

Zechariah Chapter 14

It seems from Scripture that in relation to Israel and the land there will be a restoration, before the second Advent of our Lord. But that restoration will be of very much the same state of things as those which existed at the time of His First Advent. When the threats of God's dealing with them nationally were finally dropped, not to be taken up again "until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled.

Chapter 14 is an amplification of (13:8-9). Prior to Israel's national conversion (seen in chapters 12:10-13:1), the Jews will make a pact with a false messiah known as the foolish shepherd or Antichrist. In the middle of the seven year covenant, Antichrist will break his treaty with Israel and require the worship of him alone (Dan. 9:24-27; Matt. 24:15; 2 Thess. 2:3-4).

When Israel refuses, the armies of the world will gather to do battle. Climaxing in a great siege of Jerusalem and the Battle of Armageddon (Rev. 19:11-16), will come the full restoration of Israel as anticipated (in Hos. 14:4-7, Joel 3:18-21, Amos 9:13-15, Mic. 4:1-3 and Zeph. 3:14-20).

Zechariah 14:1 "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee."

A day of the Lord cometh: (The "Day of the Lord") is a technical term for God's wrath unleashed against sinners. Here, Zechariah is looking at the Day of the Lord when His wrath is unleashed against the whole world of sinners, which results in the establishment of the Lord's millennial reign on earth.

(See note on Isa. 2:12 and introduction to Joel).

"Spoil ... divided in the midst of thee": Jerusalem will be so overcome by the enemy that the spoil will be leisurely divided in the midst of the city, illustrating how completely Jerusalem will be overthrown. This atrocity then triggers the wrath of God against the world in "the Day of the Lord".

Israel's enemies march in triumph through the land and they easily tread down all opposition. And then the enemy in overwhelming force and irresistible fury attacks Jerusalem, which is soon at his mercy.

The city is taken, and the "spoil" or booty leisurely "divided in the midst" of her, without any fear on the part of the enemy of interruption or molestation. This illustrates how completely Jerusalem will be overthrown. This atrocity then triggers the wrath of God against the world in the "Day of the Lord".

Zechariah 14:2 "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."

"I will gather all nations": God Himself will gather the nations, using them to purge, refine, and judge (Rev. 16:13-14, 16). Their presence results in an unprecedented time of national calamity. This is the climax of "the time of Jacob's distress" (Jer. 30:5-7).

As the nations gather against Israel there are many scenes of cruel brutality, lust and horrors, which usually accompany the sack of cities by enraged enemies. In this case, they are only intensified by the accumulated hatred of these confederated hosts against this land and people.

Half of the remaining population in the city is dragged forth into captivity, and there is but a small and wretched remnant left, which probably, in the intention of the enemy, are also devoted to destruction.

Verses 3-4: "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives": To prevent the eradication of His remnant, the Lord will personally intervene to fight against the gathered nations.

Just as He fought for His people in the past, so He will do in the future as the ultimate Warrior-King. Jesus will literally return to the Mt. of Olives, located east of the Kidron Valley, just as the angels announced at His ascension (Acts 1:11).

Zechariah 14:3 "Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle."

"Then shall the Lord go forth": Out of his place in heaven, either in person, or by the display of his power; that is, the Lord Jesus Christ. Whose name is called the Word of God, and is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, described as a mighty warrior (Rev. 19:11).

"And fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle": The Targum adds, "at the Red Sea"; when the Lord fought for Israel against the Egyptians (Exodus 14:25). Afterwards against the Canaanites, when they entered the land of Canaan under Joshua.

Thus Christ shall judge, and make war in righteousness, and overcome those that shall make war with him. And with the sharp sword that goeth out of his mouth shall smite nations, and with a rod of iron rule them, and cause them to tremble with fear (Rev. 14:14; see Ezek. 38:21).

Though it is a day which begins with calamity and judgment to Israel, this will be the day of Jehovah, the day set apart and appointed by Him.

Not only for the display of His majesty and the vindication of the righteousness of His character and way, but it is the day of the manifestation of His Divine might and glory in the destruction of Israel's enemies, and the salvation of His own people.

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The Jewish Targum and many commentators who regard the reference: "as when he fought in the day of battle" as being the conflict between Jehovah and the Egyptians at the Red Sea."

Verses 4-5: The violent topographical changes predicted here will afford a haven of escape for God's people. If the splitting of the mountain will be caused by an "earthquake," it is interesting

to note that a recent geological survey in the area has verified the presence of a prominent fault running “east” to “west” through the southern section of the “Mount of Olives.

