



Study Guide

Zechariah

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Chapter 1

Prophecy prepares us so that we can be found faithful when the Kingdom of G-d is established. Revelation 19v10 reveals to us that there is a connection between prophecy and the testimony of Messiah. The more we know about prophecy the more we will live in a way that reflects the testimony, character, and the ways of Messiah Yeshua.

Verse 1: *“In the eighth month in the second year of Darius, the word of the L-rd was to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo, saying:”*

Eighth month: Numbers can, and frequently do, convey information which can greatly help us in arriving at the proper interpretation of a given passage of Scripture. These numbers need to be interpreted based on Scripture alone, and should not be applied to occurrences outside of Scripture. The number 8 has to do with the Kingdom and is also related to Redemption or to that which is new.

Second year: One of the interpretations of the number 2 is two opinions, two divergent views (in this case there is man’s view and G-d’s view). Understanding prophecy helps us to understand G-d’s way and His view more ably.

Zechariah means: ‘The L-rd remembers’. When G-d remembers (primarily the covenant He made with His people) He responds, and His response brings about His Kingdom. This book teaches us what must take place in the last days - prior to the establishment of the Kingdom of G-d.

Verse 2: *“The L-rd was angry with the forefathers, a great anger.”*

The forefathers: We need to remember history – particularly Biblical history. The outcome of this anger was that they went into exile in Babylon for 70 years.

Note: In the days of Zechariah, G-d returned the people back to Judea and Jerusalem with a hope, a future, and a plan, but once again the question was if the people would respond to that plan correctly or make the same error as their forefathers had.

Verse 3: *“And you shall say unto them, ‘Thus says the L-rd of Hosts: ‘Return to Me, declares the L- d of Hosts, and I will return to you, says the L-rd of Hosts.’”*

Return to Me...and I will return to you: This is a promise. If we return/respond to G-d He will respond to us.

L-rd of Hosts: The L-rd of the Armies. It is a prophetic expression that has to do with the power of G-d to bring about His will. Are we a people who live with His will as a reality in our lives?

Verse 4: *“Do not be like your forefathers which called unto them the former prophets saying, ‘Thus says the L-rd of Hosts turn from your evil ways and your evil deeds. But they did not hear, and they did not listen unto Me declares the L-rd.’”*

Forefathers: They paid little attention to the prophets and that brought about great pain, hardship, and disaster.

Former prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel

Evil ways...evil deeds: If we are walking on the wrong pathway we will do evil deeds (i.e. Sin). We need to be on the right pathway so that we can do right deeds (This pathway is only found through the Word of G-d and the guidance of the Holy Spirit).

Hear: Our physical ears are opened to hear the message being spoken.

Listen: Listening with a desire to respond faithfully. Listening in order to obey (Spiritual ears are opened).

Verse 5: *“Your fathers, where are they? The prophets, could they live forever?”*

Fathers: Went into exile and many of them died in Babylon.

Live forever: The prophets, and their prophesying, came to an end. When we fail to respond our lives end in disaster.

Verse 6: *“But my words and my judgments (statutes), which I commanded my servants the prophets, surely they have overtaken your forefathers. They returned and they said, ‘Just as the L-rd of Hosts deemed to do to us according to our ways and our deeds thus He dealt with us.’”*

They have overtaken your forefathers: The words of the prophets were true. The forefathers ignored prophetic truth and they were eventually overcome by it, it happened to them.

They returned: Because of G-d’s faithfulness and mercy, the people returned to the land of Israel, following the 70-year exile that had been prophesied by Jeremiah (Jeremiah 29v10). G-d gave the people another opportunity to respond to Him.

Deemed: Planned. This word has a negative connotation to it. G-d’s plan or desire, from the beginning, was to bless us. However, if we reject the way of the L-rd we are going to encounter judgement (Deuteronomy 30v19-20).

Verse 7: *“On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of King Darius, the word of the L-rd came to Zechariah, son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo:”*

Shebat: (Sh’vat) This is an important month. After the Israelites had wandered for forty years in the wilderness, and were just about to enter the Promised Land, Moses reminded them of all of the L-rd’s commandments (Deuteronomy 1v3). It was in this month that G-d renewed His covenant with His people. This is a reminder to the people that G-d is giving them another opportunity to be faithful.

Verse 8: *“I looked in the night and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees, which are in the marshes, and after him (were) red horses, hissing (horses) and white (horses).”*

In the night: Zechariah had a vision at night

Red horse: Biblically speaking the colour red is synonymous with blood. In this case – bloodshed or war (this prophecy is about a blood-filled transition from this age to the age to come; from this world to the Kingdom of G-d) – see Revelation 6v4.

Myrtle trees: When this tree, or this type of material, is mentioned in the Scripture it is mentioned in the context of a bad situation becoming a good one (Isaiah 41v19, Isaiah 55v13 – a change happens - where thornbushes and briars become useful trees).

Myrtle, in Hebrew, symbolises that change which brings about the fulfilment of the covenant purposes, plans and promises of G-d.

Hissing: This horse makes a shrieking sound. According to the oldest rabbinical commentaries they say it is a word that speaks of fear/death.

White: White, in this context, has to do with conquests (Revelation 6v2).

Horses: These horses are alluded to in Revelation 6 and they represent something that is bad.

Note: There is going to be a change. There is going to be bloodshed and fear, and this is going to give rise to a new leadership – one that is going to conquer and rule (the antichrist).

Verse 9: *“I said, ‘What are these my lord?’ And he said unto me, the angel who spoke to me, ‘I will show you what these are.’”*

Verse 10: *“The man who was standing in the midst of the myrtle tree answered and he said, ‘These are the ones which the L-rd has sent to go to and fro in the world.’”*

Myrtle: Repeated, therefore emphasising that there is going to be a change (See 1v8)

The L-rd has sent: These horses have to do with conquering, bloodshed, famine, and death. G-d is sending these things into the world for one reason - to bring about repentance. We, as people, are very stubborn. G-d knows that oftentimes we will not focus, respond, or listen in regard to what we hear until He gets our attention through hardships and trials.

Verse 11: *“And they answered the angel of the L-rd, who was standing between the myrtle trees, and they said, ‘We go to and from (back and forth) in the world and, behold, all the world is sitting at rest.’”*

Myrtle trees: Mentioned for the third time.

All the world is sitting at rest: These horses represent a change, a conquering, that ultimately will usher in the empire of the antichrist. Even though this antichrist stands for injustice (those things which are unholy and are against G-d's will) the world is at rest/at peace (Daniel 9v27).

Note: When the Israelites came back to the land, after the Babylonian exile, in the time of Zechariah, there was no temple. The people were back in Jerusalem, but they were not worshipping or serving G-d. Things were not as G-d wanted them to be, yet everyone was at peace with that state of affairs – but G-d wanted a change.

Verse 12: *“And the angel of the L-rd answered and he said, ‘O L-rd of Hosts, how long until you have mercy upon Jerusalem and upon the cities of Judah, upon which you poured out your wrath these seventy years?’”*

Note: Israel had gone through a very difficult time for seventy years. The angel of the L-rd is looking at Jerusalem and Judah and he sees that the seventy years have ended but there has been no change in the people of Israel – either physically or spiritually.
Have mercy: The angel is asking G-d how long until He is merciful to the people to bring about a change.

Verse 13: *“And the L-rd answered the angel who was speaking with me. He answered good things and comforting things.”*

Good things and comforting things: These are things which bring about the Kingdom of G-d, as well as the will of G-d. This word “comfort” is related to Messiah – when Yeshua began his earthly ministry he left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum. In Hebrew, the name of this village means ‘home of comfort’.

Verse 14: *“The angel who was speaking to me said to me, ‘Cry out saying, ‘Thus says the L-rd of Hosts, I have been zealous for Jerusalem, and for Zion a great zeal.’”*

Verse 15: *“I am angry with the nations that feel secure. I was only a little angry, but the nations furthered the disaster.”*

The nations furthered the disaster: G-d was a little angry with His people before the exile, but the enemies of Israel took advantage of that anger in order to make the punishment of Israel much worse than it should have been.

Verse 16: *“Therefore, thus says the L-rd, I will return to Jerusalem with mercy. My temple will be built in her (Jerusalem), says the L-rd of Hosts. I will stretch out my measuring line concerning Jerusalem.”*

I will return to Jerusalem: That is not just what took place 2500 years ago, but it is what is going to take place in the future again. Everyone agrees that this prophecy (verse 16 and 17) is not about the days of Zechariah but rather it is about the time of the end.

Measuring line: Ezekiel 40-43, Revelation 11v1-2

Verse 17: *“Continue to cry out and say, ‘Thus says the L-rd of Hosts, again my cities will spread out because of goodness, and the L-rd will comfort again Zion, and He will again choose Jerusalem.’”*

My cities: Those cities in Judea and Samaria are going to spread out, or grow larger, as a sign that the end is near.

Again choose Jerusalem: G-d is not finished with Jerusalem. It is still an extremely significant city. This is the city that Messiah is going to rule and reign from.

Note: The Hebrew Bible ends chapter 1 at verse 17.

Chapter 2

1 Verse 18: *"I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold four horns."*

I lifted up my eyes: This, in Hebrew, is an expression for prayer. In order to understand a vision that he has seen Zechariah prays for G-d to give him more insight.

Four horns: Most scholars teach that these are different empires that were in the world and they all had something in common - they stood in opposition to Israel.

The number four is global and represents the world. These horns symbolise the world standing in opposition to Israel (Revelation 16v14-16).

1 Verse 19: *"And I said to the angel, the one speaking with me, 'What are these?' The angel answered saying, 'These are the horns which scattered Judah Israel and Jerusalem.'"*

Scattered: Made the Israelites strangers to their land, sent them into exile (the Diaspora)

Judah, Israel: Usually in Hebrew it would be written Judah **and** Israel but the 'and' is left out of this text. The reason for this, according to the rabbinical scholars, is to emphasize that Judah and Israel are one, united.

Jerusalem: Jerusalem is mentioned as the source, the base, for the Kingdom of G-d. When Judah and Israel are one we can expect Jerusalem to be established - that is, the Kingdom to come. Before this Kingdom is established G-d must bring His judgment into the world.

1 Verse 20: *"And the L-rd showed me four ploughmen."*

Four ploughmen: They are going to be disruptive and bring about change to the world (those four horns/empires)

1 Verse 21: *"And I said, 'What are these coming to do? And he spoke saying, 'These are the horns which uprooted Judah in order that no man could lift his head. These have come to bring terror upon them and to cast (throw) the horns, who are the nations, who lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter her.'"*

What are these coming to do: His question has changed. When he asked about the four horns he simply asked what they were, but the importance of this question is what they are going to do.

No man could lift his head: This is a Hebrew idiom meaning that these horns brought shame or embarrassment upon Judah by sending her into exile (Psalm 137v4).

These have come: The four ploughmen have come

Bring terror upon them: The four ploughmen bring terror upon those four horns - those kingdoms that were in opposition to the people of Israel, as well as in opposition to the plans and the purposes of G-d.

Lifted up their horn: Another idiom meaning: They acted in a prideful manner. They did things according to their own purposes and plans (what was pleasing to them), instead of following the purposes of G-d.

The land of Judah: In the days of Zechariah, Israel (the northern kingdom) did not exist. Therefore, the emphasis was on the southern kingdom – Judah.

Scatter her: Again, emphasizing that they were uprooted and placed into exile.

2 Verse 1: *“I lifted up my eyes and I looked and behold a man. And in his hand was a rope for measuring.”*

Lifted up my eyes: He was praying again

A rope for measuring: Very similar to what we see in Revelation 11v1-2

Verse 2: *“I said, ‘Behold, where are you going?’ He said to me, ‘To measure Jerusalem -to see what its width is and what its length is.’”*

To measure Jerusalem: New Testament scholars say, about those verses in Revelation, that John measured Jerusalem to assess its spiritual condition. Likewise, the rabbinical scholars, looking at this verse in Zechariah, say this man goes out to check the spiritual condition of Israel.

Verse 3: *“And behold the angel who had spoken to me went out and another angel went out to meet him.”*

Went out: He left

Verse 4: *“And he said to him, “Run and speak to this young man and say to him, ‘The cities of Judea will be without walls, because those who dwell in Jerusalem their number is great - of men and the beasts which are within it.’”*

City...without walls: Most large cities, in ancient history, were strong and were able to become populous, safe, and secure because they all were surrounded by a large wall.

Their number is great: This is understood as G-d's blessing.

The beasts: Many beasts speak of sacrifices, an idiom for worship.

Verse 5: *“‘And I will be to her,’ says the L-rd, ‘A wall of fire around, and for glory I will be in her midst.’”*

I will be to her: G-d is making a promise.

A wall of fire: Large and prosperous cities are very vulnerable, especially if they have no walls. G-d promises His people that He Himself will be a wall of fire around them.

For glory I will be in her midst: Most scholars see this as referring to the future temple that Messiah will rule from. Israel is going to have security in the last days when Messiah returns and establishes His Kingdom. There is going to be worship, and people are going to stream into Jerusalem. There will not be any need for walls because G-d will be her protection.

Verse 6: *“Woe! Woe! Flee from the land of the North,’ declares the L-rd. ‘For as the four winds of heaven I have scattered you abroad,’ says the L-rd.”*

Woe!: This word is double emphasised. It is a word that is used to capture/grab the people’s attention. If anyone fails to respond the outcome is disastrous.

Flee: The word used for fleeing here is an intense word that demonstrates great urgency.

Land of the North... the four winds of heaven: The North (as a location) is emphasised specifically, but they were not only scattered to the North but also to all the places in the world (Four winds of heaven – north, south, east and west).

Note: See Jeremiah 23v5-8 Everyone (Rabbinical, Christian, Liberal, Conservative scholars) understands that the purpose of this prophecy is that in the last days G-d will raise up, for the sake of King David, a righteous branch – the Righteous Messiah – who will be a King that rules with intelligence, justice, and righteousness. Jerusalem will have no need of walls in that day. Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell in safety. Before this Kingdom of righteousness and justice is established there is going to be an exodus of people responding, by leaving the North (possibly Russia) and the places where they have been scattered to, and going back to their own land!

The Exodus out of Egypt is known as the first redemption and it is a pattern for understanding true redemption.

Verse 7: *“Woe, Zion! Flee, those who dwell in the daughter of Babylon.”*

Zion: He is speaking about those who have a Kingdom hope, who believe in the fulfilment of prophetic truth - he wants to capture their attention so that they might respond.

