

Establishing God's Kingdom on Earth

Zechariah 6:1-15

2161

Take your Bible if you will and let's look at the 6th chapter of Zechariah. Now, this book, as we well know...and I'll take a minute or two to review...but as we well know, it is a book that presents to us in many ways and by many details, the plan of God as He looks at the destiny of Israel and of the nations. And because it is a prophetic book, I think it has special interest to us and to Christian folks around the world.

Everybody wants to know the future. And Christian people have that unique gift of God, His revelation, which does detail for us much about the future. And so prophecy has always been a fascinating thing for Christian people to study. And this is one book that Christians have studied through the years. But it isn't just Christians that are interested in the future. Our whole society is, in fact, man has always wanted to know something about the future. For centuries he has had his wizards, his seers, his prophets. He has gazed into his crystal balls. He has read his tea leaves and he has studied the zodiac always trying to see the unseeable and know the unknowable, always trying to uncover the mystery of the future to remove the fear that hangs over his head and the fear is the fear of the unknown. And the only source, really, of the truth about the future is the Bible.

Only God knows the future and only He knows the end from the beginning. And only He determines and charts the course of the ultimate destiny of man and His world. Only God knows that. And God alone is omniscient. When we think about God's knowledge, it's very vast and it's hard for us to understand it. I guess the way you might understand it is to take the sum of human knowledge and make it equal one grain of sand on one beach of one ocean in the world and God's knowledge being all the grains of all the sand on the globe. And that's the difference. At best, man is just less than elementary in his grasp of ultimate knowledge. But God knows everything. God knows the end from the beginning. God knows everything past, present and future. In fact, in Isaiah 46:10 it says, it is God who is "declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times, things which have not been done saying, 'My purpose will be established and I will accomplish all My good pleasure.'" In other words, God knows everything, God makes everything come to pass. In Acts 15:18 it says, "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the age." God knows everything from the beginning all through all of His works until it's terminated in the end.

Now, there are negative and positive aspects of this omniscience. The negative of it, of course, is that God knows all the evil of all men everywhere and that nothing escapes His eye in terms of man's evil. In Amos, chapter 9 and verse 2, "Though they dig into Hell, there shall Mine hand take them. Though they climb to Heaven, from there will I bring them down. Though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out from there. And though they be hidden from My sight in the bottom of the sea, there will I command the serpent that he shall bite them. And though they go into captivity before their enemies, and there will I command the sword and it shall slay them. And I will set Mine eyes upon them for evil and not for good." In other words, God will find the unrighteous

man anywhere. God knows everything. He knows the whereabouts, He knows the sin of all those who have done inequity. Likewise, there is a positive aspect to omniscience. In Malachi, chapter 3 and verse 16, "Then they that feared the Lord spoke often one to another and the Lord hearkened and heard it and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name. 'And they shall be Mine,' says the Lord of Hosts, 'in the day when I make up my jewels...'" On the one hand, God will find all inequity and knows of it all. On the other hand, He knows all the righteous and has their name in His book. And so God is omniscient. God knows everything and everybody and everything that everybody will ever or has ever done. So God has laid out a plan. And somewhere in the midst of God's omniscience is God's foreknowledge, making the plan come to pass. Much of the details of this plan for man's destiny are outlined for us in the Bible. And particularly, God has revealed much of the future to His prophets. Much of what you read in the Bible now, which is history past, was future history to the writers when they received it. All of the prophecies to the Old Testament writers about the coming of Messiah were great prophetic truth. Now, they're past history to us. But God detailed many things about the future to His prophets.