Zechariah 14:4 “And his feet shall stand in that day upon 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 shall be] a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.”

“The Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst”: A valley running east and west will be created as the mountain is pulled northward and southward (Mica 1:2-4; Nahum 1:5; Rev. 16:18-19).

Our Lord returned to heaven from “the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:11-12), and He will return precisely to the same location.

When the feet of Jesus touches the Mount of Olives, there will be a tremendous topographical upheaval, perhaps an earthquake. A phenomenon which is not uncommon when God announces His coming in judgment (Mica 1:2-4; Nahum 1:5; Rev. 16:18-21).

This mountain that has been so clearly defined and located in this prophecy is already associated with many events and crises in Israel’s history. It was from this mountain that Ezekiel saw the glory of Jehovah finally taking its departure. (Ezek. 11:23).

It was from this mountain that He, the living personal revelation of the glory of Jehovah, took His departure from the land, after He had been rejected by the nation of Israel.

And it was on the foot of this mountain at the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus shed tears of sorrow over Jerusalem. The mountain which witnessed His agony and bloody sweat as He talked with the Father and asked if “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will” (Matt. 26:39).

It was from this mountain that Jesus ascended and it will be the same place where “Jesus will return in the same manner as he was taken.”

Zechariah 14:5 “And ye shall flee [to] the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, [and] all the saints with thee.”

“Azal”: It is best understood as a place east of Jerusalem, marking the eastern end of the newly created valley. Though exact identification is unknown, it is possibly the Valley of Jehoshaphat or Valley of Decision (Joel 3:12, 14), which will be for judgment of the nations and for the escape of the half who were not captured (verse 2).

“All the saints with thee”: This term could refer to angels, Jewish believers or Gentile Christians together (Rev. 19:14).

This same mountain (in verse 4), shall be split in two from east to west where half of it will move to the north and the other half to the south, thus forming “a very great valley”. This is done by an earthquake similar to the one found in the book of Amos more than two centuries before this prophecy and was still fresh in the minds of the people.

“Ye shall flee” (The Hebrew text reads: into My mountains). The lofty precipitous sides of this newly formed chasm or valley and are being called His mountains, because they were formed by an act of His power.

This may, in a sense be regarded as a parallel to the passage through the Red Sea after it was divided by the power of God. And “the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on the left.”

They flee partly because of the fear of the destroying enemy and the terror inspired by the earthquake, but most of all “for fear of Jehovah and the glory of His majesty, when suddenly and unexpectedly “the Lord my God shall come”, in the person of their long rejected Messiah, “and all the holy ones with thee”.

This means not only the myriads of His holy angels, but His saints, who are also called holy “ones”, and who shall have been caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

Zechariah 14:6-7 “And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] the light shall not be clear, [nor] dark:” “But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, [that] at evening time it shall be light.”

As these Jews are fleeing through this newly created valley, the lights in the world will go out (Isa. 13:9-10; 24:23; Joel 2:10; 3:14-16; Matt. 24:29-30; Rev. 6:12-14), and be replaced by the light of Christ’s glory (Isa. 60:19-20). Only the Lord knows the fullness of the plan for that day when the lights go out and are lit again in the millennial kingdom (Isa. 30:26; Mal. 4:2).

“In that day”, is when Jesus returns to earth the second time with all of His holy ones. That day shall be an extraordinary day beyond the normal course of nature that differs from the natural. This is the day spoken of as “no one knoweth the day nor the hour except the Father.”

Joel 3:15 “The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.”

Isa. 24:23 “Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.”

Isa. 13:9-10 "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." "For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine."

Mark 13:24-26 "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light," "And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken." "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory."

It shall not be day, for the natural sources of light will be withdrawn. But it cannot be like the darkness of night, for there will be the light of the glory of the Lord, and the myriads of His holy angels, and of the glorified saints reflected on the earth.

The blessed issues of the solemn events of “that day,” as set forth in the first seven verses, are described in the verses that follow.

Zechariah 14:8 “And it shall be in that day, [that] living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.”

The highest elevation of the temple mount in Jerusalem is more than 300 feet lower than the Mt. of Olives, but the topographical alterations described (in verses 4, and 10), will allow the spring to flow toward the Dead Sea (east), and the Mediterranean Sea (west) (see notes on Ezek. 47:1-12).

