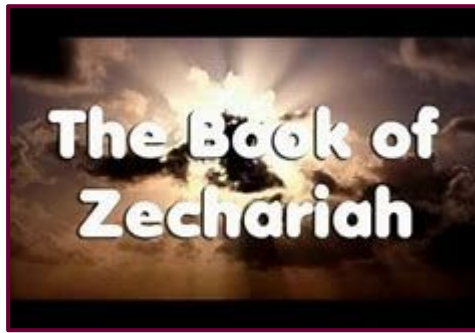


What



Means for Us Today

by Robert Curry

What God Says Will Happen Soon

**"What'd He say? Who'd He say it to?
How soon? What do we need to do?"**

It's in the book of Zechariah.



"Oh great! The most confusing book in the Bible!"

"When I even try to read it, I don't get anything out of those mysterious visions."

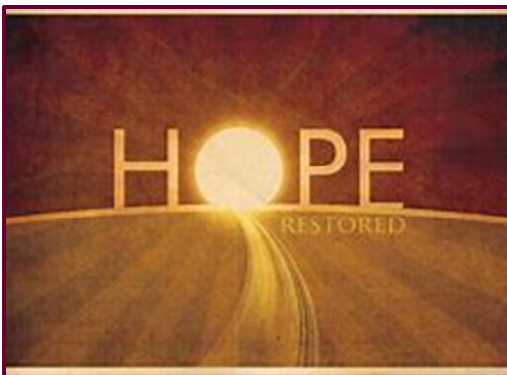
"Isn't he just a minor prophet?"

Zechariah—the 11th of the 12 Minor Prophets, the second of the three Postexilic Prophets---started writing in 520 B.C. just two months after his contemporary Haggai quit. Minor refers to book size, not importance of message. God divulges a lot about what's coming through this prophet/priest, and that time increasingly looks to be just ahead!

For those who think of prophecy as only gloom and more doom, Zechariah is called the

Prophet of hope

That makes him counterpart to Peter in the New Testament, the Apostle of Hope.



“[Zechariah’s] book is filled with references to Christ. Messianic references include ... His second coming (14:4), His glorious reign (9:10, 14), and His establishment of world peace (9:9-10, cf. 3:10). In few Old Testament books do we find such constant attention given to the coming Saviour” (*Bible*

Reader's Companion, introduction to Zechariah).

God sees to it that His servants have names that teach. Zechariah means "YHWH Remembers," his father Berekiah "the Lord blesses," and his grandfather Iddo "*the set time.*" Put together, it's quite a meaning: "the Lord remembers and blesses at

The set time"



"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only" (Matt. 24:36). Is the Father sitting on the edge of His throne, anxiously divining the right moment to pull the trigger? The Bible indicates He knows exactly when and will make it happen then (Isa. 46:9-10).

"But You, O Lord, shall endure forever, and *the remembrance* of Your name to all generations. You will arise and have mercy on Zion; for the time to favor her, yes, *the set time*, has come ... He shall appear in His glory (Psa. 102:12-15).

The Father knows which day will fulfill all the conditions of ending 6,000 years of man's rule under satan, starting a Jubilee year, cutting time short, and making scoffers think Jesus delays His coming. It's "the proper time" (Psa. 75:2). It's "the appointed time" (Dan. 8:19). Yes, God "has appointed

a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained" (Acts 17:31).

We work diligently to hasten that day—the coming of the Lord!

Zechariah opens with a call to repentance, always the first step from where we find ourselves. "Return to me," says the Lord of Hosts, "and I will return to you ... Turn now from your



evil ways and your evil deeds” (Zech. 1:3-4). Even long-time Christians must regularly and continually examine ourselves as to whether we are in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5), especially during these two months leading up to Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread this April 19-26 (1 Cor. 11:28).

“The Lord of Hosts” [YHWH Sabaoth] is the name God uses more than 80 times in the three Postexilic books. The *Septuagint* Greek translation of the Old Testament says “the Almighty.” No argument here because one reason God is the Mightiest is that He directs a host of angels mentioned often in this book who serve as His eyes on earth (Zech. 1:11).

Judah and Israel had gone into captivity because they hadn’t listened to the prophets (vs. 4-6). We’d better pay attention because the 12 Tribes of Israel are going to go into captivity in the End Time, and the time of Jacob’s trouble is going to be the worst that’s ever occurred (Jer. 30:7).



If that doesn't hit home and motivate you, it's because you don't know the whereabouts of the lost Tribes of Israel. This knowledge is a major part of the Key of David which God gave His Philadelphia-era Church of God (Rev. 3:1).

That’s why we must heed a Post-exilic book—so we will be spared or rescued from the exile coming!