Now, let me use that as kind of an introduction to Zechariah. I've mentioned to you that God knows everything and that within His knowledge is the knowledge of all history past, present and future. And not only that, there is the purpose of God working it out in fact so that God is not a bystander observing it, but He is the one who is making it come to His own purposes. Now, when God began to reveal this, He began to reveal to the Old Testament prophets certain elements of the future. And, basically, there are four categories in which God revealed the future. Number one, God gave the prophets prophecies concerning the spiritual destiny of Israel. If you study the Old Testament you will find the Old Testament is just loaded with the spiritual destiny of Israel. In other words, God is saying to them, you are going to come to judgment because of sin or you are going to have this certain nation come and take you into captivity because of sin or on the other hand, because you have been righteous, I will pour out My blessing. Some day in the future, I will gather you into the land and I will restore you, etc., etc. There is much about the spiritual destiny of Israel. The second category of prophecy in the Old Testament is Messianic prophecy. There is much also about the coming Messiah. It details His first coming and His second coming. It talks about His death and resurrection as well as His coming to set up the kingdom. The third category of Old Testament prophecy is what you'd call last day prophecy or God predicting events that are gonna happen at the end of man's day. When the sum of all human wraps up, certain events are gonna take place and those are repeatedly spoken of in the Old Testament, frequently called the day of the Lord. So that you have then, first of all, prophecies about the spiritual destiny of Israel, secondly, about the Messiah and, thirdly, about the last days and then fourthly, you have many judgment prophecies...prophecies that are based upon what God is going to do to ungodly nations and individuals.

Now, I just gave you a short course in Old Testament prophecy because that's about the sum of it, those four categories...prophecy related to the spiritual destiny of Israel, Messianic prophecy, last day prophecy and prophecy related to the judgment of the ungodly. Now, I want to look at those prophecies from another perspective, still just introducing the thought to you. I want to look at those prophecies chronologically and so I'll give you three categories. Number one, in the Old Testament and New Testament we have prophecies already fulfilled. There are prophecies already fulfilled. If you were around when I did the series on Is the Bible Believable...which, incidentally, will be coming out as a book on October 24 called Focus on Fact: Why You Can Trust the Bible...but when we were dealing with that, I showed you prophecies regarding Babylon and Petra and Tyre and Sidon and Chorazin and Capernaum and many, many cities where God said something would happen and historically, it happened. And so there are many prophecies already fulfilled. You read Hosea, you read Amos, you read Micah, you read Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and you will find in all of those books

prophecies already having come to pass. And, certainly, all of the prophecies relative to the birth and the life and the death and resurrection of Christ have come to pass. Secondly, there are not only prophecies already fulfilled, but there are prophecies being fulfilled. Right now, there are some Biblical prophecies being fulfilled. One that I can think of is the statement of Jesus that when He went to the Father, He would send the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit would come and indwell His people and empower them for worldwide witness and that's being fulfilled right now, isn't it. Another one is that God would send a new covenant and that God would make a personal covenant with men, not like the old covenant, Jeremiah 31, and that's being fulfilled right now as we are partakers in the new covenant. And so we find that there are some prophecies being fulfilled. God also predicted that He would gather Israel from around the world and it seems to me that that may be one of the prophecies right now being fulfilled as God has restored His people to the land. But then, thirdly, the third category and an obvious one by now to you is prophecy not yet fulfilled. This is the prophecy that is still in the future. Now, stay with me. I'm gonna give you four categories of these.

Number one is the prophecies of the recovery of Palestine by Israel. Isaiah 27, Jeremiah 31, Ezekiel talks about this in 37 and so forth. But there is a prophecy area or category that says in the future, Israel will recover Palestine. Secondly, there is also a set of Old Testament prophecy that says Israel in the future will be saved and so we call that the national salvation of Israel. Thirdly, there is Old Testament prophecy and New Testament as well that says Israel's enemies will be destroyed. And fourthly, there is much Old Testament prophecy that says Messiah's kingdom will be established. So of the prophecy yet unfulfilled, you have these four: Israel will gain her land, Israel will be redeemed, God will judge the enemies of Israel and Himself and establish the Messianic kingdom.