It will not dry up in summer, as most Palestinian streams do, but will flow all year, making the desert “blossom like the crocus” (Isa. 35:1).

Because of the great earthquake spoken of (in verses 4-5), and other convulsions of nature which are immediately to precede and accompany the visible appearing of the Messiah, when His feet shall stand in the day upon the Mount of Olives. Great physical changes will take place in Palestine and the whole land, but particularly the position of Jerusalem will be greatly altered and transformed.

A stream of water flows up from underneath the temple (Joel 3:18), going East to the Jordan, then curving South through the Dead Sea area. Its origin coincides with Christ’s Second Advent arrival on the Mount of Olives, which will trigger a massive earthquake. Thus creating a vast East to West valley running through Jerusalem and allowing for the water flow (see Ezekiel 47:1-12).

The former sea is the Dead Sea which shall then be healed by the streams of fresh or living water which will flow through it. The hinder sea is the Mediterranean Sea. These waters will never run dry as the streams in the south are apt to do now. Neither summer drought shall lessen them nor winter cold bind them, but they shall ceaselessly flow in both summer and winter.

To these perennial waters flowing from the “river of God” (see Psalm 46:4), primarily so called because it is formed as it were, by a direct act of His power.

There are many references in the prophetic Scriptures regarding this.

Isa. 30:25-26 “And there shall be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers [and] streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.” “Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the LORD bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.

Joel speaks of the time when Jehovah shall manifestly dwell in Zion, and “Jerusalem shall be holy,” into which nothing that defileth shall enter, says:

Joel 3:18 And it shall come to pass in that day, [that] the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim.

(In Numbers 25:1), Shittim was the last encampment of the Israelites before crossing the Jordan into Canaan, the barren valley of the Jordan above the Dead Sea. Shittim means acacias, which

grow only in arid regions, and the words of the prophecy imply that even the arid desert shall be fertilized by the waters issuing from this fountain.

The Psalmist beholds in vision: Psalm 46:4: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy [place] of the tabernacles of the most High."

Jerusalem during the millennial period shall emerge from the catastrophe described in the first verses, when the earth shall "be removed", or "changed," and the "mountains shaken into the heart of the seas, and the waters roar and be troubled.

The allusion in all these scriptures, which speak of the river of living waters dividing themselves into streams flowing in different directions, is probably (Genesis 2:10), which reads:

"And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads." Which are: Pison is in the land of Havilah; Gihon is in the land of Ethiopia; Hiddekel is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria and the fourth river is the Euphrates.

Since for beauty and fertility, and as the earthly center of God's dwelling and worship, point to, as it were, to the garden of Eden. There is again the River, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, and flowing thence fertilize other parts of the earth.

Consider for a moment this "river of God". Its source is God Himself.

Isaiah 33:21 "But there the glorious LORD [will be] unto us a place of broad rivers [and] streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby."

And John puts it this way in Revelation.

Rev. 22:1 "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."

Yes, and of the Lamb, for though God is the Source, the Eternal Fountain of this pure Water of Life, the Lamb slain is the channel through which it flows.

As the "living water" is abundant in quantity, so also is the healing life giving of the living waters wonderful. The very desert shall be transformed by them, and the stagnant waters of the Dead Sea healed.

Zechariah 14:9 "And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one."

"There be one Lord ... and his name one" (Rev. 11:15). There will be only one religion in the entire world during the millennial reign of Christ. Ruling with a rod of iron (Rev. 19:15), Christ will have done away with all false religions spawned by Satan.

This will be the ultimate fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant providing a Jewish people, the nation of Israel, and the land given to Abraham; the Davidic Covenant which promised a king from the tribe of Judah and the line of David. And the New Covenant which held out the hope of spiritual redemption for Jew and Gentile.

All of this will be fulfilled in and by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Here is the answer to the “Lord’s Prayer”, “Thy Kingdom Come”. The Lord here is referring to Jehovah. Jehovah shall be King, but according to the united and harmonious testimony of the prophetic scriptures it will be Jehovah in the person of the Messiah.

Jehovah Jesus, Immanuel, He whose feet shall in that day stand on the Mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem on the East, who will thus set up His Kingdom and rule on this earth.

While the holy hill of Zion shall be the seat of His throne, and Palestine, with restored and converted Israel, the center of His blessed rule, “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth”.

All kings shall fall down before Him, all nations shall serve Him, for all the kingdoms of this world shall then become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.