Babylon: Babylon is used symbolically in Revelation (chapter 17) to talk about the last world empire – rooted in sin and blasphemy. An empire that will persecute the children of Israel. We are not to be a part of her (John 17v14-18).

Verse 8: *“For thus says the L-rd of Hosts, after glory, I have been sent to the nations, those who are plundering you – for those who touch you will be like those who touch the pupil of His eye.”*

After glory: G-d wants to manifest His glory in His Kingdom.

Been sent to the nations: This prophecy is going to be made known, or taken, to the nations.

Those who are plundering you: Those who attack Israel and want to lay them bare and empty.

For those who touch you (Israel) will be like those who touch the pupil of His eye: G-d’s warning to the nations in regard to Israel.

Verse 9: *“For behold I will wave my hand upon them and they shall become plunder for their servants, and you shall know that the L-rd of Hosts has sent me.”*

They shall become plunder: At one time Israel was in bondage and being persecuted. A change is going to happen, though, in the end times - those nations who were persecuting Israel are going to be plundered.

You shall know the L-rd of Hosts has sent me: The L-rd used Zechariah to proclaim this message to the nations. Zechariah was rejected by the people in his days. He was murdered, we see this mentioned by Yeshua in Matthew 23v35, in the area of the temple. However, in the last days (when this prophecy comes about) Israel is going to be convicted with the truth that Zechariah was indeed a prophet sent by the L-rd.

Verse 10: *“Shout and be glad, O Daughter of Zion, for behold I am coming, and I will dwell in your midst, declares the L-rd.”*

Daughter of Zion: Has to do with those who have a Kingdom hope, who believe in the promises of G-d.

I am coming: Messiah is going to return!

I will dwell in your midst: Intimacy

Verse 11: *“Many nations will be joined to the L-rd on that day and they shall be to me for a people and I will dwell in your midst and you shall know that the L-rd of Hosts has sent me unto you.”*

Many nations: The remnant of the nations.

On that day: In Hebrew this is a term that speaks of judgment. It is a day when G-d delivers His people and judges the nations.

Verse 12: *“And the L-rd will inherit Judah, His portion upon the Holy Land. He will choose again Jerusalem.”*

The L-rd will inherit Judah: G-d is going to keep covenant with the Jewish people – Judah is the name where we get the word “Jew” from. He is going to renew His covenant with Israel.

The Holy Land: This has always been a term used for the land of Israel. There is still a significance for the Land of Israel today.

Verse 13: *“Be silent and still, all flesh, from before the L-rd. For He has been aroused from His holy habitation.”*

All flesh: Addressed to all people. Each person needs to be quiet, to be still, and understand that G-d is going to bring about the fulfilment of His prophecies to Israel.

Chapter 3

This chapter helps us to recognize who Messiah is by what He has done. He is a Redeemer who deals with sin, so that we might be set free and enter into His Kingdom.

Verse 1: *“He showed me Y’hoshua, the High Priest, standing before the angel of the L-rd and satan standing on his right side to accuse him.”*

Me: Zechariah

Note: There are two types of visions in the Scripture:

1. One type speaks of a literal event that will happen
2. Another type speaks of an image that is seen and written down so that we can learn a spiritual truth from it and how to respond faithfully – identifying the work and purposes of G-d.

Y’hoshua: Yeshua in Hebrew, Joshua in English. This name means ‘salvation’. This word for salvation carries with it two truths:

1. Deliverance from sin
2. and also victory over something.

High Priest: In the Scripture there are two types of priesthood:

1. The Levitical priesthood – from the family of Aaron
2. The Priesthood of the order of Melchizedek (Genesis 14v17-20, Psalm 110v4, Hebrews 6v20 and Hebrews 7)

The term ‘High Priest’ helps us to understand what Messiah is going to do. One of the important truths concerning a High Priest is that he served on behalf of the people. The most important day in the year for a High Priest was Yom HaKippurim or the Day of Atonement (The day for dealing with sin). The High Priest did the work, but the people benefited from it (The High Priest’s work is vicarious). This vision reveals to us that Messiah is going to do the work of salvation, but we are going to be the ones to benefit from it.

The angel of the L-rd: According to the rabbis whenever there is a reference to the angel of the L-rd it gives us a particular context - one of victory and one of salvation. The name Y’hoshua and the presence of this important angel emphasize the same truth.

Satan: There are those who stand in opposition to the things of G-d, and their leader is satan.

His right side: The right side is the preferred location. satan, from a human standpoint, has everything going for him. Powerful, cunning, positioned in the right location to attempt to defeat the work of Messiah.

Accuse: To bring adversity, to afflict.

Verse 2: *“The L-rd spoke to satan, ‘The L-rd will rebuke you satan, the L-rd will rebuke you, the One who chooses Jerusalem. Surely this is an ember which has been saved from fire.”*

Rebuke: This verb is in the future tense. This is repeated twice.

1. When something is repeated in the Scripture it is for the purpose of emphasis. Zechariah is emphasising that G-d is going to act against satan's plan and purposes. satan may have positioned himself in the right position but that is to no avail because G-d will rebuke him.
2. When something is repeated it also confirms it as truth.
3. Messiah has two specific works to do – the work of salvation on His first visit, and then to return a second time for two specific reasons: To bring judgment and thereafter to establish His Kingdom.

Messiah is going to rebuke satan twice. The first time He rebuked him was nearly 2,000 years ago when He did that work of redemption on our behalf, laying down his life upon that tree. satan was there: tempting Him, testing Him, afflicting Him. G-d rebuked him and Yeshua was victorious – the image of His success is seen in the resurrection, a picture of victory over sin and death. Yeshua is going to be just as successful when He returns the second time - to judge this world and to establish His Kingdom.

The One who chooses Jerusalem: G-d identifies Himself as the One who chooses Jerusalem. There is an inherent relationship between Jerusalem and the Kingdom. This is a statement of promise. It is an affirmation that the Kingdom is going to be established.

Ember: There are two words in Hebrew to describe an ember:

1. The one word means an ember that is hot or powerful. It is one that can still be used for warmth or for cooking with. It has a purpose.
2. The second word used for ember has to do with one that is dissolving and will shortly just fizzle out and disappear. This is the ember spoken about in this verse.

Saved from fire: Without receiving, by faith, the work of Messiah (forgiveness of our sins) we are close to flickering out and being extinguished. It is important for us to be saved from the fire or from the judgement of G-d. G-d's final judgement is going to be with fire – 2 Peter 3v7, but Jerusalem, the Kingdom promise, is going to be saved at the last minute.

Verse 3: *“And Y’hoshua was clothed in soiled garments standing before the angel.”*

Clothed: In 3v1 we were told that Y’hoshua was a High Priest. Leviticus 16 deals with the requirements for the High Priest on the Day of Atonement. We read about the regulations concerning his garments in Leviticus 16v4, Leviticus 16v23-24, and Leviticus 16v32.

Soiled garments: In the Scripture we understand that garments are related to works/deeds (Revelation 19v8 and see 3v4 below). Soiled garments are ones that are stained by sin. Messiah, who knew no sin, became sin for us (2 Corinthians 5v21). The garments of Y’hoshua were soiled because of our sins, our transgressions, our iniquity that was placed upon Him. He took our punishment and died in our place – for the outcome of sin is death (Romans 6v23). He mediated to us freedom, redemption, and forgiveness. His vicarious work (He does the work, and we benefit from it) placed our sin upon Him, and placed His righteousness upon us. We were designated for the wrath of G-d (that fire of judgement, that we saw at the end of verse 2) but He “pulls out” that Kingdom promise for us, when it is about ready to go out, and He does so by the work of Messiah - this mediation of redemption to us by the sufficiency of

the work of the High Priest. Messiah took on soiled garments so that we could experience salvation.

Verse 4: *“And he answered, and he said to those who were standing before him, ‘Remove the soiled garments from upon Him.’ And he said to him, ‘See, I will cause to be removed from you your iniquity and clothe you with festival garments.’”*

Soiled garments... your iniquity: Garments are related to deeds.

He...I: There is a change in grammar here. Whenever there is a change of grammar it is significant. The rabbi’s teach that “I” is G-d speaking.

Your iniquity: The reader’s iniquity – you and me.

Clothe you: G-d is going to clothe us (Revelation 19v8)

Festival garments: Festival garments were garments that were used in praising G-d. These garments that will be given to us remove our guilt and the shame of sin (Genesis 3v21). The word used for festival garments is one that refers to a weight/pressure being taken off us. A removal of stress, anxiety, and the pressure of sin in our lives. Freedom from these things allows us to freely praise and worship Him.

Verse 5: *“And I said, ‘Set a pure head covering upon his head.’ And they dressed him in garments, and the angel stood by.”*

Pure head covering: A certain type of crown. A priestly hat (also called a mitre)

They dressed him: This all shows a transition from this age into the establishment of the Kingdom.

Verse 6: *“For the angel of the L-rd he designated Y’hoshua saying,”*

Y’hoshua: This man is a picture of Yeshua, Messiah.

Verse 7: *“thus says the L-rd of Hosts: ‘If in My ways You will walk, and My charges You will keep, You will judge my house and also keep My courtyards. I will give to You the freedom to walk among those who are standing here.’”*

Those who are standing here: The heavenly angels.

Note: This verse is talking about a transition - a transition from what was to what will be.

Verse 8: *“Listen, O Y’hoshua the High Priest, you and your friends - the ones who are sitting before you, for you are men of miracles. Behold I am bringing My servant, the Branch.”*

Men of miracles: It is not simply a miracle, as in a wondrous act, but it is a miracle in the sense of a sign that is going to communicate truth.

These men, that came out of exile in Babylon, are examples that lived 2,500 years ago. They

rebuilt the second temple and established, once again, a kingdom in Jerusalem. This is an example of what is going to happen again in the last days. Messiah is going to return and bring about the outcome of His work of redemption - the establishment of His kingdom.

The Branch: This word appears in several places in the Scripture. It is a term that relates to Messiah (Jeremiah 23v5-6).

There is no question that we are talking about Messiah Yeshua in this passage. He is going to be the one that establishes the Kingdom - just like 2,500 years ago Joshua and his friends once again established the kingdom, for a short time, in Jerusalem.

Verse 9: *“For behold the Stone which I have given before Y’hoshua, upon one stone is seven eyes, behold it is engraved upon by Him,’ declares the L-rd of Hosts. I will remove the iniquity of the world in one day.”*

The Stone: This is Messiah (1 Peter 2v4-8)

Seven eyes: Complete truth. He knows all things.

It is engraved upon: Something is written/engraved on the stone.

Remove the iniquity of the world in one day: This is the work of salvation. In one day (we see this same word in Genesis referring to the first creation, but it is also used now in speaking of the second creation; the Kingdom of G-d), Messiah entered into Jerusalem and was crucified, he died, was buried, and rose again.

Verse 10: *“And on that day’, says the L-rd of Hosts, ‘Each man will call his neighbour from under the fig and under the vine.”*

On that day: This word in Hebrew always relates to Judgement day

Under the fig and under the vine: This is a reference to rest. When G-d judges the world and establishes His Kingdom there will be rest, peace, for those who are partakers of the Kingdom.

Chapter 4

Verse 1: *“The angel who was speaking with me returned, and he woke me up as a man who wakes up from his sleep.”*

He woke me up: For this vision Zechariah was woken up and given a very strong prophecy.

Verse 2: *“And he said to me, ‘What do you see?’ and I said: ‘I looked, and behold a golden menorah all of it. And its basin was above it, and its seven lights upon it and seven pipes to each light which is upon its top.”*

Menorah: A solid gold Lampstand (Exodus 25v31-40). The purpose of the menorah was to manifest the glory of G-d. Its light was symbolically thought of as the glory of G-d.

One of the reasons that G-d supernaturally created Israel (by opening up the womb of an elderly woman who had been barren all of her life) is so that Israel could manifest the glory of G-d - to be a light to the nations (Genesis 12v3, Isaiah 49v6) so that the nations could come into His light and worship Him.

Basin (bowl): The oil would come into the bowl and then would drain, through *the pipes*, into the menorah.

Seven lights: Like a candle - a source of illumination.

Verse 3: *“There were two olive trees over it (over the menorah), one on the right side of the basin and the other on the left side.”*

Two olive trees: The source of the oil. In order for there to be light there has to be oil.

Verse 4: *“I answered, and I said to the angel who was speaking with me saying, ‘What are these my lord?’”*

What are these my lord?: He wants to know what the significance of this vision is, what we are to glean from it.

Verse 5: *“The angel answered, and he said to me, ‘Surely you know what these are?’ And I (Zechariah) said, ‘I do not my lord.’”*

Verse 6: *“He answered, and he said to me saying, ‘This is the word of the L-rd to Zerubbabel saying, ‘Not by strength, not by power but rather by My Spirit says the L-rd of Hosts.’”*

The word of the L-rd: G-d's glory (His light) will never be manifested unless it is done so within the context (framework) of Scripture.

Zerubbabel: He was a man related to the building of the second temple. Zerubbabel (Just like Y'hoshua in chapter 3) personifies Messiah – he is a symbol, an example, of Him.

Not by strength, not by power but rather My Spirit: The prophecy of Zechariah talks about a change that is going to happen. This change will not only affect Israel but the entire world.

It is not going to come about because of human strength or power, but only through redemption by means of the Spirit of G-d (Isaiah 59v20-21)

Verse 7: *“Who are you, O great mountain, before Zerubbabel? (You will become) A plain. He will bring out the chief cornerstone (with) shouts of grace, grace to it.”*

Mountain: In the Scripture the word ‘mountain’, prophetically speaking, is related to a kingdom or an empire (Daniel 2v35, Jeremiah 51v24-26). G-d's plan for Israel is to manifest His glory, but -like a mountain- the world stands in opposition to that. There is going to be a great empire that rises up in the last day which will stand in opposition to the things of G-d and to the person of Messiah. From our vantage point this is going to look like a great mountain, but it is going to be small to Messiah who is going to defeat it and make it as flat as a plain.

Cornerstone: Throughout the Scripture the word used here for stone relates to ‘The rock of our salvation’ – which is a reference to Messiah (2 Samuel 22v2-4, Psalm 62v2, 5-7, Isaiah 28v16-22)
Shouts: Literally means to lift something up in adoration, to extol.

Grace, grace: In chapter 3v2 we see that satan was rebuked twice and now here we see a double grace in relation to Messiah.