Now, as we've been studying Zechariah, we have seen Zechariah deal...mark this...with every one of the elements of Old Testament prophecy that I've just read to you, or just reported to you, every one of them. In these eight visions that we've been looking at that began in chapter 1, the eight visions that make up the middle section of the book, in these eight visions we have seen, for example, these last four categories. We have seen God talk about Israel taking the land. We've seen God talk about the national salvation of Israel. And tonight we're gonna see the last two, the destruction of God's enemies and the establishing of the Messianic kingdom. And so there is, in a sense, to these visions, a chronological order. The visions also record for us those first four categories I gave you of all prophecy in the Old Testament. We've heard the prophet speak of the spiritual destiny of Israel, the coming Messiah, the last days and the judgment of Godless nations. So it's all here and that's why Zechariah, historically, has been such a loaded book. It's been just studied and studied and studied because of the tremendous impact that it makes on the prophetic picture of the Word of God.

Now, in that last little group of four...just forget the rest of it and start there...that last little group of four...we've already studied two...we saw in the visions already past, the total recovery of Palestine by the tribes of Israel. Remember how we saw the man with the measuring line who measured the city and we saw the people being brought back and Jerusalem being enlarged and they occupied their own area? And the second one, the promise of national salvation, we saw that in the vision of chapter 3 where we saw Joshua, the high priest, who represented Israel and his garments were cleansed and he was given a clean robe to put on and that was the picture of the cleansing and the salvation of Israel. So we've seen those two. That leaves us two more. In the final chapter we want to see the destruction of Israel's enemies and the establishing of Messiah's kingdom on the earth. That is precisely where history is going. History is going to the time when God acts in judgment against His enemies and establishes His kingdom on the earth.

Now, we come to chapter 6 and a most fascinating vision. And it helps us to see how God is going to judge the world and set up His kingdom. Now, we've talked a lot about the kingdom. I don't want to belabor the point tonight. I know you have, most of you, good teaching and a good understanding of it. But just for a minute let me say this. Can you imagine a world where justice always prevails, where righteousness and goodness is the rule and dominates, where there is total and lasting peace, where joy reigns, a world where health is widespread and somebody who dies a hundred years old, dies a baby, a world where children can play in snake pits and lions and lambs can walk together with bears and cows and all be led by a little child? Can you imagine a world where agriculture is profuse and food is plenty even with the greatest population explosion in man's history? Can you imagine a world ruled by the loving, saving, perfect Ruler, Jesus Christ? Can you imagine a world where all the people of God are the exalted rulers and the unbelieving are judged by the rod of the divine Judge, the Lord Himself? If you can imagine that world, that you will find to be the millennial kingdom and that is God's plan for the future. It's coming. It's the new world that comes when Jesus comes.

Now, in this chapter we see these final two elements of setting up the kingdom: the negative, the destruction of the enemy; the positive, the establishing of Christ on the throne. God, as it were, dethrones the world of all of its Godless monarchs. God wipes clean, governments, and establishes Christ as the great final Ruler. It's like a divine coup, if you will. God just usurps the earth, taking it back, if you remember the history of the Bible, from the one who usurped it in the beginning, Satan himself. So you have two elements, the negative and the positive and I want to look at them from two words. One is condemnation and the other is coronation.

First of all, the condemnation of God's enemies, chapter 6, verse 1. This is the condemnation of God's enemies and this has to happen in the future. "And I turned and lifted up mine eyes and...behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains and the mountains were mountains of bronze. Before the first chariot were red horses and before the second chariot, black horses and before the third chariot, white horses and" ...watch this translation..."before the fourth chariot, dappled strong horses. Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, 'What are these, my lord?' And the angel answered and said to me, 'These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. The black horses, which are there go forth into the north country and the white go forth after them and the dappled go forth toward the south country and the strong went forth and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth.' And he said, 'Go from here; walk to and fro through the earth.' So they walked to and fro through the earth. Then cried he to me and spoke unto me saying, 'Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country.'" Now, that's the end of the vision. Now, you know why you need me (laughter). Right?