Visions

This book is called apocalyptic, not only because of its tie-ins with the book of Revelation, but because of its visions—sometimes counted as eight, but the sixth and seventh seem to be one, making seven [a great Bible number of perfection and completion]. In them God promises to comfort Jerusalem, and they especially apply to the End-time restoration of Israel and the millennial temple by Jesus Christ.

Regarding **the first vision**, “In Revelation 6:4 the red horse ... is associated with a sword, the instrument of war and death ... myrtle trees, which are evergreen, are associated with the Feast of Tabernacles for making booths;

and in Isaiah 41:19 and 55:13 they are included in a description of messianic kingdom blessing.... At the foot of the Mount of Olives are myrtle groves in the lowest part of the Kidron Valley” (*Expositor’s Bible Commentary*). The Messiah’s feet will stand on the Mt. of Olives (Zech. 14:4) and He will war with the Gentile nations who God used to punish His people but they enjoyed themselves a little too much (1:15).



“I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy; My house shall be built in it ... My cities shall again spread out through prosperity; The Lord will again comfort Zion, and will again choose Jerusalem” (vs. 16-17).

Charles Feinberg in *The Minor Prophets* [1952, p. 275] observes that “all eight visions form a unit, and the first is the key to all of them.”

What Zechariah's Visions Reveal Is Coming

Vision two: Animals fight with their horns. In Scripture, horns symbolize power of nations and rulers.



The Hebrew word *zarah* can be translated “scattered” or “scatter” (Zech. 1:19). The four horns seem to be ancient Assyria, Babylon and Rome, which were defeated by "craftsmen," plus the End-time Beast combo of all three, which Jesus Christ as the fourth craftsman will conquer (14:3).

The Master Timer will see to it that "All the horns of the wicked I will also cut off, but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted" (Psa. 75:10).

Vision three: An angel went out to measure Jerusalem, which “shall be inhabited as towns without walls” with Jesus Christ as “a wall of fire all around her [like the pillar of fire] ... and the glory in her midst” (2:4-5).

“Surely it will not be denied that the fulfillment of this prophecy is in millennial times (Hab. 2:14). The theme of the vision is the rebuilding and resettlement of Jerusalem ... the full accomplishment of these words will be the establishment of Jerusalem in the earth as the city of God’s dwelling. Blessed day for Israel and all the earth that will be” (Feinberg, *The Minor Prophets*, p. 280).

God sounds the alarm: “Up, up! Escape, you who dwell with the *daughter* of Babylon” (Zech. 2:7). That’s our day (Rev. 18:4), and we must come out of her! You’re probably thinking, I don’t even know where Babylon is over

there in Mesopotamia so I guess I'm already out of her. The one you have to worry about is the whole "world" system that is growing more ungodly every passing day. You are in that, and we must become godly in the midst of it.

God says "he who touches you touches the apple of His eye"—pokes God in the eye (Zech. 2:8).

"Many nations shall be joined to the Lord *in that day*, and they shall become My people" (v. 11). Zechariah uses that term a lot which refers to the soon-coming Day of the Lord and Jesus Christ establishing His Kingdom on earth.

All people who will live for eternity must become spiritual Israel (Gal. 6:16). Zech. 2:12 is the only place in the Bible using the term "the Holy Land."



Vision 4: The removal of Joshua the High Priest's "filthy" garments pictures how Jesus Christ, our High Priest, will restore Israel to being the priestly nation in the millennium that it was always intended to be (Isa. 61:6). The "Lord" [Christ] calling a rebuke down from the "Lord" [the Father] (Zech. 3:2) will have its ultimate fulfillment when They remove "the Satan" on the Day of Atonement at the start of the Kingdom of God (Rev. 20:1-3). Joshua and Jesus both mean "The Eternal Is Salvation" and Joshua and his companions were "a wondrous sign" of what Jesus---"My Servant the BRANCH"---will come accomplish. The stone (Zech. 3:9) refers to the Messiah. In the millennium Israel will invite neighbors---other nations---to come be blessed (v. 10) under their own vine and fig tree (Mic. 4:4).

Vision 5: God's Word and law allow people to see in the dark like a lamp. The Holy Spirit, symbolized by olive oil for lamps, is the central element in this vision.

"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit"

Zech. 4:6 is the most memorable verse in the book. The Work of God will not be accomplished by human ability but only by the Holy Spirit powering God's people in humble submission.

"How timely this message is for our day with its complex and manifold committees, boards, drives, plans, organizations, contests, budgets, sponsors, rallies, groups, and much more. These can never avail themselves to bring about the accomplishment of the task God has entrusted to us; since it is from first to last a spiritual work, it must be by the omnipotent and unailing and unerring Spirit of God. The arm of flesh fails; He never does" (Feinberg, p. 290).