Just as the rebukes related to Messiahs first and second coming so to does grace relate to His first and second coming. Grace the first time as relating to the work of salvation, and grace the second time to accomplish the outcome of salvation, which is His Kingdom - established by the grace of G-d.

Grace to it: Grace to Messiah. We see undeniably that there is a relationship between Messiah and the concept of grace.

Verse 8: *“It came about the word of the L-rd to me saying,”*

Verse 9: *“The hands of Zerubbabel will establish this house and his hands will perform (accomplish) that work. And you shall know that the L-rd of Hosts has sent me to you.”*

This house: The temple – a place of worship, where the Holy Spirit dwells. The temple that they are referring to here is not the literal temple that will be in the Millennial Kingdom and nor is it talking about the second temple that was built in the days of Zechariah. The second temple that was built by Zerubbabel confirmed the assurance of the Kingdom that is coming.

Messiah is going to build a temple out of you and me, and His glory will be manifested through us (1 Peter 2v4-10).

You shall know that the L-rd of Hosts has sent me to you: Zechariah was not well received by the people. They did not like what he shared concerning Messiah, the difficult times that the Jewish people were to go through, the fact that G-d was very displeased with them. The people had not changed spiritually after the exile and Zechariah spoke to that over and over. The people simply did not want to hear it.

Verse 10: *“For do not despise the day of small beginnings, but rather rejoice and look at the plumb stone in the hand of Zerubbabel. These are the seven eyes of the L-rd. They go to and from all the earth.”*

Do not despise the day of small things: Often we see G-d moving and accomplishing great things, but they begin in a very small fashion (1 Kings 18v41-46).

Plumb stone: This is used for the purpose of making things straight. Again, the reference to stone should remind us of Messiah. If we are going to be a living temple that manifests G-d’s glory we need to apply the teachings (truth) of Messiah to our lives. They bring order into our lives and enable us to live lives that are ‘straight’ (in alignment) and pleasing to G-d.

Seven eyes of the L-rd: Before the establishment of the Kingdom of G-d we need to see that judgment is going to come first. The standard (plumb stone) is righteousness. G-d’s judgement is performed according to perfect knowledge.

All the earth: G-d's going to judge the entire world.

Verse 11: *“And I answered, and I said unto Him, ‘What are these two olive trees, one on the right and one on the left of the menorah?’”*

Note: John, in the book of Revelation, relied heavily upon the prophecies of Zechariah. In Revelation 11 we see the measuring of Jerusalem -seeing if Jerusalem is straight, assessing its spiritual condition. The conclusion is that Israel, in the last days, are far removed from the purposes and the plans of G-d. G-d is therefore going to send two witnesses (also called the two olive trees -Revelation 11v4), and these two witnesses are going to be very influential in bringing Israel to repentance – preparing her for Redemption. Their task is to prophesy – to give the people the truth, the Word of G-d (the oil).

Verse 12: *“And I answered the second time and said to him, ‘What are these two branches of olive trees which are in the hand of the two pipes of gold, that empty out the golden oil into the menorah?’”*

Verse 13: *“And he said to me saying, ‘Surely you know what these are?’ And I said, ‘No, my lord.’”*

Verse 14: *“And he said, ‘These are the two anointed ones.’”*

The two anointed ones: A reference to those two witnesses (Revelation 11v4) that are going to speak truth in the last days, at a time of great persecution for the Jewish people. At the end, through their message, Israel is going to experience Redemption and be prepared for when Messiah returns to establish His Kingdom.

Chapter 5

This fifth chapter speaks about G-d bringing a curse, that is His judgment, into this world.

Verse 1: *“I returned and lifted up my eyes, and I looked and behold a flying scroll.”*

Scroll: (Torah scroll): Has to do with that which reveals a revelation. The words in a scroll are rolled up, concealed. When the scroll is unrolled there is an uncovering of truth. Something about the nature of G-d is going to be revealed to the people with this vision.

The Torah (Law) has two aspects to it. Life and death, blessing or curse (Deuteronomy 30v11-20) The Torah is G-d's standard for mankind.

Verse 2: *“And he said to me, ‘What do you see?’ and I said, ‘I see a flying scroll whose length is twenty cubits and its width is ten cubits.’”*

Flying: Flying, in Hebrew, has to do with something supernatural. That which is going to be revealed is not something human or man-made. It is something that relates to the Living G-d.

Length is twenty cubits ... width is ten cubits: Rabbinical commentators point out that these measurements relate to the measurements of the door into the inner temple (Holy of Holies). The ark of the covenant was inside the Holy of Holies and in this ark were the two tablets - that had upon them the Ten Commandments, the laws of G-d.

Note: This flying scroll relates to the supernatural Word of G-d that is going to enter into this world in a very unique manner, for a very specific purpose.

Verse 3: *“And he said to me, ‘This is the curse which goes forth over the face of all the earth; for all the ones who steal from this like it will be cleaned. And those who swear by this will be like it – cleansed away.”*

Curse: The word used here relates to a strong curse, an eternal curse - expressed by the judgment of G-d alone. This curse is going to destroy those things that are in opposition to the things of G-d.

The face of all the earth: G-d is going to bring a judgment upon the world because He wants a very specific change - the establishment of His Kingdom.

Cleaned: Removed. G-d is going to move away everything that is contrary to His purpose in establishing His Kingdom.

Swear by this: Take an oath

Note: Two types of sin are mentioned here:

1. Theft (the one who steals) – something that is an act/deed
2. And the one who swears an oath (in the name of the L-rd, in order to deceive or bear false witness) – something that is spoken (or thought).

Verse 4: *“‘I have brought her out,’ said the L-rd of Hosts, ‘And she shall come to the house of the thief and to the house of the one who swore in my name, in falsehood. And it lodged in the midst of his house and finished them, its wood and its stone.’”*

Her: The word curse is written in the feminine.

Lodged: In modern Hebrew, this word is used for a hotel – dwelling there, but not permanently.

Note: This curse is going to come upon all the earth and is going to remove/cleanse away the consequence and the origin/source of sin (both sinful deeds and sinful words).

Finished them, its wood and its stone: It is going to totally remove any effects of sin.

Verse 5: *“The angel who was speaking to me went forth and he said to me, ‘Lift up your eyes please and look at what goes forth – this.’”*

This: This word appears multiple times in the text. It relates to the same thing -to the curse or to judgement. Every time it is used it teaches us about different aspects/things related to that curse.

Verse 6: *“And I said, ‘What is this?’ And he said, ‘This is the ephah which goes forth.’ And he said, ‘This is their eyes which go forth in all the earth.’”*

Ephah: A measurement, a standard. G-d's standards (laws i.e. the Word of G-d) have gone forth through all the world.

Note: Revelation 15v5-8 tells us that the tabernacle of the Testimony was opened – this housed the stone tablets with the Laws written on them.

It is when this tabernacle of Testimony is opened that G-d's judgment/wrath, which is about to follow, is announced. This judgment is based upon the Word of G-d.

Eyes: Have to do with perfect knowledge and understanding. G-d is a righteous judge, and His judgments are based upon truth.

Verse 7: *“Behold a talent of lead was lifted up (goes forth) and this is one woman sitting in the midst of the ephah.”*

A talent: A weight

Lead: When Pharaoh and his armies pursued the Israelites into the Sea, the Sea closed in over them and they sank like lead in the waters (Exodus 15v10). This is the same kind of image being used here. When this term appears in the Scripture it always appears in regard to judgment - someone being brought down. Those who are without Redemption are going to be brought down, defeated, by the curse of G-d.

Woman sitting in the...ephah: There is a coming together between two thoughts - this woman together with the measurement. This curse, spoken of in the Word of G-d, is coming upon this woman.

Woman: In this context this word woman is not a literal woman, but it relates to an empire. In Revelation 17v3-6 we are told that there is a woman who is like a great harlot (spiritual prostitution i.e. idolatry- the worship of other gods rather than the One True G-d), and this woman is going to be judged according to G-d's standards.

Verse 8: *“And he said, ‘This is the wickedness (evil).’ And he cast her into the midst of the ephah, and he cast a lead stone into her mouth.”*

Into the midst of the ephah: Into the midst of G-d's judgments.

Lead stone into her mouth: She is going to be brought down in judgement.

Verse 9: *“I lifted up my eyes and I looked and behold two women were going forth. And the wind was in their wings and to them were wings as the wings of a stork. They lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens.”*

I lifted up my eyes: Zechariah is wanting to understand what has been revealed to him so far, so he begins to pray.

Two women: In the same way that Joshua and Zerubbabel personified Messiah so too do these woman personify Babylon. The purpose of these two women is to bring together what Zechariah experienced in his time (Babylon in our past – which was defeated and judged) as well as what is going to take place in the last days (Babylon of the future – which is also going to be defeated and judged).

A stork: A stork flies very high in the sky. Flying has to do with supernatural empowerment. This is not a normal Empire. The first Babylon was manmade but the second one is going to be of satan.

Lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens: She wants to exalt herself (2 Thessalonians 2v4)

Verse 10: *"I said to the angel who was speaking to me, 'Please, where are they leading the ephah?'"*

Where are they leading (taking) the ephah?: What is the outcome of this?

Verse 11: *"He said to me, 'To build for her a house in the land of Shinar. He will prepare and place her there upon her pedestal.'"*

Land of Shinar: See Genesis 11v1-9 The tower of Babel is where we get the word Babylon from. These people had everything in common (unity, possessions etc) and they brought it all together into a specific location – Shinar. It was here that they wanted to build a city for themselves, for humanity. It was in this place that the L-rd confused their language and took away their ability to do what they planned.

He will prepare and place her there upon her pedestal: In the last days, G-d is going to position this empire on a pedestal. He is going to allow her to be lifted up and there is going to be a very clear choice that each person is going to have to make – Either to choose G-d and His ways or to choose to be a part of this evil, adulterous, idolatrous kingdom. Those who choose this Empire are going to receive exactly what she does – the eternal curse of judgment. Those who choose G-d will dwell in the Kingdom He is going to establish.

Chapter 6

Note: To many of the prophets G-d would reveal an event that was going to be fulfilled in their near future, but the purpose of that prophecy (and then its subsequent fulfillment) was to confirm something that would happen at a later time - usually at the end of the ages.

Verse 1: *"I returned, and I lifted up my eyes and I looked. Behold! Four chariots going forth from between two mountains. And the mountains, mountains of bronze."*

Four: The number four has a global significance.

Chariots: According to the rabbinical scholars a chariot signifies war. There is going to be an abundance of wars throughout the entire world (Matthew 24v6-8).

Two mountains: Two Empires -see Zechariah 4v7. Many scholars interpret this to mean ancient Babylon (which persecuted the Jewish people and, from the perspective of Judaism today, represented the worst time of Jewish history) and we also know from Revelation 17 that 'Babylon the Great' is going to rise up in the last days.

From a new covenant perspective, those who have faith in Messiah Yeshua, see those four

chariots going out and representing something that is going to take place between the two empires - Babylon of old and the future Babylon (the one we read about in the book of Revelation)

Bronze: This type of metal was used primarily for making idols. We are talking about two empires that were involved in idolatry.

Verse 2: *"In the first chariot were red horses, and in the second chariot were black horses."*

Red horses: Bloodshed or war -Revelation 6v4 (which leads to death)

Black horses: Death (which leads to a new conquest - a new world government that rules over the entire world – Revelation 13v1-8)

Verse 3: *"In the third chariot there were white horses, and in the fourth chariot there were strong, spotted (speckled) horses."*

White horses: White, in this context, has to do with conquering or conquest. Revelation 6v2

Speckled horses: Unique horses. These spots/specks are a composite of the horses we have seen – red, black, and white spots.

Strong: This composite of war, death and this new administration/government is going to be very strong.

Verse 4: *"I answered and said to the angel who was speaking with me, 'What are these my lord?'"*

Verse 5: *"And the angel answered and said to me, 'For these are the four winds of the heavens, going forth from having stood before the L-rd of all the earth.'"*

The four winds: Four directions – north, south, east, and west. This has global significance or impact.

Having stood before the L-rd of all the earth: The things that are going to take place (wars, abundance of death, and the establishment of a new government) take place with G-d's permission (Yeshua opens the seals in Revelation 6 and these things are released). This does not mean that these are good things, but they are things that absolutely have to happen in order for His Kingdom to be established (Matthew 24v6 – such things have to happen to get us to the place where G-d wants us to be).

G-d is going to use these chariots and horses, but He is not causing this war, bloodshed, death etc. He is allowing it, and will use it for His purposes.

Verse 6: *"In these four winds were black horses going forth to the land of the North and the white horses going forth after them. The spotted ones went forth to the South."*

Land of the North: There is an emphasis upon the North country (an evil empire that greatly persecutes the Jewish people).

The spotted ones: These include all the types of other horses – bloodshed, death, and conquest.

In Hebrew, talking about north- south or east-west means that one is talking about the entire world. These things are going to go throughout G-d's creation.

Verse 7: *“And the strong horses went forth and requested to walk to and fro in the earth, and he said, ‘Go and walk to and fro in the earth.’ And they went to and fro in the earth.”*

To and fro in the earth: This confirms that we are talking about a world event - that this prophecy has implications for the entire creation. This is repeated to show emphasis.

Verse 8: *“And he yelled and spoke to me saying, ‘Look at that which goes forth to the land of the North. For I will place my Spirit (My anger) in the land of the North.’”*

He: Probably the angel

Land of the North: Jeremiah 23v7-8 We cannot overemphasize the importance and the significance of G-d's plan to bring the people back to the land (Ezekiel 37).

Verse 9: *“It came about the Word of the L-rd to me saying,”*

Verse 10: *‘Take from the exiled (ones) from Heldai, and from Tobijah and from Jedaiah. You shall come on that day, and you shall come to the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah - who came out of Babylon.’”*

Take from the exiled: The people have returned back to the land – G-d uses the events of Zechariah’s day as a picture or a confirmation of what is going to happen in the last days.

Heldai: Means ‘This world’ ...and its perspectives

Tobijah: Means ‘The goodness of G-d’

Jedaiah: Means ‘The righteousness of G-d’

On that day: A reference to G-d's judgment.

Josiah: Comes from the Hebrew root that means despair and hopelessness.

Who came out of Babylon: It is in the plural, so is referring to all of these individuals as having come out of ancient Babylon.

Note: This verse speaks of four men. What these men are going to do is going to have worldwide implications - we are going to see that they bring about the establishment of the kingdom.