Now, what you have in this vision is the condemnation of God's enemies. This is a recurring theme throughout the Bible. In fact, in Revelation, chapter 14 and verse 6, you have a statement there that an angel is flying through Heaven preaching the everlasting gospel. And I guess Bible commentators have hassled about what the everlasting gospel is for a long time. But if you really study the context, it isn't that tough a problem. Because if they would read from chapter 14:6 where it mentions the everlasting gospel, simply to the next verse, verse 7, they would find out what it is because when the angel preached the everlasting gospel, he said "with a loud voice, 'Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment is come.'" Listen. The everlasting gospel, the message that God has been giving from the beginning and is giving to the end, the everlasting gospel, the everlasting good news is God punishes sin and God rewards righteousness. That is the everlasting content, the never changing news that God has been giving. And so the basic recurring theme throughout all Scripture,

God rewards the righteous...that's the kingdom, ultimately...God punishes the sinful, and that's the ultimate condemnation of the world system that is prior to the setting up of the kingdom. And so this is a recurring theme. This is ageless. From Lucifer and his initial fall right on through to the establishing of the new Heaven and the new earth, the everlasting gospel will continue to mark God's dealing with men. He will punish the sinner; He will reward the righteous. This is basic. And you can find it over and over and over in the Scriptures.

Now, I want us to look at the vision that unfolds this element of the everlasting gospel. First of all, let's look at the symbols in verses 1 to 3 and this will be interesting...the symbols themselves. "And I turned and lifted up mine eyes..." Now, remember that every time Zechariah saw a vision, what happened?...he kind of fell into a stupor or a sleep because of the trauma and the shock. All these came on one night. And after each vision, they were so devastating and so powerful and no doubt had a cumulative effect so by now...when he saw the one in chapter 5, it just overwhelmed him and he actually collapsed and his head was bowed and in each case, he had to lift up his eyes again. And he "looked and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains and the mountains were mountains of bronze." Now, four chariots represent war chariots. Chariots in those days formed the storm troops of an ancient army. And so he looks and he sees these four war chariots and they represent vehicles of divine judgment on the nations. In other words, you remember the vision in chapter 1 where you had four horses and the four horses with their four horsemen were just sitting outside the city of Jerusalem. And they weren't really doing anything. They had just reconnoitered over the whole world and they had come back and they had reported in. Well, those same four horses that weren't really doing anything, all of the sudden now are transformed into four war chariots. And God is not just standing by watching; God has called His vehicles of divine judgment into action. And so they advance to the final judgment. Now, notice, it says they come out from between two mountains and the mountains were mountains of bronze. Now, interestingly enough, in the Hebrew there is a definite article here. And the definite article is the word "the." "A" is an indefinite article. If you said, "I saw man," then you meant a certain one. If you said, "I saw man," you meant any man. That's the difference. The definite article is "the" and it's used here. And so out this came from between two mountains in the Hebrew. So they are some well-known and definite mountains. Now, mountains speak of strength. And the fact that they are bronze speaks of judgment because bronze repeatedly appears in Scripture as a symbol of judgment. If you were to read Revelation 1:15 and 16 and see the image of Christ, you will see that His feet are feet of burnished bronze. And the picture is of one who is stamping out judgment. And so bronze is the symbol of judgment. And mountains are the symbol of strength and power. And so you have here a powerful scene of judgment. And the war chariots come firing down this valley between these two mountains. Now, they are two common mountains. You say, what mountains are they? Well, since the fourth century with one of the early church fathers by the name of Eusebius, it has been the consensus of Bible scholars that the two mountains are Mount Zion and the Mount of Olives...Mount Zion and the Mount of Olives...which means that these chariots are literally roaring down the Kidron Valley. Those of you who've been to Israel know that to the east of the city of Jerusalem...have you all seen the Dome of the Rock, that shiny building, and the wall right behind it, which is the eastern wall of Jerusalem, and a slope going down? Well, that whole thing is on Zion. And the opposite mountain is the Mount of Olives. And in the middle is the brook Kidron and that's the valley. And so it is likely that Zechariah literally sees these war chariots of God plummeting down the Kidron Valley between Zion and the Mount of Olives. And this has been the common Biblical interpretation. And what makes it fit so well is that the other prophets in the Old Testament tell us that the final judgment of the nations is going to take place in that area. Joel talks about that and so does Zechariah in another place. In Joel, chapter 3 in verse 2, "I will gather all nations and bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat and judge them there for My people and for My heritage..." Now, where is the