“In that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.” Jehovah will be recognized and acknowledged as the “God of the whole earth,” and the false gods of the nations, to whom even Israel was tempted in former days of apostasy to render worship, shall be “cut off”, and all idols utterly abolished (terminated with prejudice).

Zechariah 14:10 “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 unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and [from] the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.”

“All the land ... turned as a plain”: The term “plain” pictures the Jordan Valley, extending from Mt. Hermon (elevation 9,100 feet), to the Gulf of Arabah.

Here the entire land, from Geba 6 miles to the north to Rimmon in the south, would be leveled to become like the well watered and fertile lowlands of the Jordan Valley (Gen. 13:10), causing Jerusalem to be exalted above like a solitaire diamond on a ring.

Jerusalem, having been rebuilt according to these dimensions, will be exalted in both place and purpose, the prominent royal city containing the temple of God and the throne of Jesus Christ (Ezek. chapters 40 to 48). The locations of these landmarks would be the equivalent of meaning “all Jerusalem, east to west and north to south.”

The area to be transformed is more closely defined, namely, “from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem”.

This entire district “from Geba to Rimmon” is to be changed and become “as the Arabah”. This word, translated “plain” in the American Standard Version bible, is the proper name of the Jordan valley, that remarkable depression which runs from the slopes of Hermon to the Red Sea, known as the deepest depression in the surface of the globe.

The Sea of Galilee situated within it being 652 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, while the Dead Sea, which is also included in its course, is 1316 feet below that level, or the level of the Red Sea.

Parts of this valley were distinguished for their luxurious vegetation, but the reference here is not to its fertility nor to its deep depression, which probably will itself undergo modification in that day of great physical as well as moral upheavals, but to the fact of its being a plain.

The whole hill country specified shall be leveled or become a plain “and she” (meaning Jerusalem), shall be lifted up (or exalted), and shall dwell (or become settled), “in her place.” Literally, upon that which was under her, upon her own rubble or mound, as Jeremiah expresses it.

The prophet Zechariah gives us also, a terse summary of the longer predictions of the former prophets. For already Isaiah and Micah, as well as Ezekiel announced that “it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of Jehovah’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted about the hills.

Here, as in the case of the “living waters” in the 8th verse, the literal fact will at the same time be emblematic of a great spiritual truth.

Zion in the millennial age will be the city of truth, the habitation of righteousness and mountain of holiness, and therefore will be raised conspicuously aloft in the view of all the nations. It will be the source whence the living waters of God’s grace and salvation are to issue in all directions, and therefore every obstacle which might hinder their flow shall be changed and turned into a plain.

It will be the center of God’s governmental rule of the world, and the place to which “all nations shall flow” for instruction and guidance, and therefore it must be lifted high, and approach to it rendered easy.

The second half (of verse 10), concerns the bounds of the restored and enlarged city, which shall thus be “lifted up” and settled down to dwell safely in her own place.

The gates and towers named here cannot with any certainty be identified. Benjamin’s gate is probably the same as “the gate of Ephraim” (mentioned in 2 Kings 14:13), and was in the north wall of the city through which the road to Benjamin, and thence to Ephraim ran.

The first or former gate, which no longer existed in Zechariah’s time is supposed to have been at the north eastern corner, and the “corner gate” at the north western corner.

If these suppositions are correct, this line would describe the whole breadth of the city from east to west, while the town of Hananeel, which stood at the north or north east corner, and the king’s winepresses, which all are agreed were in the king’s gardens south of the city, would indicate the northern and southern boundaries.

The chief importance of these local and topographical details in this great prophecy is the proof which they afford that it must be literally understood, and that it is of Jerusalem and Palestine that the prophet primarily speaks.

Zechariah Chapter 14 Questions

1. The nations are gathered against _____ in this battle.
2. What percentage of the people goes into captivity?
3. Where are the Christians, when this battle takes place?
4. Who fights against those nations?
5. Where do Jesus' feet stand in that day?
6. What happens to the place where His feet rest?
7. What is this, really?
8. What does the author find interesting about this area?
9. What do the seismologists tell us about this fault?
10. Why did God send earthquakes?
11. What will this earthquake do, to make an entrance into Jerusalem for the Lord?
12. Where do the people flee?
13. How many years will the Christians reign with Jesus, on the earth?
14. What will cause it to be neither night, nor day?
15. Who provides the Light?
16. What are the "living waters" speaking of?