Verse 11: *“And you shall take silver and gold and you shall make crowns, and you shall place them on the head of Y’hoshua the son of Jehozadak the high priest.”*

Take: Zechariah was commanded to take from the exiles in verse 10 and we learn in this verse what he had to take from them – silver and gold.

silver and gold: They have two purposes:

1. Good purposes – for the construction of the temple vessels in order to worship the Living G-d (and that is the purpose for them in this passage)

2. Evil Purposes – idolatry – making forbidden statues and images

Crowns: These have a kingly/kingdom purpose.

Y'hoshua: This is the same high priest who we read about in chapter 3. His name means salvation and he personifies a later Yeshua (Jesus of Nazareth) who is going to establish that Kingdom. What took place 2,500 years ago is a confirmation of what is going to take place in the near future when Messiah Yeshua returns and establishes His Kingdom.

Jehozadak: Means 'The righteous L-rd'

High priest: It reminds us of Messiah's work of making atonement. Yeshua has already done this – in His first coming.

Verse 12: *"And you shall say to him (Y'hoshua) saying, 'Thus says the L-rd of Hosts saying, Behold this man, the branch is His name, and under Him will He branch out, and He will build the sanctuary of the L-rd.'"*

This man: Yeshua

The branch: In many places, prophetically (e.g. Jeremiah 23v5-6), Messiah is called the branch - G-d made a covenant with David concerning his son (the sprout) who would be Messiah.

Under Him: Under His authority

Sanctuary: Temple – in New Covenant terms this is the body of Messiah (believers – you and me)

Note: Judaism, by and large, says that building the temple today is irrelevant until Messiah comes. They believe that Messiah is coming to build the temple.

This passage of Scripture, however, is not talking about the physical temple, that will stand in Jerusalem, but a spiritual temple (1 Peter 2v1-5 – Messiah's first work, i.e. High Priest, caused us to be filled with the Holy Spirit so that we might be able to manifest His glory, living stones in a spiritual temple).

Verse 13: *"He will build the house of the L-rd and He will lift up glory and He will sit, and He will rule upon His throne. And there shall be a priest upon His throne and the counsel of peace shall be between them."*

A priest upon His throne: Ezekiel 40 onwards speaks of the Millennial Kingdom. (See Ezekiel 43v6-7) In the days of Messiah there is going to be perfect unity between the priesthood and the King.

Verse 14: *"And the crown shall be for Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen the son of Zephaniah for a memorial in the sanctuary of the L-rd."*

Note: There are two name changes in this verse (see verse 10) The kingdom under the leadership of men brought about despair and hopelessness, because it was all based upon the perspective of the world rather than the perspective of G-d.

Helem: Means 'The dream of G-d'. (His purpose, His vision)

Hen: The name for 'grace'

Note: At the end, through Messiah, there is a change from despair and hopelessness to the grace of G-d, which will bring about the fulfilment of His Kingdom.

A memorial: All these things are to tell us, remind us, of what is going to happen in the last days.

Verse 15: *“And ones from afar will come and they will build the sanctuary of the L-rd. And you shall know that the L-rd of Hosts has sent me unto you. And it will be, if you diligently listen to the voice of the L-rd your G-d.”*

Note: This verse deals with the actual building of the physical temple, the third temple that will be in Jerusalem.

Ones from afar: Those who come out of exile.

Diligently listen: Pay attention to these prophecies if you want to see the fulfilment, and to be part of that Kingdom of peace, justice, and righteousness - where the glory of G-d is manifested.

Chapter 7

Note: A leader should hear from G-d and tell the people what G-d is saying. Sometimes that is not the reality of the situation though. Sometimes it is the people who are listening to G-d and they need to tell the leadership what G-d is saying. That is exactly what we see happening in the seventh chapter of this prophecy.

Verse 1: *“It came about in the fourth year of Darius the king that the Word of the L-rd was to Zechariah, on the fourth day of the ninth month of Kislev.”*

The fourth year of Darius: This is two years after Zechariah first started prophesying. In prophecy we often see the number four appearing and reappearing. The number four relates to the world, and this prophecy (concerning the establishment of the Kingdom) has implications for the entire world.

Ninth: The number nine has to do with work or an event.

Verse 2: *“Bethel sent Sharezer and Regum-Melek and his people to beseech the face of G-d.”*

Bethel was a city not far from Jerusalem. An important vision took place here (Genesis 28v11-22) concerning unity between G-d and man. That is what Jacob's ladder spoke about - the means that G-d would provide for there to be access to the G-d of the heavens. This He did through the work of Messiah (John 1v51).

Sharezer and Regum-Melek: These men are leaders.

Beseech the face of G-d: They went to Jerusalem in order to cry out to the G-d of Israel.

Verse 3: *“Saying to the **priests** which are at the temple of the L-rd of Hosts and to the **prophets** saying, ‘Have I cried (you) in the fifth month having set it aside just as I did these several years?’”*

Fifth month: The Hebrew month of Av. Jerusalem and the temple were both destroyed in this month.

Several years: During those seventy years of exile in Babylon the sages of old instituted a special day of mourning and fasting – the ninth day of Av. They ordered the people to intercede before G-d, asking Him for forgiveness and pleading with Him to re-establish His covenant people back in the land so that they could rebuild the temple - in light of His promise concerning a Kingdom.

Note: The seventy years are now over, and the people are back in the land. However, the leadership are not so concerned about the rebuilding of the temple and nor are they concerned about prophecy being fulfilled.

The people from Bethel are asking the leadership if they should still keep on fasting (in this fifth month) and if they should still intercede to ask G-d to bring about the fulfilment of His promises - what He had said that He would do because the Kingdom had not yet been established.

Verse 4: *“And it came about that the Word of the L-rd of Hosts was to me.”*

Me: Meaning to Zechariah

Verse 5: *“Saying, ‘Speak to all the people of the land and to the priests saying: When you fasted and you lamented on the fifth month and on the seventh month, these seventy years, did you fast for Me?’”*

Speak to all the people: These few men from Bethel took upon themselves to speak to the leadership. This is going to have implications for all the people of the Land of Israel.

Fifth month and on the seventh month: G-d is asking the people if they have fasted and lamented properly – not only on the fifth month (of Av) but also on the seventh month. This fast in the seventh month is not the fast of Yom Kippur but is a fast called Tzom Gedaliah. Gedaliah was the leader/governor of Jerusalem at the start of the Babylonian exile. Jewish individuals rose up against him and put him to death causing great havoc upon the residents of Jerusalem. The sages, because of this act, also instituted (according to the Scriptures) a fast in the seventh month to remember this rebellion against a leader of Jerusalem and all the hardship that came after that.

Fast for Me: Meaning did they fast as unto the L-rd.

Verse 6: *“For you have eaten and you have drunk. Did you eat and did you drink unto Me?”*

Shall eat and you shall drink: This is a Biblical commandment - Deuteronomy 8v10. When we have eaten and are satisfied our response should be to bless G-d. Conversely, when we do not eat or drink our response should be the same – to bless G-d.

Verse 7: *“For surely these things which the L-rd called to all the people, by means of the earlier prophets, during the time when Jerusalem was sitting in peace and security and the cities round about her - also the cities of the Negev, and the places along the Mediterranean coast also dwelt (in tranquillity).”*

Negev: The southern portion of Israel.

Note: G-d was faithful under the leadership of David (and the kings thereafter) to bring security throughout the entire land. They conquered the Philistines and they had peace in the land. The question needs to be asked though: When there was peace in the land, were the people concerned about the fulfilment of G-d’s plan? He gave peace in order to bring righteousness into the land and thereby to bring about, in the end, His Kingdom. Were the people concerned with that? The answer was “no.” They received all of those good things, but they did not use them to fulfil the L-rd’s purposes. They continued to think in their own way, and they fell into idolatry. Zechariah is asking for the people to change, to have a different perspective.

Verse 8: *“It came about the Word of the L-rd to Zechariah saying,”*

Verse 9: *“Thus says the L-rd of Hosts: ‘Justice and truth execute, as well as forgiveness (grace) and mercy - every man to his brother.’”*

Note: G-d has provided safety, security, peace, and resources for the people so that they might be able to live righteously. If they began to live according to the Word of G-d they might become that light to the nations. Unfortunately, the people were not living that way. They were far removed from the things of G-d, and that is what Zechariah was speaking about.

Verse 10: *“And to the widow, the orphan, the stranger, and the one who is poor do not oppress them. The evil a man to his brother do not think of it in your hearts.”*

The widow, the orphan, the stranger, and the one who is poor: We do not exploit and oppress others for our benefit. The way we treat the least of our brethren is really going to be the key in revealing the nature/character of our society. If we do not deal with the least of our brethren according to G-d’s truth (justly, mercifully, lovingly, forgiving them readily) then the Kingdom cannot be established.

Verse 11: *“But they refused to listen, and they gave (to the L-rd) a rebellious shoulder and ears heavy from hearing.”*

Refused to listen: The people were not in darkness during the time of Zechariah. They were not unaware of what G-d expected or required from them. The problem was that they simply rejected G-d’s Word.

Rebellious shoulder: They turned their shoulders from G-d in defiance. This phrase (and its ramifications) appears in the book of Deuteronomy 21v18-21 for an utterly rebellious young man one who will not listen to instruction, one who will not be influenced by discipline, one who is dead set on doing his own will - regardless of any type of feedback or discussion from

anyone else. This is how the people were behaving. This type of rebelliousness leads to judgement and death.

These people have spent seventy years in exile and have just returned. They went through probably the most difficult time of Israel's history, from a spiritual perspective (witnessing the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple being burnt) and G-d had been faithful. He responded, according to His prophetic truth, in bringing the people back to the land after 70 years. He had given them a second opportunity to live in holiness before G-d.

Once again they are receiving all the benefits of G-d - His grace, His mercy, His forgiveness -but they are not extending it to one another. They are still exploiting the goodness of G-d for their own purposes.

Heavy from hearing: They are unwilling to listen.

Verse 12: *“And their hearts they stopped up from hearing the instructions (The Torah) and the things which the L-rd of Hosts sent with His Spirit in the hands of the former prophets. And a great anger (judgement) came about from the L-rd of Hosts.”*

Hearts: Synonymous with thinking (Proverbs 23v7) They are not even willing to give any consideration, any thought, to G-d's perspective or what He wants to share with them. How quickly they forgot G-d's discipline 70 years earlier.

Verse 13: *“And it shall come about that just as I called and they didn't listen, thus they shall call and I shall not listen, says the L-rd of Hosts.”*

Says the L-rd of Hosts: This can be understood as a covenant or a promise from G-d. G-d makes promises of the good things He wants to do, but they are conditional. If we do not respond, listen, or submit then those counter promises are going to come into effect- and that is that G-d is not going to listen and is going to be silent.

Note: After the Babylonian exile the people were back in the land for almost 600 years before they were sent into exile again (An exile that has lasted for nearly 2000years). The people should not have ceased fasting because the Kingdom had not been established.

Today a large majority of people have returned back to the land as a fulfilment of promise, but the exile is even now not over - there is no temple in Jerusalem and Messiah is not ruling from that temple.

Verse 14: *“I will have **all** the nations (Gentiles) rage against them, whom they have not known. The land will become desolate after them, and no one will pass back and forth. They shall make a desirable land a desolation.”*

Rage: The word used here is one used for a hurricane or for a terrible storm. If the people did not learn G-d's message from the first exile G-d was going to take them into exile again, but this exile would be even longer than the first one and the people would be dispersed throughout the nations.

Many think that the Holocaust was the pinnacle of this rage but in actuality the full brunt of this punishment, and the lowest point of Israel's history, is going to be at the end of the age.

Whom they have not known: Israel went into nations that Israel did not even know would be against them in the last days.

Make a desirable land a desolation: G-d fulfilled that beginning with the destruction of the Second Temple. The land changed. Mark Twain went to Israel and he looked, and he said: Why would anyone want this land? It was arid, it was barren but today we see something else taking place - we see (just like Isaiah promised) that the desert would bloom. G-d is showing his faithfulness, but the question is this: Are the people going to respond? G-d is faithful to discipline, but He is also faithful to restore.

Chapter 8

Verse 1: *“It came about the word of the L-rd of Hosts saying:”*

L-rd of Hosts: This was the favourite way for the prophets to refer to G-d - the L-rd of Hosts (armies). It is a term that speaks about His power to judge as well as His power to bring about the fulfilment of His promises. In this chapter this name of G-d is emphasised over and over again.

Verse 2: *“Thus says the L-rd of Hosts: ‘I have been zealous for Zion. With a great zeal and with a great anger I have been zealous for her.’”*

Zealous: The establishment of the Kingdom is going to come about because of G-d's zeal for His Word.

Zion: Zion is another term for Jerusalem – but not a term referring to the Jerusalem of today. It refers to Jerusalem in her redemptive, or final, state.

Great zeal and ... great anger: G-d loves His Kingdom, and the establishment of it upon earth, so much that He is going to be zealous in order to bring it about. There is going to be a great demonstration of His wrath when He brings it about.

Verse 3: *“For thus says the L-rd, ‘I have returned to Zion and I will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called a City of Truth, and the mountain of the L-rd of Hosts is going to be a Holy Mountain.’”*

I have returned to Zion: This is prophetic. G-d is going to return to Zion.

Note: We see an inherent relationship between G-d's presence and the manifestation of His truth. As believers we have received the Gospel message of Messiah Yeshua by faith. Messiah promises that the Holy Spirit then dwells within us. Evidence of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us is that we live according to Scriptural truth. If truth is not dwelling in our lives then it would not be a true statement to say that we love G-d and are in a covenantal relationship with Him.

Mountain: Prophetically speaks of a government/a seat of authority/an empire. G-d is going to cause there to be a *Holy* government.

Note: There is an inherent relationship between truth and holiness.

Verse 4: *“Thus says the L-rd of Hosts, ‘Again elderly people, male and female, will dwell in the streets of Jerusalem. A man leaning upon his staff in his hand from an abundance of days.’”*

Elderly: Old age, Biblically, is seen as a blessing (Exodus 20v12, Ephesians 6v2-3).

Note: G-d is going to establish His kingdom for the purpose of blessing.

Verse 5: *“The streets of that city will be full of young boys and young girls playing in her streets.”*

Young boys and young girls playing in her streets: Children playing in the streets has to do with security. G-d's Kingdom is going to give both blessing and security to people.

Verse 6: *“Thus says the L-rd of Hosts: It will be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days. Also, in My eyes it shall be marvellous says the L-rd of Hosts.”*

The remnant: **Faith** characterizes the remnant of Israel from the rest of Israel. The remnant is going to see the fulfilment of G-d's covenant (His blessings, peace, security etc) and it is going to be wondrous in their eyes.