valley of Jehoshaphat? Well, there isn't any. There isn't any. Jehoshaphat means Jehovah judges. It is the valley of judgment. But Bible scholars have always equated that with the Kidron Valley. That's been the common place. In fact, I might add something very interesting. Jews and Moslems both agree that the final judgment of the world will take place in the Kidron Valley, which will be renamed the Valley of Jehoshaphat because it will be there that Jehovah judges. Notice in the 14th of Zechariah and the 4th verse and I'll show you why they equate these two. When Christ returns...now watch..."His feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in its midst toward the east and toward the west..." In other words, the little Valley of Kidron is gonna split wide open and half of the mountain remove to the north and half toward the south. In other words, God is gonna create a whole new valley there, a huge, massive one and that is where the judgment will take place. Now, there's the connection. When Christ hits the Mount of Olives and He splits the Mount of Olives wide open, He'll create a huge valley between Zion and the Mount of Olives and that is the valley that Joel calls the valley of Jehoshaphat where Jehovah judges. So in Zechariah's vision...now, back to chapter 6...in Zechariah's vision, he sees, no doubt, Olive and Zion and coming down that valley, the four war chariots of God.

Now, further, let me show you, verse 2, and it gets fascinating here because to show us more about the judgment, God discloses to us the color of the horses. Look at verse 2. "Before the first chariot were red horses, before the second chariot, black horses, before the third chariot, white horses, before the fourth chariot, dappled, strong horses." Now, you say, why always four? Why is this four? Well, basically, four speaks of universality. Isaiah 11:12 talks about the four corners of the earth. The Bible talks about the four winds of Heaven, north, east, south and west. And so it's just the idea of global judgment. Now, interestingly enough, this could be connected with the 6th chapter of Revelation. I don't want you to turn to it cause we don't want to keep jumping back and forth, but I'll elude to it. Do you remember that when the tribulation period begins, there is immediately an introduction to four horsemen? Do you remember that in chapter 6, the four horsemen of the apocalypse? Well, they are an interesting parallel in terms of color and the thing that they do here. For example, they appear in the same context in Revelation, that is the context of final judgment. You have red horses here in Zechariah. The first chariot was pulled by red horses. And in Revelation 6:4 you have red horses. And in both cases, red horses speak of war and bloodshed. In Revelation 6 it says, "And there went out another horse that was red...power was given to him that sat on it to take peace from the earth and that they should kill one another, and there was given to him a great sword." So the red horse of Revelation is war and bloodshed and the red horses pulling the chariot in Zechariah, again, could be paralleled with bloodshed and war. Secondly, you'll notice here in Zechariah, black horses pull the second chariot. In Revelation you have the same thing. Chapter 6 of Revelation, verses 5 and 6, the black horse speaks of famine. And it says, "I saw a black horse" and the one on it "had a pair of balances in his hand." And he said, "A measure of wheat for a penny and three measures of barley for a penny," etc. In other words, famine conditions in the world. The black horse speaks of famine. So God will judge the world in the end times, says Zechariah, by war and bloodshed and by famine and that's exactly the message echoed in Revelation 6. Thirdly, the horse in verse 3 is the third chariot and it is white horses. This parallels, again, Revelation 6:2 where you have the white horse, which speaks of victory and speaks of conquering and speaks of triumph. And then you have the dappled horse or the dappled strong horse. It's very difficult to translate that Hebrew there but it seems best as the dappled strong horse. You have that also called the pale horse in Revelation and there it is a reference to death and to Hell. And so here it is as well. So you can see there's a consistency in the mind of the prophets because there's a consistency in the Holy Spirit who's doing the revealing. So we meet, then, four war chariots pulled by four sets of horses and the horses speak of bloodshed and war and famine and victory and triumph and death. And

