Phoenicians”

Known anciently for their wisdom...especially Tyre  
Ezekiel 28: 2,4, 12-19 (associated with Satan’s rebellion)

### Verse 3

Explanation of how Tyre displayed her wisdom:

Fortifications—an island fortress (Isa. 23:4)  
and riches—wealth through commerce (Rev. 18: 9-17)

#### Verse 4

Alexander was the instrument God used to bring down mighty Tyre  
The city was a fort in the sea

The Assyrians besieged Tyre unsuccessfully for 5 years  
The Babylonians tried to bring it down for 13 years

Alexander burned it down..."devoured by fire"

- (Rev. 18: 8, 18) Babylon of future to burn

#### Verse 5-6

Philistine cities conquered

##### Verse 5 (first and last part)

Ashkelon had its population wiped out...as  
prophesied

##### Verse 5 (middle part)

Gaza had its king dragged around the back of a  
horse to his death

##### Verse 5 (middle part)

Ekron (located close to Tyre) had hoped that Tyre would hold out against Alexander...but there  
hopes were "dried up" and they fell also

#### Verse 6

Ashdod had its native population replaced

- Alexander had a policy of mingling other peoples in a conquered land

Verse 6 (last part)

“cut off the Philistine pride”—the loss of independence, cities and temples burned

(FYI) The name “Palestine” is derived from “Philistine”

Verse 7 (end time)...moves from judgment to Christ’s return

At the return of Christ—the Philistines will be converted.... “**shall be for our God**”

(v. 7 first part) Judgment of Philistines:

“I will take away the blood”... (idolatrous sacrifices were eaten with the blood)  
“and **abominations** between his teeth”—things sacrificed to idols

➤ Describes removal of idolatrous and unclean practices from Philistines

(middle part v. 7): future conversion

After the cleansing of idolatry and uncleanness the Philistine remnant:  
“shall be for our God”= converted  
And adopted as “leaders in Judah”

“Ekron”= representatives of the cleansed Philistines will be “**like a Jebusite**”

Jebusites were the ancient inhabitants of Jerusalem who were Incorporated into Judah

➤ Describing converted Philistines who become part of Judah

Verse 8

“I will camp around **my house** because of the army...”= God’s protection

“My house has been understood as the temple, Holy land and the people of Israel” (Feinberg)

Verse 8 (middle part)

“because of him who passes by and him who returns”

- “Alexander passed by Jerusalem more than once in his campaigns without harming it”  
(Feinberg)

Verse 8 (last part)

“no more shall an oppressor pass through”

Since Alexander’s time **many nations have oppressed Judah** and their people...so this prophecy refers to after Christ’s return:

“for I have seen with my eyes”—God will closely watch the movements of any oppressor

The prophecy fast forwards from Alexander’s time and Jerusalem’s deliverance...to the time of future deliverance from every oppressor

Focus on the future King who will deliver Israel

Verse 9

(prophecy of Christ’s first coming)...first reason for rejoicing

A prophecy of the Messiah arriving in Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey

Fulfilled a few days before his crucifixion (Mat. 21: 2-7; John 12:12-15)

The **donkey** was the mount of princes and kings (Judges 5:10, 10:14; II Sam. 16: 1-2)

➤ Symbolizes humility and peace

### Verse 10

(prophecy of Christ's 2<sup>nd</sup> coming)...more reason for rejoicing

➤ 2<sup>nd</sup> coming is the focus of the rest of the chapter

He begins his rule by **putting down warfare**

The **chariot of Ephraim** was a characteristic of the army of northern Israel— “I will cut off”

The chariot, the horse (war horse), the battle bow were a great part of the arsenal in ancient warfare—all to “be cut off”

### Verse 10

“Shall **speak peace** to the nations”—(Moffat: “His words make peace for nations”)

Not only will he destroy the weapons...but he will teach peace (Isa. 2: 3-4)

### Verse 10 (last part)

His global dominion of peace in the kingdom

Before he can reign in peace...the nations must be subdued and Israel restored (v. 11-13)

### Verse 11

Deliverance of Israel- “set your prisoners free”

### Verse 11 (first part)

“You”—refers back to v. 9 Zion (Jerusalem)

“blood of the covenant”—Mosaic covenant (Ex. 24: 3-8)

(“All the words which the Lord has said we will do Ex. 24: 3)...obedient heart

### Verse 11 (last part)

“set the prisoners free”... “water less pit”: where prisoners were kept

1. Anciently those who were still in Babylon who had not returned from captivity
2. Future fulfillment of those who return from captivity

### Verse 12

Those returning told to go to Jerusalem where he will be ruling (“stronghold”)

They will be “restored a double” blessing

### Verse 13

The returning exiles fight against their foes...with Greece being named the enemy

Judah and Ephraim (represents Israel)

(last part) “made you like the sword of a mighty man= they will gain victory

“Greece”= (Javan Gen. 10)—his descendents would occupy much of southern Europe...including Rome—

1. could be a connection with Babylon of future
2. Greeks were termed as non-Jews in N. T.---could be Israel warring with gentile armies

### Verse 14

Christ will return in power and glory

(Paraphrase) “The Lord shall lead his people as they fight! His arrows shall fly like lighting; the Lord God shall sound the trumpet call and go out against his enemies like a whirlwind off the desert from the south”

### Verse 15

(first part)

God defends his people...even though they have only “sling stones” for weapons

### Verse 15 (last part)

Describes the victory banquet in celebration of the victory: “drink and roar”

Symbolically they are filled with the blood of the enemy...as the ancient sacrificial basins were filled with blood on the altar

### Verse 16

“In that day” (of the Lord)—will be a day of salvation

“Crown”—often represents that of the high priest  
God’s **obedient** people...Reigning as priests

(Paraphrase) “They shall shine in his land as glittering jewels in a crown”

### Verse 17

The blessings that allow the people to flourish and rejoice are the results of looking only to God “in that day”