In My eyes it shall be marvellous: If the Kingdom is magnificent to G-d – from His perspective- just think about how great it is going to be to us.

Verse 7: *“For thus says the L-rd of Hosts, ‘Behold I am saving My people from the land of the East and from the land of the West.’”*

I am saving My people: Unredeemed Israel is going to be redeemed.

Note: When we read about the North/ South or East/West we are talking about the whole world. The land of Israel is key to G-d's prophetic plan to establish His Kingdom.

G-d is going to bring the Jewish people, from all over the world, back to the land of Israel. He is going to take them back for the purpose of salvation - that they might come to faith once they are back in the Land of Israel.

Verse 8: *“I will bring them, and they will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They shall be for Me for a people and I will be for them for G-d, in truth and in righteousness.”*

Jerusalem: The purpose of Jerusalem, first and foremost, is that it is understood as a place of the temple and of worship.

They shall be for Me for a people and I will be for them for G-d: Here we have the definition of redemption.

Truth and righteousness: The outcome/fruit of redemption.

Verse 9: *“For thus says the L-rd of Hosts, ‘Make your hand strong, and the ones hearing in these days these things from the mouth of the prophets which In the day that the Temple of the L-rd of Hosts was founded, the sanctuary to be rebuilt.’”*

Make your hand strong: A Hebrew idiom which means: Do not be discouraged, continue on in the purposes of G-d, be committed.

Hearing in these days: Meaning: Be committed to what the prophets reveal. Do not be discouraged if things are not fulfilled immediately. He is calling the people to have faith.

Sanctuary to be rebuilt: The fulfilment of the second Temple being rebuilt assures us that G-d is going to establish the third temple – the Kingdom temple in the Millennial Kingdom.

Verse 10: *“For thus before those days the wages of man they were not and the wages of an animal they were not. One went out and one came back, there was no peace because of the enemy. I will send every man against his neighbour.”*

Before those days: Before the kingdom.

Wages ... were not: Meaning there was injustice in the land. People made an agreement, but they did not receive the outcome of the agreement as people were not loyal or honest.

One went out and one came back: An idiom for war.

Every man against his neighbour: G-d is going to allow a time of disunity, conflict, division among peoples and nations. This is going to reach its pinnacle right before the end/last days.

Verse 11: *“And now not as the former days but I will bring about a remnant of this people,” says the L-rd of Hosts.”*

Bring about a remnant: There is going to be a remnant that survives.

Verse 12: *“Because of the seed of peace the vine shall give its fruit and the land shall give its produce and also the heavens will give their dew and I will inherit the remnant of this people, all these.”*

All these: G-d is going to fulfil all of His covenant promises -not only to the Jewish people but also to the Gentiles.

Verse 13: *“It shall be just as you were cursed among the Gentiles, O house of Judah and house of Israel, thus I will save you and you shall be blessed. Do not fear but let your hands be strong.”*

Note: In the last days G-d is going to take Israel and make her a blessing to the nations. Even though there is going to be another great time of persecution and hardship He encourages the remnant in her to be faithful and committed, to not be disappointed or discouraged.

Verse 14: *“For thus says the L-rd of Hosts, ‘Just as I had planned for evil for you I brought it about when your forefathers angered me,’ thus says the L-rd of Hosts, ‘And I was not comforted.’”*

Planned: Determined or plotted

Planned for evil: When we disobey G-d instead of receiving His good we will receive the opposite of His will. Evil simply means the opposite of what G-d wants.

I was not comforted: The people were in Egypt for just over 400 years. The present exile has been almost 2000 years.

Verse 15: *“Thus I will return, and I will plan in those days to make good for Jerusalem and the house of Judah: do not fear.”*

In those days: In the time of redemption

Do not fear: Another idiom that means that they must be encouraged and walk faithfully with G-d who will fulfil what He has promised.

Verse 16: *“For these things you are to do: Speak truth every man to his neighbour. Truth and justice and peace execute at your gates.”*

Truth: Truth is the foundation for everything that G-d's going to do.

Gates: Places where judgments were handed out, the courts of today.

Verse 17: *“Every man not the evil of his neighbour should he think in his heart. A false oath do not love. For all these things I hate,’ declares the L-rd.”*

Verse 18: *“It shall be that the word of the L-rd of Hosts was to me,”*

To me: Zechariah

Verse 19: *“Thus says the L-rd of Hosts, ‘The fast of the fourth month, the fast of the fifth month, the fast of the seventh month, and the fast of the tenth month will be to the house of Judah for joy and for gladness and for good appointed times. And the truth and the peace you shall have.’”*

Fast of the fourth month: This commemorates a time when the city of Jerusalem was broken up (Jer 52v6-11)

The fast of the fifth month: Commemorates the destruction of the temple. (Jer 52v12-13)

Fast of the seventh month: Tzom Gedalia – Remembers the murder of the righteous governor – Gedalia (Jer 40v8-, chapter 41)

The fast of the tenth month: Commemorates when the King of Babylon turned against Jerusalem (Ezekiel 24v1-2)

Note: All of these fasts have to do with the Babylonian exile, which was seen as the worst time for the Jewish people. Are we setting aside these Biblical fast days in order to pray and ask G-d for His covenant promises, and Kingdom purposes, to be realized - even in our lifetime?

House of Judah: Judah refers to people who are praising.

Verse 20: *“Thus says the L-rd of Hosts, ‘Then the people shall return, and they shall dwell in many cities.’”*

Verse 21: *“They will go, and they will dwell one with another and they will speak saying, ‘Let us*

intercede before the face of the L-rd, to seek the L-rd of Hosts. I will go, also me.”

Verse 22: *“And many peoples and strong nations will seek the L-rd of Hosts in Jerusalem, they will beseech the face of the L-rd.”*

Note: In the last days G-d is going to restore His covenant to His people, His natural people. They are going to come to faith, and they are going to be used as a great source of evangelism. As a result, many people, and strong nations, are going to go and seek G-d's face.

Verse 23: *“Thus says the L-rd of Hosts, ‘In those days there will be ten people, from all the languages of the nations, and they will grab the corner of the garment of a Jew. And they will say: We will go with you because we have heard G-d is with you.’”*

Ten: Ten is the number that speaks of completion.

Garment: The prayer shawl

We will go with you: In the last days G-d is going to use the Jewish people as a great source of evangelism – bringing many of the Gentiles to faith.

Chapter 9

Verse 1: *“A burden, the Word of the L-rd in the land of Hadrak, and Damascus is its resting place. For to the L-rd is the eye of man and all the tribes of Israel.”*

A burden: There is a change in the way that this section is written. Instead of a dream or a vision Zechariah receives a burden or a heavy weight. A burden is placed on someone in order to bring them down. This burden is not necessarily for their destruction (although it can have that end result) but it brings them down in a way that humbles them and causes them to, hopefully, repent and see from G-d’s perspective.

Land of Hadrak: Most scholars understand that this land is in the northern part of the Middle East - called Syria today. Hadrak is made up of two Hebrew words. The one word means ‘sharp’ and the other word means ‘soft’. Rashi, a famous rabbinical commentator, has linked this word to the two natures of Messiah. He can be very gentle, easy, forgiving, loving etc but He can also be very sharp, judging, destructive etc. The nature we see/experience is dependent on what we do with the truth of G-d.

Damascus: Damascus is a city in Syria.

Resting place: This burden is going to rest there in Damascus. G-d is going to judge the northern part of the Middle East - Syria will be a key location for assembling those nations that will come against Israel in the last days.

For to the L-rd: The purpose of this burden/judgement, that is going to be placed in this location in the Middle East, is that it is going to capture the attention of Israel and all of humanity. This is a call for people to repent and to give heed to the Word of the L-rd.

Verse 2: *“And also Hamath will be in her border, Tyre and Sidon for she is very wise.”*

Hamath: In the foothills of the Golan Heights - between Jordan and Syria today (very close to the Sea of Galilee) G-d is going to bring it into the nation of Israel.

Tyre and Sidon: Two cities in Lebanon

She is very wise: This expression has to do with a call. Are these cities going to be wise and respond properly to G-d? It seems like Sidon does respond wisely as no disaster was prophesied for her.

Verse 3: *“And Tyre will build a stronghold for herself, and she will accumulate silver as dust and finest gold as the pavement of streets.”*

Tyre will build a stronghold for herself: Tyre rebels against G-d. She is going to use her wealth in order to build for herself a shelter from this burden of G-d. She does not want to repent and do what G-d has called her to do.

Verse 4: *“For behold the L-rd will inherit both of them. For He will strike with the sea her power, and she will be devoured with fire.”*

Strike with the sea: The image here is kind of like a tsunami in the way her wealth or power is destroyed – quickly and unexpectedly.

Devoured with fire: G-d is not going to destroy her with water, but He is going to use *fire* in the last days.

Verse 5: *“Ashkelon is going to see and be afraid, Gaza is going to be to be shaken greatly and Ekron will be ashamed from looking. The king will perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon will not be dwelt in.”*

Ashkelon: A city today -along the Mediterranean coast right above Gaza.

Note: G-d brings this judgment/this burden upon these Philistine cities (Israel’s enemies) to call the world to repentance, to take hold of G-dly truth and His perspective.

King will perish: This can mean an individual or it could also be talking about the rule of Gaza. Gaza was the chief Philistine city.

Verse 6: *“A stranger will dwell in Ashdod and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.”*

Stranger: The rabbinical commentators of old say the stranger to this Philistine city is going to be Israel. We see a foretaste of G-d's faithfulness. Today Ashdod is the fifth largest city in Israel, and it is a city that only Jewish people inhabit. This should encourage us that the full fulfillment, in only a matter of time, will be completed.

Philistines: The modern-day Palestinians. G-d is going to cut them off from the land.

Verse 7: *“I (G-d) will remove its blood from its mouth, and its abomination from between its teeth. The ones who remain will be for our G-d. And there will be as a victor in Judah and Ekron as the Jebusites.”*

Blood ... abomination: Idolatry (sacrifices made to idols) is going to be removed/ended.

The ones who remain: There is going to be a remnant of the Palestinians as well as of those other nations which dwelt in the land and engaged in idolatry.

Will be for our G-d: Those who are not cut off (the remnant of these nations) will be transformed and are going to repent.

A victor in Judah: Some say this is a reference to Messiah.

Ekron: This city is probably the most insignificant of the five Philistine cities.

As the Jebusites: The implication of this is that Ekron is going to be like Jerusalem. It is going to be a place where holiness and righteousness dwells.

Verse 8: *“And I will encamp at My house and no army will pass to and fro and there will no longer be an oppressor that passes over to them. For now, I have seen with My eyes.”*

My house: Temple. G-d is going to inhabit His house.

No army will pass to and fro: There is going to be stability.

Oppressor: Tyrant - one who causes affliction or suffering. They will be erased because of the establishment of G-d's Kingdom

I have seen: The book of Exodus talks about G-d being silent for many hundreds of years. After that time G-d saw and then He responded (Exodus 2v25). That is what this passage alludes to.

Verse 9: *“Rejoice greatly O daughter of Zion and shout a loud shout O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold your King He comes to you - righteous and full of salvation. Afflicted and riding on a donkey, even upon the colt, the son of a female donkey.”*

Zion ... Jerusalem: This verse is talking about a Kingdom people who have Kingdom hope because they believe in the coming of Messiah.

Note: We need to understand that there are two images of Messiah and not two Messiahs (two different men) – as Judaism teaches.

We believe that there is one Son of G-d who is fully divine and fully human. He is going to come at two distinct times to complete the work of redemption. The first time He came to earth He made the payment for redemption (that is for the forgiveness of sins), but when He returns the second time it is going to be to establish His Kingdom of righteousness.

Behold your King He comes to you - righteous and full of salvation: This is how they expected Messiah to come.

Afflicted: However, this part of the prophecy also tells us that He was afflicted/poor/humble. The rabbi's interpret this as a different Messiah who is going to come in a very different fashion. Revelation 19v11 shows us Messiah coming on a great white horse and He will (when He returns) but the first time He did not come on that great white horse that people anticipated - He came in a humble manner – riding on the foal of a donkey (Matthew 21v1-11). He entered into Jerusalem in this way for the purpose of being afflicted for us – dying on the cross. This prophecy was fulfilled at Messiah's first coming.

Verse 10: *“And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem and the bow of war shall be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations and His rule shall be from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth.”*

Cut off: Messiah is going to do the work of redemption and He is going to establish a Kingdom without weapons of war.

He will speak peace: The first time Messiah came He simply spoke peace to the nations (Israel included in those nations) - He offered to ALL of us His gospel message (John 3v17-21).

River: The Euphrates River

To the ends of the earth: That gospel is available to all.

Verse 11: *“Also you have this blood of the covenant, I will send for your prisoners from the well that is without water.”*

Blood of the covenant: There is a great benefit to being in a covenant relationship with G-d, through the work of Messiah – it is the most important thing that we need in our lives.

Send for: Provide relief for the prisoners.

The well that is without water: This is what happened to Jeremiah. This was a common punishment – to put people in a hole and just leave them there for an extended period of time. Those who have a covenant relationship with Messiah know that, although they might be persecuted in this world, persecution is going to come to an end (see also John 4v10-14)

Verse 12: *“Return to the strong place O prisoners of hope, also today I will declare this double. I will return to you.”*

The strong place: Most scholars see it a reference to Messiah. He is that place of security, so return to Him.

Prisoners of hope: Because of the hope they have in the promises of G-d, those who are in this state of persecution and suffering are not going to be disappointed.

I will declare this double: We now see an allusion to the work of Messiah when he returns a second time.

Verse 13: *“I will bend for you Judah the bow and I will fill Ephraim with arrows. I will wake up the sons of Zion against the sons of Greece, and make you like a warrior’s sword.”*

Sons of Zion: Those who are Kingdom minded.

Greece: In this time period Greece referred to Europe. Greece is used prophetically as the nation of the Antichrist. It simply tells us that the Antichrist will come out of Europe, out of the West. G-d is going to put the children of Zion (the Kingdom people) against the people of the Antichrist.

Make you like a warrior’s sword: G-d is going to make His Kingdom people strong.

Verse 14: *“And the L-rd shall appear over them, and His arrow will go forth as lightning and the L-rd G-d will sound the shofar and He will go as a tornado in the south wind.”*

Them: Those of faith

Go forth as lightning: See Matthew 24v27. At His second coming Messiah is going to be like lightning.