that's going to be the way God moves in on the nations of the world. That's the symbols.

Secondly, let's look at their significance, verse 4. What do they mean? "...I answered and said to the angel who talked with me" ...this is interpreter angel who helps Zechariah with all these visions..."What are these, my lord?" In other words, what are these horse-pulled chariots? What is this meaning? What is this trying to say to me? What is God portraying here? What are these? "And the angel answered and said to me, 'These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth.'" Now, the best way to translate the Hebrew there, ruwach, is these are the four winds. Further, four winds or four spirits would be best seen as angelic spirits. These are four angels, four divine agents of judgment. And the angels are coming out of Heaven to carry out God's judgment. Notice, they are four spirits who "go forth from standing before the Lord..." And that little phrase is a give-away that these are angels because that is the role that angels have. They stand before the Lord to do His bidding. And you can see that as you study the Scripture in many places. One illustration of it would be in Daniel, chapter 7, I think it is, verse 10. "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him," a "thousand thousand ministered unto Him and ten-thousand times ten-thousand stood before Him." And there Daniel is seeing the angelic host standing before the throne of God. And it was four of those angels that were dispatched by God to this vision to show Zechariah the final picture of judgment. In Luke 1:19 when Gabriel came to announce the birth of Christ it says, "I am Gabriel who stands in the presence of God." So the angels are those who stand in God's presence. And they are those who do God's bidding. Incidentally, in Revelation, chapter 7, you have a similar designation of angels in the first two verses. "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree." In other words, here are four angels waiting to release judgment. Here, again, in Zechariah, four angels are pictured by these four horse-drawn chariots. And they move out from standing before the Lord of the whole earth. Now, that phrase at the end of verse 5, as a footnote, is a millennial title for the Lord...the Lord of the whole earth. It's referring to the day when He takes over the whole earth. It's also used in Micah 4:13 and again in the 4th chapter and the 14th verse of Zechariah.

Now, verse 6 gives us further detail about this and this is where it gets kind of tangled up and I'll do my best. "The black horses which are there go forth into the north country and the white go forth after them and the dappled go forth toward the south country and the bay"...or the strong horses..."went forth and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth. And he said, 'Go from here. Walk to and fro through the earth.' So they walked to and fro through the earth." Now, we'll stop there for a minute. Remember now, the horses are symbols of divine judgment. The chariots are symbols of angelic spirits. So angelic spirits drawn out by divine judgment against the ungodly world is the picture. Angelic judgment agents, just like you have in Revelation, where you have seven angels blowing seven trumpets, seven angels pouring out seven bowls of judgment. The black horses, famine and death, and the white horses, victory and conquest, go to the north. Why? Well, because historically, that's where the greatest foes of Israel always came from. Nobody ever attacked Israel from the east, never. In the first place, they were practically impregnable from the east because of the tremendous distance that you had to march straight up to get to the city of Jerusalem, which sat on a plateau, and because you would have to cross the worst part of the Arabian desert. So whether it was Assyria or Babylon or later in history, the Seleucids, or later in history, the Romans, the worst of Israel's enemies always came down from the north. They never attacked from the west. That was the Mediterranean Sea. They never attacked from the east because that was the Arabian Desert. But they would come down from the north. And the dappled strong horses went to the south because Israel had had great enemy to the south and the enemy to the south was whom?...Egypt. And so you find here that God is then bringing about a final judgment of vengeance particularly upon the nations