Zerubbabel's "hands shall also finish it" (v. 9). The ultimate restorer is "the Man whose name is the BRANCH [Jesus Christ!] ... He shall build the temple of the Lord" (6:12). The Church of God is His temple (1 Cor. 6:19). Hopefully you have received the Spirit of God and are His temple! If Zerubbabel is in the first resurrection, he could lead the building of the millennial temple.

The two "sons of fresh oil" (*Green's Literal Translation*) refer to the Two Witnesses (Rev. 11:3-4).



Visions 5 & 6: The woman in the basket is "Wickedness." Until our sins are forgiven and we become a son or daughter of God, you might say we're a basket case!

The scroll is written on both sides like the Ten Commandment tablets (Ex. 32:15), and the two sins mentioned were breaking the Third Commandment by taking God's name in vain (front side) and breaking the Eighth Commandment by stealing (back side). Throughout the Bible God commands that His 10 be obeyed! How are we doing now?

The warning for God's people is that wickedness has no place with God (Isa. 59:2) and will be purged to Babylon.

Vision 7: Four chariots come from between two bronze mountains to deliver judgments on the nations that take Judah and Israel captive---especially Babylon. Christ is coming to accomplish this, and it doesn't look that far away!

"In that day"



God says He "will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples ... a very heavy stone for all peoples" (Zech. 12:2-3). No human with even the best of intentions is going to solve the Middle East problem! The Bible says it's a hard place to deal with.

The Day of the Lord is coming when God will "gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem" (14:2). "In that day" Jesus Christ's "feet will stand on the Mount of Olives" (v. 4) and He "shall be King over all the earth" (v. 9).

Here's where you come in: all the saints are with Him! (v. 5).

"The Lord will save the tents of Judah first ... and defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem" (12:7-8). "In those days ten men from every language of the nations shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man, saying 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you'" (8:23). At last Judah and the other Tribes of Israel will set the example and teach the nations as they were always destined to do!

"And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles" (v. 16). Any nation refusing to go keep the Feast will get no rain!

Why wouldn't we want to worship God now and keep His Holy Days!

How the Book of Zechariah Can Help Us Prepare for the Spring Holy Days

Think of Zechariah and we usually think of his prophecies about “in that day” and the Second Coming. But the *Scofield Study Bible III* says the book’s theme is “advents,” and it also features the Messiah’s First Coming and prophecies about His crucifixion.

So what a surprise to find out that this amazing book can help us prepare for the spring Holy Days.

Entering Jerusalem on a donkey



◆ “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on ... the foal of a donkey” (9:9).

“The donkey was the mount of princes ...and kings” (*Nelson Study Bible*). God had forbidden kings of Israel from stockpiling horses, a

symbol of conquest (Deut. 17:16).

The donkey symbolized humility, meekness and peace, key traits for us to evaluate ourselves before the spring Holy Days (1 Cor. 11:28).

Jesus sent two of His disciples up ahead to find a colt of a donkey tied up that nobody had ever ridden. Maybe you dream of a BMW, this was Christ’s new ride!

Cheering throngs laid out palm branches before His path. This occurred on Nisan 10 to fulfill Exodus 12:3-6—Christ was being selected as the lamb without blemish to become our Passover lamb sacrificed on Wednesday,

Nisan 14 in A.D. 31. So this was really a Palm Sabbath [What?! Satan has deceived the whole world about crucifixion week like he has everything else!] Maybe these were evergreen myrtle branches mentioned in the first vision (1:8) which are associated with the Feast of Tabernacles for making booths and describe Messianic kingdom blessing (Isa. 41:19, 55:13).

Jesus rides into Jerusalem humbly this first time, but the second time He will bind “his donkey to the vine” and tread the winepress (Gen. 49:10-11).

30 pieces of silver



♦ “What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?” Judas asked the chief priests (Matt. 24:16).

Thirty pieces of silver sounds like a lot of money to me! I always figured a purse keeper would be sure to get a good deal. I see no indication Judas or the chief priests were thinking “Oh, Zech. 11:12-13 tells how much to pay!”

In v. 12 the Messiah declares that He’s done being the nation’s shepherd so it’s time for them to pay Him what they owe Him—or just forget about it.

The appropriate pay would have been “their love, their obedience, and their devotion to God and His Shepherd. But it was not to be a matter of compulsion; if they were so minded, they could refrain from any manifestation of their evaluation of His ministry. They were prepared, however, to indicate their estimate of Messiah and His work. They gave Him thirty pieces of silver (money) for His wage. According to Exodus 21:32 *this was the price of a gored slave. A freeman was considered twice that amount. Think of the insult of it!*” (Charles Feinberg, *The Minor Prophets*, p. 328).