Shofar: Trumpet

Verse 15: *“The L-rd of Hosts will defend them (us). He will devour and he will consume the rocks of the slingshot. They are going to drink, and they are going to howl, just like someone who is drunk with wine, and be full like those basins that catch blood at the four corners of the altar.”*

Consume the rocks: Those are the weapons of the enemy.

Drink and ...howl: They will taste G-d's judgment.

Blood: Blood is synonymous with judgment.

Verse 16: *“The L-rd their G-d will save them on that day, because they are the flock of His people. For they are like the stones of the crown, and they are going to be made miraculous in His land.”*

His land: Referring to Israel.

Verse 17: *“For how great His goodness and how great His beauty! Grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the young women.”*

Chapter 10

Verse 1: *“Ask from the L-rd rain in the latter time; the L-rd makes lightening and abundant rain He will give to them, to a man grass in His field.”*

Ask: Beseech. If we want to be blessed by G-d we need to approach Him because He is the only source of true blessing.

Rain in the latter time: There are two seasons for rain:

1. There is the rain that falls in the early part of the season - in the fall (autumn).
2. The latter rains, in the springtime, are seen as the best rains as they affect both the first harvest as well as the second. They are seen as a double blessing.

In the Bible, rain is synonymous with blessing and is seen as a good provision from G-d. G-d, by asking us to ask Him for the latter rains, wants to bless us abundantly – with a double portion.

Grass in His field: If G-d is working in our lives, and blessing us, there will be evidence of this.

Verse 2: *“For the teraphim speak injustice and the sorcerers have false visions and dream dreams of emptiness that will not comfort. Therefore, those who follow are like a flock and they will be afflicted, for they do not have a shepherd.”*

Note: Most people instead of beseeching G-d and turning to Him with faith (in obedience seeking His provision) turn to the wrong sources.

Teraphim: Household gods (Genesis 31v30-35) that people thought they could use to predict the future.

Speak injustice (evil): Following them leads to conflict with the purposes and the plans of G-d.

Dreams of emptiness: No matter what vision/dream they have it is all in vain because it is not from G-d.

Those who follow: Those who follow false leaders.

Afflicted: Tortured, suffer greatly. Affliction comes from unrighteous behaviour. Persecution, on the other hand, comes from righteousness.

Shepherd: A leader. G-dly leadership in our lives is very important.

Verse 3: *“Concerning the shepherds I have great (hot) anger, and concerning the goats I will visit (for judgement). The L-rd of Hosts will visit His herd: the house of Judah. He will make them as a horse which has splendour and is equipped for war.”*

The goats: He uses the term ‘goats’ in regard to the leadership. It is not a flattering term and is used as a put-down, a term that shows rejection.

Equipped for war: All the supplies and everything needed to be totally prepared for war and whatever would be encountered in it. G-d, here, promises His people that He will prepare them for the future so that they can fight and be victorious.

Verse 4: *“From Me is the cornerstone, from Me is the tent peg, from Me is the bow for war, from Me will the oppressor go forth together.”*

Note: This verse speaks of a structure being built. Some say this relates to the temple and others say it relates to the Kingdom – either way, both relate to worship. Victory leads us to worship.

Cornerstone: G-d is going to supply the foundation.

The bow for war: When we set out to live in such a way that our lives reflect the Living G-d we can expect persecution/opposition from the enemy. G-d supplies everything we need in order to be victorious over the enemy.

From Me will the oppressor go forth: G-d is going to get rid of our enemies.

Verse 5: *“And they shall be as heroes who tread upon the mud of the streets in war; and they will fight, for the L-rd is with them. The riders of horses will be ashamed.”*

Note: G-d’s people are transformed.

Heroes: The root of this word has to do with power.

Tread upon the mud of the streets: They are going to put the enemy underneath their feet.

With them: With us

The riders of horses will be ashamed: Those who trust in the strength and the power of horses (those things in this physical life), and not in G-d, are going to be put to shame (Psalm 20v7-8).

Verse 6: *“I will make strong the house of Judah and the house of Joseph I will save: and I will return them, I will be merciful to them, and they will be as I never left them. For I am the L-rd their G-d and I will answer them.”*

Strong: Heroes

The house of Joseph: This has to do with the northern tribes. We have an image here of G-d bringing together both the South (Judah) and the North - making one people (see Ezekiel 37).

Note: About 150 years before the destruction of the first temple Israel (that Northern Kingdom, the house of Joseph) went into exile and they have never come back (approximately 2800 years ago). However, G-d is faithful and in the last days He is going to completely reassemble the house of Israel with the house of Judah and make them into one people.

Save: When we talk of salvation the image that should come into our minds is that of redemption. There are two aspects of redemption:

1. The **spiritual** work of redemption that Messiah did upon the cross, in order that we might find forgiveness.
2. With Israel, who for the most part rejected that message, G-d is going to begin his work of redeeming them by bringing them to that same truth of the gospel by first and foremost returning them back to the land. A **physical** redemption.

Merciful: The foundation for redemption is G-d's mercy/grace.

I never left them: Matthew 28v20

I will answer (respond to) them: This is a promise that G-d is making. If we throw out the promises that G-d made to the Jewish people how can we believe the promises He has made to us in Messiah? As the world sees G-d's perfect faithfulness to Israel we can be assured that He will keep all of His promises.

Verse 7: *“And they shall be strong: Ephraim, and He will gladden their hearts as with wine. Their sons will see and be glad, their hearts will rejoice in the L-rd.”*

Ephraim: This helps us to understand that this prophecy has a last days context. Jacob blessed Joseph's two sons (Manasseh and Ephraim) in Genesis 48. As he blessed the sons he made a cross with his arms and the blessing he blessed them with is understood as a blessing of Messiah. The blessing had to do with the covenantal promise that G-d made to Abraham and Isaac (see Genesis 48v15-20)- a covenantal promise of redemption and eternal blessing. Rabbinical scholars say that whenever Ephraim takes centre stage in a passage we need to think of the work of Messiah, and that is Redemption.

Gladden their hearts as with wine: Cause them to have great joy.

Their sons: Reference to the future generation should cause us to think of the Kingdom.

In the L-rd: So often when we talk about the work of Messiah it causes us to be **in** G-d, **in** a covenant relationship. That preposition “in” is related to Redemption. We can only be in the L-rd as a result of Redemption.

Verse 8: *“I will whistle to them and I will gather them for I have redeemed them, and they will be abundant as they were in the past abundant.”*

Them: Judah and Ephraim (or Joseph, or Israel) G-d is going to bring the two nations (Israel and Judah) together.

Redeemed: The word used here is the word used for the work of redemption - which is the kingdom. He changes the language to emphasize the work of redemption that Messiah did on the cross.

Abundant: The scholars say this abundance/greatness is a reference to the abundance of land that Israel had under the leadership of David. Under the leadership of David, Israel expanded its borders far and wide – conquering all the promised land for a brief period of time.

Verse 9: *“For I have planted them in the nations, in great distant places but there they shall remember me, and their sons shall live and shall return.”*

Sons: The next generation should always make us think about the Kingdom.

Their sons shall live and shall return: It is that Kingdom generation that is going to return to the land.

Verse 10: *“I shall bring them back from the land of Egypt and from the land of Assyria. I will gather them to the land of Gilead and to Lebanon I will bring them. They will not find enough places for them.”*

Bring them back: A word is used that is also related to repentance. G-d is going to bring them back and He is also going to bring them to repentance. Over and over in the Scripture we see that the Jewish people returning back to the land is foundational for the final redemption - that is, for the Kingdom to be established.

Egypt: In the South

Assyria: In the North

Note: When North and South are spoken of together it sets the context of the verse within global parameters (Speaking of East and West also has implications for the whole world).

Gilead: In Jordan

They will not find enough places for them: A hint concerning Israel spreading out to all the promised land that God promised them when He established that covenant with Abraham (from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates river in Babylon– Genesis 15v18-21)

Verse 11: *“For they shall pass a turbulent sea, but He will strike the waves of that sea. And He will dry up all the deep waters of the river and bring down the leader of Assyria and the staff of Egypt He will remove.”*

Note: G-d is going to remove any obstacles preventing His people from returning back to the land. G-d is going to deal with the enemies of Israel – He is going to bring them down.

The leader: The government

Verse 12: *“I will strengthen them in the L-rd and in His name they will walk declares the L-rd.”*

Strengthen them: Make them heroes/leaders who manifest the glory of the L-rd.

In the L-rd: In the L-rd only relates to a redemptive relationship with G-d through Messiah Yeshua.

in His name: In/with His same character

They will walk: An idiom meaning that they will live/behave in that way.

Declares the L-rd: This expression, according to the sages of old, usually relates to a promise. G-d has promised to keep covenant and He is going to make Israel what He called Israel to be. They are going to live in His character and the Kingdom of G-d will be established at that time.

Chapter 11

Note: This chapter is not talking about the days of Zechariah but about the days of Messiah, the son of Joseph. It is a chapter that speaks of judgement.

Verse 1: *“Open your doors O Lebanon for fire shall consume your cedars.”*

Open your doors: This is an expression telling them to get ready for judgment.

Cedars: The cedar tree was a tree especially connected with Lebanon. Even today trees in general are very important to this country and the cedar was their most famous tree. The cedars were the pride and glory of Lebanon.

Verse 2: *“Lament O fir tree for the cedar has fallen. Those who are strong have been plundered. Lament O trees of Bashan, for the strong forest has fallen.”*

Fir tree: The fir tree was also an important tree but second in significance to the cedar. Many scholars see these trees as a reference to the leadership of Lebanon.

The cedar has fallen: If the number one tree has fallen it is just a matter of time before the other trees of less significance will also fall. If the strongest is no more it is a great object of fear and lamentation for the second one.

Strong: Important or glorious.

Plundered: Robbed, everything has been stripped away from them.

Bashan: This is in the northern part of Israel by the Golan Heights. In the Old Testament it was proverbial for its rich pastures and thick forests.

Note: There is a judgment upon the trees, the strength, of this location.

Verse 3: *“The voice of lamentation upon the shepherds for their strong ones have been plundered; the sound of the roaring of young lions for the intelligent one (government) of Jordan has been plundered.”*

Shepherds: Often in Scripture the term ‘shepherd’ refers to a leader. This verse is speaking about the leaders of Jordan.

Young lions: The ones who should have been the best able to defend themselves are lamenting and crying out because of the judgment of G-d.

Note: Jordan and Lebanon receive the judgment of G-d. Rabbinical commentators say that the reason for this judgment upon these two places is because of how they afflicted Israel. Lebanon and Jordan were not living under the truths of G-d and whenever a Jew or Gentile is not living in obedience to G-d (according to His Word) they are going to reap judgment.

Verse 4: *“Thus says the L-rd my G-d, ‘Shepherd the flock that are perishing (or the ones that are being slaughtered).’”*

Note: This verse speaks of Israel in a very general manner and shows judgment also coming upon Israel. The reason for this is because the leadership is not tending to the people. They are not feeding the flock. In other words, they are not learning/teaching the truths of G-d.

My G-d: This prophecy is addressed to those who have a relationship with the G-d of Israel and who are concerned about G-d's purposes and plans and who are wanting to be a part of them.

Flock: The people

Perishing: The people are suffering greatly because of improper leadership.

Verse 5: *“Those who buy them will kill them, and they say they are not guilty. Their sellers will say, ‘We are blessed of the L-rd for we are wealthy’; and their shepherds will not have any pity for them (the sheep).”*

Will kill them: The ones who are purchasing the Jewish people put them to death.

Their sellers: The leadership are not tending to the people but are behaving as wicked shepherds. Instead of caring for their flock they are selling them for the slaughter and they wrongly think that G-d is with them because they have become wealthy – which they see as a sign of blessing.

Verse 6: *“‘For I will not have mercy (pity) any longer upon the dwellers of the land,’ says the L-rd, ‘For behold I will turn over every man to his neighbour and into the hand of his king and they shall crush them and I will not save them out of the enemies hands.’”*

Note: When G-d's leadership are not behaving properly there is going to be a consequence.

Turn over every man: There is going to be conflict among the people and conflict among the leadership.

I will not save: Oftentimes, prophetically speaking, when G-d says that He is going to allow hardship and problems for His people it is very temporary, and G-d moves to heal that situation.

Verse 7: *“And I will Shepherd the flock that is being slaughtered. Therefore, **afflicted** ones of my flock, I will take for Myself two sticks. On one I have written: ‘Pleasant’ and on the other ‘Bandits’. I will tend to the flock.”*

I will Shepherd the flock: G-d promises to look after His flock (Ezekiel 34)

Afflicted: Matthew 5v3. He is speaking to those individuals who are grieved about the spiritual and physical situation of the people of Israel.

Two sticks: G-d makes a distinction between two types of people (Like when Yeshua made a distinction between the sheep and the goats – Matthew 25v31-46).

Pleasant: It is speaking about those who are appropriate before G-d i.e. those who want to serve Him, walk with Him, worship Him.

Bandits: This has to do with those who are practicing terrorism.

Verse 8: *“I will cut off three shepherds in one month. My soul is fed up with them and also their soul is sick of Me.”*

Cut off three shepherds: These three shepherds (leaders) could be a reference to the end of the Second Temple period, shortly before the destruction of the temple in 70 AD. The leadership then among Israel were the priests, the elders, and the Sanhedrin.

Their soul is sick of Me: This leadership were sick of the truths of G-d.

Verse 9: *“And I said, ‘I will not shepherd you. The one who is dying let die, the one who is being cut off let him be cut off, and the ones who remain shall be devoured, as a woman (devours) the flesh of her husband.”*

I will not shepherd you: Because of the spiritual condition and rebellion of Israel G-d takes His hands off so that Israel can realise how far she really is from G-d and realise her need for repentance.

Woman (devours) the flesh of her husband: Everything is going to be turned upside down and society is going to be in a mess. Relationships are going to be severely affected and out of order.

Verse 10: *“I will take that stick that says “Pleasant” and I'm going to cut it down. For I will make void my covenant which I have cut with all the peoples.”*

Cut it down: This word literally means to make a stump. The use of this term should give us hope, because we are told that from the stump of Jesse (the house of David) comes forth a twig/new life – which is Messiah (Isaiah 11v1)

I will make void my covenant: He is talking about the covenant that He made with Israel, but we need to understand that when the covenant to Israel is affected so is the covenant to the nations/all people. In Genesis 12v3 the covenant that G-d made with Israel is inextricably tied to the nations. When Israel is affected so are all the nations of the world.