that have mistreated Israel. And that's not inconsistent because you can usually determine a nation's righteousness by how it treats the people of God. In fact, in the 25th chapter of Matthew when you have the judgment of the nations, Christ will judge the nations on the basis of their treatment of His people, Israel. In the 12th chapter of Genesis, the Abrahamic Covenant, if anybody blesses you, he'll be blessed; if anybody curses you, God says he'll be cursed. So the armies of God's angelic hosts go to the north and they go to the south. None of them go east and west simply because the Mediterranean Sea and the Arabian Desert prevented any kind of thing like that. Now, in verse 7, again, you have an interesting note. You don't have any red horses going anywhere. Why not the red horses? Well, the best we can say is that most likely the red horses are the last thing. For some reason they're kind of held in check until the black and the white and the dappled gray have done their work and then comes in the terrible bloodshed that follows. There's really no other reason to assume why they aren't mentioned unless they don't go out at the same time. But finally they all go and you have in the middle of verse 7, "Go from here. Walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth." Now, it's interesting to mention that even though these angelic hosts just go north and south, that is merely the exit and they cover the globe. God's final judgment will cover the world. Nothing escapes; nothing is left out, worldwide judgment on the nations. Now, you say, John, when is this gonna happen? Well, it's gonna happen when Jesus returns. Read Matthew 24 and 25. Christ will come in His glory. You compare that with Zechariah. He'll stand on the Mount of Olives. The Mount of Olives will split wide open and at that point, the nations of the world will be gathered into the valley of Jehoshaphat and they will be judged and all individuals who are ungodly and all whose ungodliness has been manifest in their mistreatment of God and His people will be condemned and punished by being sent to eternal perdition. That's the judgment that's gonna happen. Now, later on at the end of the kingdom there will be a final sentencing. But God comes down and slays them and sends them to await the final punishment. The last verse of the vision, verse 8, offers us the best key to the interpretation and this I call the satisfaction. The symbol, verses 1 to 3, the significance, 4 to 7 and the satisfaction, verse 8. Listen to this. "Then cried he to me and spoke to me saying, 'Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted My spirit in the north country.'" What does this mean? There is a loud crying and whether it's interpreter angel or God Himself, he is speaking for God. And there's a loud cry. God says, these have quieted My spirit. What does that mean? That means that my spirit was always in turmoil until vengeance was accomplished, you see. And now God's spirit is at rest. He is appeased by judgment. He is satisfied, particularly...notice verse 8...He is particularly satisfied from those who have gone to the north country because it was from the north that the worst of all enemies came...Babylon. And, listen. In the book of Revelation what does the writer of Revelation call the final form of evil?...Babylon. And so it is when the ultimate Babylon is put down that God's spirit is at rest. In Zechariah, chapter 5, in our last study, we saw that God was going to deal with Babylon and He called it there the land of Shinar, that ultimately, evil will be summed up under the name Babylon because that's where it all began, at the Tower of Babel, organized, systematic, worldwide evil. And so when God at the end comes and goes with His host against Babylon, the final system, and wipes it out, then God's spirit is at rest. Now, Israel can never come into its kingdom till this happens.

Now, that brings us to point two. Point one, the condemnation of the nations, point two, the coronation of the King. Verse 9...and this is wonderful to see the coronation that God has planned for the Lord, Christ. The remarkable series of eight visions is now over. This is not a vision beginning in verse 9; this is a word from the Lord the morning after the visions. The visions are gone now. It's the morning after. Zechariah has arisen from seeing these marvelous visions of future and there is a beautiful act that takes place on that next day that actually did happen historically, no doubt, to symbolize the coronation of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this has got to be one of the most marvelous passages in all Scripture on the exaltation of Jesus Christ. And I want to remind you of something,