God sarcastically applauds it as a “princely price” (v. 13).

“The price was so disgraceful,” Feinberg continues, “that it was to be cast to the potter who busied himself with things of little value. Casting a thing to the potter may have been proverbial for throwing away what was worthless.”

The specifics of Zechariah were fulfilled exactly when the remorseful Judas flung the pieces into the temple. Not wanting to put “blood money” into the temple treasury, the temple priests gave it to a potter to purchase his field (Matt. 27:3-10).

What value are we placing upon our Creator, Savior and Shepherd?

Behold the pierced Shepherd

- ◆ Joshua the High Priest is typical of Jesus the Messiah both by name [Joshua and Jesus both mean “the Eternal is salvation”] and office. In Zech. 6:11 Joshua is introduced with the words “Behold, the Man,” the exact words by which Pontius Pilate introduced the scourged Jesus to the crowd (John 19:5). I don’t think Pilate had read Zechariah for a script of what to say.
- ◆ Zech. 12:10 prophesied “they will look on Me whom they pierced.” Jesus didn’t die of a broken heart; His blood was poured out for us!
- ◆ Zech. 13:7 prophesied “Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.” Our eyes must be on Christ the Head of the Church to experience desired unity.

“Return to Me”

In the Bible such as with Josiah and Hezekiah, Israel returned to God by keeping His Sabbaths and Holy Days. Remember the meaning of Zechariah’s name? “YHWH remembers” wants us to remember God’s Sabbaths! The United States is Manassah which means “forgetful.” We forget God’s plan of salvation is we don’t keep His Holy Days.

Zechariah is concerned with

Restoration of temples

We are God’s temple (1 Cor. 6:19-20, Eph. 2:21, 1 Tim. 3:15). God changed His address from physical buildings to YOU! Do others see God’s presence in you? The Church of God is God’s “latter temple ... greater than the former” (Hag. 2:9). Moses completed the wilderness tabernacle “just so” down to every intricate detail (Exo. 39:43; 40:16). “For who has despised

the day of small things?” asks Zechariah. We must be faithful in little things if we want to be faithful in big things that Zechariah prophesied are coming!

Fast between now and the spring Holy Days

It would be wise to fast to humble ourselves and draw close to God. The fast of the seventh day mentioned in Zechariah 7:5 is one of four traditional ones and not the commanded fast for the Day of Atonement. All other fasts are voluntary, but experience shows that a Christian should fast to prepare for the spring Holy Days if we are really serious about seeking God’s will.

God asks in Zechariah: “Did you really fast for Me—for Me?” Obviously their fast was all for themselves. They were wallowing in self-pity and wanting to make God feel sorry for them. They should have been asking how they could draw closer to God and think the way He does. They should have been asking how to change their sinful ways that brought God’s punishment. We should read Isaiah 58—the fasting chapter—about not trying to make our voice heard on high but choosing a fast God endorses (Isa. 58:6).

“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit”

Zech. 4:6 is the most famous scripture in the book.

The spring Holy Days are all about what Jesus Christ does for us: saves us with unmerited grace and lives in us through His Holy Spirit to sanctify us and help us become like Him!

“How timely this message is for our day with its complex and manifold committees, boards, drives, plans, organizations, contests, budgets, sponsors, rallies, groups, and much more. These can never avail themselves to bring about the accomplishment of the task God has entrusted to us; since it is from first to last a spiritual work, it must be by the omnipotent and unfailing and unerring Spirit of God. The arm of flesh fails; He never does” (Feinberg, p. 290).



The Holy Spirit is the greatest power in existence. We have all we need right now to overcome whatever is corrupting us as God’s temple.

“Up, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with *the daughter* of Babylon” (Zech. 4:7). Babylon is roaring to one-world power and today we must “Come out of her my people” (Rev. 18:4).

Joshua the priest was a type of the entire nation. The Church of God is to be a royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:9).

“The Hebrew word *soim* (‘filthy’) is ‘the strongest expression in the Hebrew language for filth of the most vile and loathsome character’ [*Feinberg*]”—*Expositor’s Bible Commentary*. The Angel of the Lord [Christ] restored his filthy garments to festive ones, just as Christ our Passover and the Bread of Life of the Days of Unleavened Bread should restore our relationship.

Paul said he was chief sinner and each of us should feel that way because our sins alone were enough to require Christ’s death. Each of us killed Jesus Christ!

May this amazing book of Zechariah help us prepare for Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread!



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