Verse 11: *“On that day I am going to make void (that covenant) and they, the afflicted ones of the flock, shall know thusly; the ones who guard me - for the Word of the L-rd is this.”*

On that day: A term of judgment. G-d was going to take Israel all the way down for the purpose of bringing them back up.

The afflicted ones: (see verse 7). G-d allowed Israel to go through a horrible time of suffering (The Roman exile that began in 70 AD, with the destruction of the second temple, and still

continues today) yet throughout those generations G-d spoke to the afflicted ones of the flock telling them that this was taking place and revealing to them what He was doing and why He was doing it.

The ones who guard me: The afflicted ones of the flock are those who guard/keep the Word of the L-rd. Those who understand the Word of G-d are going to perceive why G-d is doing this.

Verse 12: *“I will say unto them, ‘If it is good in your eyes then come and pay my wage. But if not, keep it.’ So, they weighed out my wage: thirty pieces of silver.”*

Note: We usually think of this verse in regard to Judas who betrayed Messiah Yeshua for thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26v14-15 and Matthew 27v3-5). The children of Israel went into exile because they rejected Messiah Yeshua.

Them: To the leadership of Israel

Good in your eyes: An idiom that means there was/is a need to make a decision.

If not, keep it: If they are going to do it they must do, but if not then they must stand aside. The leadership was corrupt so they either needed to step aside to let Messiah bring about a change/transformation or they had to pay the price for Him.

Thirty: The number thirty is very important in Judaism. 30 days is a period of mourning. The price relates to Messiah for His death.

Verse 13: *“And the L-rd said unto me, ‘Pass into the treasury (the price of) the precious great one which I was valued by them.’ And I took the thirty pieces of silver and I cast it into the house of the L-rd into the treasury.”*

The precious great one: An idiom that is a reference to Messiah.

I was valued by them: This was the price that they placed upon Messiah, what they esteemed Him to be worth.

I cast it: Judas concluded that his action had been wrong (Matthew 27v3-10)

Verse 14: *“And I will cut that second piece of wood called “Bandits” and I will make an end to the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.”*

Cut: Make a stump (see verse 10)

Bandits: The context is the rejection of Messiah. The leadership were not willing to give way to G-d's purposes and plans. They rebelled and did not want to submit to G-d's purposes and plans and they rejected Messiah and the outcome of that rejection was exile.

End to the brotherhood between Judah and Israel: When a house is divided it cannot stand (Mark 3v24-25)

Verse 15: *“And the L-rd said to me, ‘Again take that vessel (instrument) of a foolish leader.”*

A foolish leader: Foolish leaders have been over the Jewish people from the time of the destruction of the second temple up until today. They are leaders who are not listening to G-d

but are instead concerned with and listen to what the nations have to say. G-d's will is not for Israel/His people to be subjugated to the nations.

Verse 16: *"For behold I am establishing (raising up) a shepherd (leader) in the land. Those who are cut off he will not visit, the young he will not seek out, the broken ones he will not heal, the ones standing up for assistance he will not sustain, but the flesh of the healthy he will eat and their hooves he will break."*

Note: He is a leader who only thinks of himself. Ultimately this will be the final antichrist -the unrighteous leadership that will be afflicting the Jewish people in the last days.

Verse 17: *"Woe to that idolatrous (foolish) shepherd who leaves his flock. A sword will be on his arm and upon his right eye. His arm is going to wither up and his eyes will not see."*

Leaves his flock: He does not do his job.

His arm is going to wither up and his eyes will not see: He is going to suffer the judgment of G-d.

Note: This is an important chapter that speaks to the judgment of G-d - first upon the nations and secondly upon Israel. This judgement brings Israel to repentance that they might not trust in the leadership of man but would repent and turn and embrace the truths of G-d and in doing so be made ready for the coming of Messiah Yeshua.

Chapter 12

Verse 1: *"The burden of the Word of the L-rd concerning Israel declares the L-rd. He stretches forth the heavens and He establishes the earth, and He forms the spirit of man in His midst."*

Concerning Israel: There is going to be a burden upon the land of Israel as well as upon the people.

Stretches forth the heavens and He establishes the earth: This is talking of a new creation, which is understood in Judaism as G-d's work of redemption. The establishment of the Kingdom of G-d follows this redemption.

Verse 2: *"Behold I am making Jerusalem a cup of poison for all the peoples round about, and also on Judah will be the siege on Jerusalem."*

A cup of poison: This word could also be translated as a threshold of a door. Both of these meanings are appropriate. When the nations come up to make war against Jerusalem the end result for them is going to be akin to taking poison, but it is also going to bring a transition, a change, from this age to the age of the Kingdom- The return of Messiah and the Kingdom that He is going to establish.

All the peoples round about: The nations are going to go up to war against Jerusalem (see Psalm 83).

Verse 3: *“And it shall come about that on that day I will make Jerusalem a crushing stone for all the peoples. All who are crushing her will cut themselves. And all the nations of the earth shall be gathered unto her.”*

On that day: This is a specific day, the great day of the L-rd, the day of G-d's judgment. This is the day that all people are going to have to give an account unto Him.

A crushing stone: A heavy weight

Cut themselves: This is an expression used in regard to a form of idolatrous worship - which was never sanctioned by G-d. When G-d begins to judge these nations, they are going to turn to their idols for assistance.

All the nations of the earth: Every single nation. Israel is going to stand alone, but in the end (by the work of Messiah Yeshua and His return) Israel is going to be victorious.

Verse 4: *“On that day says the L-rd I will strike every horse with amazement and its rider with insanity and concerning the house of Judah I will open My eyes. Every horse of the peoples I will strike with blindness.”*

Horse: Horses represent power (horsepower). Horses were the key “piece” of military equipment. G-d is going to strike the weapons of the enemy.

Amazement: They are going to be unable to work/function.

Rider: Every soldier

I will open My eyes: From the destruction of the Second Temple (nearly 2000 years ago) it has been as though G-d's eyes have been closed to Judah. In the last days G-d is going to open His eyes to them again. He is going to bring redemption to them and fulfil His covenant promises to the Jewish people.

Blindness: They are not going to function properly.

Verse 5: *“And the champion of Judah is going to say in his heart, ‘Strength is to me, dwellers of Jerusalem, in the L-rd of Hosts, their G-d.’”*

Strength: Courage, confidence, or power.

Dwellers of Jerusalem: According to the ancient sages it is an expression that speaks of those who want to worship G-d.

Verse 6: *“On that day I will make the champions of Judah as a basin of fire among wood, and as a torch of fire against the sheaves and they shall devour the right and the left and all the people round about. Jerusalem again will dwell in her place in Jerusalem.”*

Fire among wood... a torch of fire against the sheaves: Both the wood and the sheaves are quickly consumed.

Verse 7: *“And the L-rd will save the tents of Judah as in the former times, so that the splendour of the house of David and the splendour of the dwellers of Jerusalem shall not be greater than*

Judah.”

Note: Two different groups of people are going to be made into one in Judah.

The house of David: This is referring to the spiritual descendants (and not the literal ones) of David. Within Scripture, the house of David is almost always tied to a Messianic context (example: Isaiah 7v13-17). The house of David are those who believe that there is a Messiah. They have that hope and are remaining steadfast for Messiah to be revealed to them.

Dwellers of Jerusalem: Worshippers of G-d – Messiah is foundational for this. Without a covenant or relationship with Messiah we cannot worship G-d as His Word commands that He be worshipped.

Verse 8: *“On that day the L-rd will defend the dweller of Jerusalem. Those who are a failure in the flesh, G-d, on that day, is going to make them like David and the house of David is going to be like G-d – as the angel of the L-rd was before them.”*

The L-rd will defend: He is going to defend those who want to fulfil the purpose G-d created man for in the first place – to worship Him.

The house of David is going to be like G-d: Those who believe in Messiah are going to judge the enemy.

As the angel of the L-rd: Bringing about victory.

Verse 9: *“It shall come about on that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations who are coming up (for war) to Jerusalem.”*

On that day: The context is on that day of judgement.

I will seek: What G-d seeks He will accomplish.

To destroy: G-d is going to save His people by destroying all their enemies.

Verse 10: *“I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the dwellers of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication. And they will look upon Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him as the mourning for an only begotten son and the bitterness concerning Him (will be) as the bitterness for a firstborn son.”*

I: Speaking of the L-rd G-d of Israel.

The house of David: Those who believe in a Messiah and have faith in the promises that G-d made. These individuals, however, do not know who Messiah is. Knowing that there is a Messiah does not bring about redemption. We need to know who Messiah is and put out faith in Him and in what He has done.

Dwellers of Jerusalem: Worship

Note: Messiah and worship go together.

Supplication: The Hebrew word for grace also appears in this Hebrew word for supplication. The people are going to seek/ask for G-d’s grace/favour.

Me: Speaking of G-d the Father, but in Judaism (and in the Talmud) they see it as a reference to Messiah the son of Joseph.

Note: According to Judaism there are two Messiahs:

1. Messiah ben Yosef (son of Joseph). He is the suffering servant. Joseph, when he went down to Egypt, suffered greatly, but he was put in a position where he could bring about redemption for the Jewish people, He provided food for them in order that they could live and not die. That is what Messiah Yeshua has done for us – he has saved us from sin (death) and given us life. The brothers stood before Joseph and, not thinking he understood, they talked among themselves saying that all the trouble was upon them because of what they had done to Joseph. They did not recognise that it was Joseph who was before them. It was not until Joseph revealed himself, the second time that the brothers came to Egypt, that his brothers received and understood who he was. This tells us that it is going to be on Messiah's second coming that Israel will recognise Him and will receive Him.
2. Messiah ben David (son of David). He is a conquering, victorious Messiah – the work of Messiah the son of David is to save Israel from their enemies.

Pierced: Stabbed. This is a reference to what happened to Yeshua when He died on the cross.

Mourning: This type of mourning lasts for 30 days. The reason why this mourning is taking place (even though Yeshua is alive and is not dead) is because Israel as a nation did not mourn Him when He came the first time and He suffered as a suffering servant and He died. When He returns and they look upon the One that has been pierced they are going to realize and understand that when Yeshua (Jesus of Nazareth) came the first time He was rejected just like the brothers rejected Joseph. Now they will see that He is coming back to save them from their enemies.

Note: There are not two Messiahs, as Judaism believes, but there is only one Messiah who comes at two different times - and has two different works to perform each time. The first time He came to do the work of redemption, to suffer for sin. Just like the people did not recognize Joseph in Egypt so too they did not recognize Messiah Ben Joseph.

However, when Messiah Ben Joseph comes back doing what is expected of the second Messiah (the son of David) and delivering the Jewish people from their enemies then they are going to recognize him. They will then understand that there are not two Messiahs but one Messiah who does two very different works - the work of redemption spiritually, and the work of redemption physically - bringing the victory to the Jewish people over their enemies and ultimately establishing His Kingdom.

Verse 11: *“On that day the mourning shall be great in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadad Rimon in the valley of Megiddo (Armageddon).”*

Messiah goes to three places when He returns:

1. Bozrah in Edom (Isaiah 63v1, Amos 1v11-12, Ezekiel 35) – They lead the nations to go up against Israel to try to capture Jerusalem.
2. Armageddon (Revelation 16v16)
3. The Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14v4)

Verse 12: *“And the land will lament, each family by themselves. The family of the house of David by themselves, and their wives by themselves. The family of Nathan by themselves, and their wives by themselves.”*

Lament: Biblically the word for mourning/lamenting is related to the mourning done for a person who has died, but it also relates to a legitimate form of worship (For example a lot of the writers of the Psalms used the language of mourning as part of their worship/lament). They are going to mourn and lament Messiah’s death.

Note: The men and the women are worshipping/lamenting/mourning the true Messiah, but we see they are separated from each other. This time is going to be a glorious time for Israel, because it speaks of the intimacy, the coming together, between the Saviour of Israel and the people of Israel. The separation of the men and women reminds us of the giving of the law at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19v15). Moses was preparing the people to be ready for this great day of revelation, a day that G-d wanted to do a great work and bring about a miraculous transformation of the children of Israel.

Verse 13: *“The family of the Levites by themselves, and their wives by themselves. The house of Shimei by themselves, and the women by themselves.”*

Note: There is an order to this lamentation – David was king, Nathan was prophet, The Levites were the priests and the house of Shimei (the last family mentioned in the order of the Gershonite clan – Numbers 3v14-18)

Verse 14: *“And all the rest of the clans and their wives.”*

Chapter 13

Verse 1: *“And on that day a source (of water) will be opened for the house of David and the dwellers of Jerusalem, for sin and impurity.”*

Source: According to the ancient sages we need to understand this source as a spring of water used for the purpose of immersion/baptism. Baptism teaches us of an identity with Messiah Yeshua. Immersion reveals two important things:

1. The person who is being immersed shows his desire to serve or obey G-d.
2. The person also identifies and places his faith in the work of Messiah -His death, burial, and resurrection.

Opened for the house of David: (Those who believe in Messiah) Israel is going to go through a great day of immersion.

Note: Today there is a national day of baptism for Israel - the day leading up to Yom Kippur. A few hours before Yom Kippur almost every male, if they have a little bit of faith in the G-d of Israel and if they observe the Day of Atonement, enter into what is known as a mikveh. (This can be the sea, a river, a lake, or a place that is specifically designed for immersion)

Immersion is preparation for dedication.

Dwellers of Jerusalem: Those who want to worship G-d.

Verse 2: *“It shall come about on that day,’ says the L-rd of Hosts, ‘That I will cut off all the names of the idols from the land. They shall not be remembered anymore. Also, the prophets and the unclean spirit I will remove from the earth.”*

The land: Initially that is the land of Israel, but ultimately it is the entire world.

The prophets and the unclean spirit: There is a relationship between false prophecy and unclean spirits. When someone is teaching the Word of G-d and they do so improperly and falsely that is an invitation to allow the demons and the unclean spirits to work. The truth of G-d's Word washes us and makes us pure.

Verse 3: *“It shall come about if a man should again prophesy, his father and mother who gave birth to him shall say to him, ‘You shall not live, for falsehood have you spoken in the name of the L-rd.’ And his father and his mother who bore him shall stab him when he prophesies.”*

Stab him: This is the same word ‘pierced’ used in regard to Messiah. Messiah was condemned as a false prophet by Israel and by Rome through this crucifixion. ‘Stab’ is used as a measure of judgement.

Verse 4: *“And it shall come about on that day that the prophets shall be ashamed, every man of his vision when he prophesies. He shall no longer dress in the garment in order to deceive.”*

The garment: A mantle or a coat that they would put upon their shoulders as a way of showing people that they were a prophet. It was another way that the false prophets tried to elevate themselves in pride.

Verse 5: *“He is going to say, ‘I am not a prophet. I am a man who works the field, for I am a herdsman from my youth.”*

Herdsman: A man who works with cattle.

Verse 6: *“And he will say to Him, ‘What are these wounds among Your hands?’ and He shall say, ‘I was wounded in the house of my friends.’”*

Note: This is a verse that relates to the true suffering Messiah when He came to His friends – the house of Israel. Israel, by and large, did not receive Him and He suffered the deathblows to pay for our sins.

My friends: My loved ones

Verse 7: *“Awake O sword upon My shepherd, upon the man who is My comrade,’ says the L-rd of Hosts. ‘Strike the shepherd and the flock shall scatter, and I will withdraw My hand from upon the young ones.’”*

Note: G-d is speaking.

Sword upon My shepherd...my comrade: G-d is speaking concerning Yeshua. He says that there is going to be a sword placed against him - a sword means death. Yeshua came as a comrade, in unity with G-d the Father, to do the work of redemption.

Strike the shepherd and the flock shall scatter: Fulfilled in Matthew 26v31. Messiah spoke of this on the night that He was betrayed. It very clear that Messiah Himself used this verse in regard to His arrest and ultimately His death.

The young ones: The sages say this phrase is referring to the common people. Shortly after the time of Yeshua, under the Roman leadership, a time of affliction fell upon the common people in Israel.

Verse 8: *“It shall come about in all the earth,’ Says the L-rd, ‘Two thirds will be cut off and die and one third shall remain in it.’”*

Two thirds will be cut off and die: This is the time known as the time of Jacob’s trouble (Jeremiah 30v7). Two thirds of Israel is going to perish in the last days but there is going to be a *one third* remnant that survives.

Verse 9: *“And I will bring this third through fire. And I will refine them as a jeweller does silver, and I will test them as one tests gold. And he shall call on My name and I will answer him, I will say, ‘You (Israel) are my people,’ and he (Israel) will say, ‘The L-rd is my G-d.’”*

Fire: Fire relates to judgment in the prophets. This judgement that Israel has to go through has a purpose to it – in order to refine them. G-d is going to bring the remnant through this time in order that they will experience His salvation, and this will lead them to repentance. They are going to be a transformed people.

Test them as one tests gold: It is heat which brings out the impurities. G-d is going to remove the impurities (improper teaching, idolatry, not walking in faith, not believing and operating in obedience to the Word etc) that have plagued Israel through the centuries.

He shall call on My name: Joel 2v32 All who call on the name of Messiah Yeshua will be saved.

Note: According to the ancient sages ‘we will be His people and He will be our G-d’ is the definition of redemption. Israel is going to experience that final redemption- that redemption which only Messiah can offer.

Chapter 14

Part 1: Zechariah 14v1-9

Verse 1: *“Behold the day of the L-rd comes and your spoil will be divided in your midst.”*

Behold: The purpose of this word is to tell us to pay close attention to what is written immediately thereafter, as it is revealing something important to us.

The day of the L-rd: Usually thought of in terms of judgment. We need to realise that this difficult time (like birth pangs) comes, in order that (in the end) there will be a great outcome - The Kingdom of G-d.

Your spoil will be divided: A coalition of enemies are going to strip Israel bare of all of her wealth.

Verse 2: *“I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem for war and the city will be taken, and the homes are going to be ransacked and the woman abused. Half of the city will go into exile, but the remainder of the people shall not be cut off from the city.”*

I: G-d himself is speaking, but as is so often the case what we see is that it is Messiah bringing these things about. This speaks to the unique relationship between Messiah Yeshua and G-d our Heavenly Father.

Gather all the nations: The militaries of every nation.

The remainder of the people shall not be cut off: A remnant of Jewish people who are in Jerusalem will not leave that city – they are going to be worshipping and praying to G-d (for salvation).

Verse 3: *“And the L-rd shall go out and fight against those nations on the day of His fighting, in the day of the battle.”*

The L-rd: Although this is written as G-d Almighty it is literally Messiah who goes out to fight (see chapter 12v10). Messiah has been sent by G-d to bring about redemption, and the final aspect of redemption is the establishment of the Kingdom.

Verse 4: *“His feet shall stand, on that day, upon the Mount of Olives which faces Jerusalem on the east. The Mountain of Olives will be split – half of it toward the east and half toward the west. A very great valley is going to be – half of the mountain is going to move northward and the other half towards the south.”*

His feet: Rabbinical commentators, as well as Christian, identify these feet as belonging to Messiah.

Upon the Mount of Olives: Acts 1v9-12 confirms that Yeshua ascended from the Mount of Olives and when He returns He will descend on the Mount of Olives - to confirm what the angels told the disciples, that in the same way He went up into the heavens is the same way that He is going to come back.

Note: When Messiah Yeshua comes to Jerusalem He will descend from the Mount of Olives, cross over the Kidron Valley and enter into Jerusalem through the Eastern gate. From there He will go into the Holy of Holies and will inaugurate His Kingdom.

Note: When Yeshua returns there is going to be a great change to creation. Paul tells us in Romans 8v19-22 that creation (this planet and the universe) is crying out for redemption,

because ever since that first sin the creation has been stained with sin and therefore it cries out for the change.

Very great valley is going to be: This valley is created for a purpose.

Verse 5: *“You shall flee through my valley – the one that reaches that valley of mountains – to Azel. And you shall flee just as you fled before the noise similar to the one that was in the days of King Uzziah the king of Judah. And the L-rd my G-d shall come and all the saints with You (Him).”*

Shall flee through my valley: The purpose for the valley was so that people could flee

Azel: That is a place.

The noise: A great earthquake. Whenever there is an earthquake listed in the Bible the purpose is to capture our attention. Earthquakes have implications for the entire world.

The L-rd my G-d shall come: Speaking of the return of Messiah.

All the saints: See 1st Corinthians 15v51-52 and 1st Thessalonians 4v16-17. When Messiah returns those who took part in the rapture are going to return with Messiah and be part of His Kingdom.

Verse 6: *“It shall come about on that day that there shall not be light.”*

Note: Everything we see in the next few verses has to do with a change, something new that has never been seen before. These changes are all related to, and characterise, the Kingdom of G-d.

On that day: Usually when this phrase appears in the Scripture it has to do with judgment - judgment day will bring about a result – the result being the establishment of the Kingdom. From this verse onward when we see this phrase it is now in relation to the Kingdom (brought about as a result of judgement).

Light: The light is not going to be anything like the light that we know now. There is going to be a new reality that is consistently there – even throughout the millennial Kingdom.

Verse 7: *“It shall come about one day which will be known to the L-rd, not day and not night. And it shall be at the time of evening that there will be light.”*

One day: In Genesis 1v3, on one day, G-d created light. This was a unique light and was not the light of the sun, moon, or stars - as those were only created on day 4. The word translated ‘One’ is often used in reference to G-d and it is also used to describe unity. G-d is going to speak, and He is going to bring about a unity between creation and Himself and when that happens there is going to be light - but not the light from the sun, moon or stars.

Note: Most scholars believe what brought about the change in G-d's creation (to take it from empty, void, formless, out of order) to the place where it became very good was G-d's presence. His glory was manifested in the creation. This is why it talks about the heavens and the earth manifesting, announcing, declaring the glory of G-d.

Will be known to the L-rd: He is going to define it.

At the time of evening that there will be light: The glory of the L-rd will be present at all times. Day and night.

Verse 8: *“It shall come about on that day living water shall go forth from Jerusalem -half to the Sea on the East and half to the Western Sea. It shall be both summer and winter”*

Sea on the East: The Dead Sea

The Western Sea: The Mediterranean Sea

Living water: See Ezekiel 47v1-13 and John 7v37-39. The glory of G-d is going to be manifested and the Spirit of G-d is going to be present.

Verse 9: *“It shall come about that the L-rd shall be King over all the earth on that day. He will be One and His Name One.”*

Chapter 14

Part 2: Zechariah 14v10-21

Verse 10: *“He will turn all the land into a plain from Geba to Rimmon and it (Jerusalem) will be raised up and she will dwell in her place, from the gate of Benjamin unto the place of the former gate, unto the inner gate from the tower of Hananel unto the wineries of the king.”*

The land into a plain: The land turns into a plain and Jerusalem remains lifted up.

Geba to Rimmon: Some scholars identify these places as the Eastern and Western sides of Jerusalem. These are the boundaries and everything south of them will also become a plain. Most of the Jewish people, under King David’s administration, lived on this southern side of Jerusalem.

(Jerusalem) will be raised up: See Isaiah 2v2-5. The chief mountain is the most important one. Prophetically speaking a mountain can also refer to a government. Messiah is going to have a world government, and it is going to be lifted up above all other governments.

She will dwell in her place: See Chapter 12v6. The Jerusalem of the Millennial Kingdom is going to be in the same place that Jerusalem of today is in.

From the gate of Benjamin...: The borders of the city are given to us.

Verse 11: *“And Jerusalem is going to dwell in this and there shall no longer be any destruction and Jerusalem will dwell with security.”*

Jerusalem is going to dwell in this: An idiom talking about the condition of Jerusalem.

Verse 12: *“And this shall be the plague which the L-rd will strike all the peoples which war concerning Jerusalem. And his flesh will melt while he is standing upon his feet, his eyes are*

going to melt while they are in their sockets, and his tongue is going to melt while it is in his mouth.”

All the peoples: Those who go up to Jerusalem to make war.

War: Refers to those who send their armies to Jerusalem.

His flesh: Those who stand in opposition to the purposes of G-d.

Melt: The heat is going to be so intense that he is not going to feel it. He is going to collapse even as he stands.

Verse 13: *“It shall come about on that day that this will be a great disturbance that the L-rd will bring against them. Each man shall seize the hand of his neighbour and his hand shall go up upon the hand of his neighbour.”*

Seize the hand of his neighbour: Most scholars see this as an expression of fear.

His hand shall go up upon the hand of his neighbour: A Hebrew idiom that usually has to do with war or a conflict between two people.

Note: In the last days (like we see in 2 Chronicles 20v17-24) the neighbours will help each other to fight and defeat their common enemy and then they are going to turn on each other and kill each other too.

Verse 14: *“Also Judah will fight with Jerusalem and the wealth of all the nations shall be gathered around – gold, silver, and garments to great abundance.”*

Judah will fight with Jerusalem: Historically when the enemy would come he would begin to destroy the cities of Judah and the peoples would flee and then Jerusalem would be by themselves with no one to help them. This is not going to be the case in the last days. There is going to be a unity between Judah and Jerusalem.

Gold, silver, and garments to great abundance: See Exodus 12v35-36. In the first redemption (when the Israelites came out of Egypt) they plundered the enemies of G-d – those who were opposed to the purposes or will of G-d. In the final redemption (when Messiah Yeshua returns) the enemies of G-d are, once again, going to be plundered and impoverished.

Verse 15: *“Thus shall be the plague upon the horse, the mule, the camel, and the donkey -on all the animals which are in the camps of them. It shall be as this plague”*

The animals: In the context of war, these animals are tools of warfare, they are instruments of war. The weapons of warfare are going to be destroyed.

Verse 16: *“And it shall come about of all those who remain, that went up among the nations to make war with Jerusalem, shall go up each year to bow down before the King, the L-rd of Hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.”*

Those who remain: There is going to be a remnant of the nations (even among those who had gone to war against Jerusalem but who had, by G-d’s grace and mercy, repented) that are going

to come to faith. In the Millennial Kingdom it is not a faith which we just hold in our heart, but it is a faith that we are called to physically demonstrate (We are called to demonstrate our faith today but in the Millennial Kingdom if we do not demonstrate it there are going to be some serious consequences).

The king: Messiah Yeshua

Feast of Tabernacles: During the time of the Millennial Kingdom all the festivals are going to be observed, but the reason why the Feast of Tabernacles is mentioned is to teach us that the primary lesson (the main thought) of the Feast of Tabernacles is to make one dependent upon G-d - to trust His provision. This faith, trust and dependence is being demonstrated by going up to Jerusalem each year and worshipping Him in the context of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Verse 17: *“If a family will not go up to Jerusalem to bow down to the King, the L-rd of Hosts, there shall not be upon them the rain.”*

Rain: Rain, Biblically, is synonymous with blessing. Someone who will not demonstrate their dependence, their faith, their belief in G-d will not be blessed but will in fact be cursed.

Verse 18: *“For if the family of Egypt will not go up, and will not come, there shall not be upon them the rain. There shall be the plague, which the L-rd will strike the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.”*

The L-rd will strike: He is going to rule with a rod of iron (Psalm 2v8-9, Revelation 2v26-27)

Verse 19: *“And this shall be the sin of Egypt and the sin of all the nations if they should not go up and worship during the Feast of Tabernacles.”*

Sin: Sin is synonymous with death.

Verse 20: *“On that day inscribed on the bells of the horse shall be ‘Holy to the L-rd’. The pots in the temple of the L-rd will be as the basins before the altar.”*

Horse: This is not a kosher animal.

Holy to the L-rd: This was a phrase attached to the turban of the high priest (Exodus 28v36-38). Even the bell of a horse (unkosher in our dispensation) is going to be elevated to the same status that the high priest had (in our dispensation)

The basins: They caught the blood of the sacrifices and were seen as extremely significant. They were set apart for this purpose.

Verse 21: *“It shall come about that every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holy to the L-rd of Hosts, and those who sacrifice they shall come, and they shall take from them and they shall cook and eat from them. And there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the L-rd of Hosts on that day.”*

Every pot: Elevated status

On that day: This phrase now has to do with the Kingdom of G-d.

Canaanite: The Canaanites were those who opposed G-d's plan for the children of Israel to take possession of the land. (i.e. there will no longer be anyone who stands in opposition to the will of G-d, they are not going to be tolerated and are going to be destroyed)

The Canaanites can also be a reference to merchants (John 2v14-17). The house of G-d is not going to be about commerce. It will be a holy place – consumed with the zeal of the L-rd. The zeal of G-d is going to rule in the Millennial Kingdom and those who are going to inhabit that Kingdom are going to have that same zeal. Zeal is what we are supposed to demonstrate each and every day of our lives as believers in Messiah Yeshua.