people, that we need to remind ourselves of as Christians. The climax of history...note this...the climax of history is not an event. The climax of history is a person, always a person. To the Jew, the climax of history was always the arrival of Messiah, a person. Verse 9, "And the word of the Lord came to me saying"...see, it isn't a vision. This is a direct revelation from God. The visions are over. This is an historic event. "The word of the Lord came," but it came again in a symbol or a picture or a type. Verse 10, "Take of them of the captivity, even of Heldai, of Tobijah and of Jedaiah, who are come from Babylon, and come the same day and go into the house of Josiah, the son of Zephaniah." All right, now, stop there for a minute. Let me tell you what's happening. Although there were many people back in the area of Palestine and many had come back from the Babylonian captivity, there were still many who were there. And every once in awhile, a new caravan of people, Jewish people, would come back to Israel from Babylon. Now, this particular day a caravan like that had arrived. These were latecomers leaving Babylon years after the first group had come back. And this group was made up of some individuals who proved to be very interesting, Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah and Josiah. Now, these men had come back and they weren't coming empty handed. They had come from Babylon loaded up with gold and silver and the reason they had the gold and silver was they wanted to make a contribution to the rebuilding of the temple. And so they came back ready to give this to the temple that was going to be built by Zerubbabel, the restoration temple, the rebuilding of the temple. In fact, I want to tell you something interesting. As I began to study these names...and I can never get by names without studying them...I found out that all of them have very, very God-honoring names. Heldai means "the Lord's world." Tobijah means "God is good." Jedaiah means "God knows." And Josiah means "the Lord supports." So they all had God-honoring names, names that spoke of the character of God. Now, right after the vision, on the very same day, this caravan arrives. Divine providence dovetails this beautifully. And Zechariah is told to go and meet them. And then verse 11, watch this. "Then take the silver and the gold"...in other words, they'll be bringing you silver and gold for the temple, but you take it..."and make crowns"...now, that is plural in the Hebrew and so your version probably says crowns with an "s." But the Hebrew is not meaning to say that there are multiple crowns; it is meaning to say there is like a composite crown. Take the silver and the gold and make a silver crown and gold crown that is really a composite of one crown. So they want the silver and the gold to be made into one crown "and set upon the head"...now, watch this one..."of Joshua, the son of Josedech, the high priest." Now, when I first read that, that was shocking to me. And the reason it was shocking to me is this. In the Old Testament, the priestly office and the kingly office were always kept distinct, always. In fact, do you remember, I think it's II Chronicles, chapter 26 where King Uzziah decided that he wanted to play like a priest. And so he tried to take on the priestly role. And you remember how God reacted to that. A king was not a priest. A priest was not a king. Those two were distinct. You say, well, then what is this all about? Why are they crowning Joshua the high priest? It is only a picture, that's all, only a picture. Listen, there will be in history only one king who is a priest. Who is that?...Jesus Christ. And all you need to do to know that is to read Hebrews 7:1. "For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God..." He was the only other one which was way back before Israel was even a nation. He is the one who will be, in a sense, like, or rather, whom the Messiah will be like. And it says he was a "king of righteousness" and a "king of peace. Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life, but is made like unto the Son of God..." Melchizedek is a picture. Christ is the fulfillment, the only King Priest. And so you have here a picture of Christ, the coronation of the great High Priest. And I want to show you something interesting. Verse 12. Here is the significance of the symbol or the type. "And speak to him saying..." He says, now, Zechariah, you say this. The Lord said to Zechariah, you say this. "...Thus speaks the Lord of hosts saying, 'Behold the Man whose name is The Branch...' Now, stop there for a minute. Do you remember somebody else who said "Behold the Man"? Who was it?...Pilate in John 19:5. The words of Pilate when Pilate said "Behold the Man," he didn't know it, but he was echoing the prophecy of Zechariah, that the Messiah, the

ultimate King Priest would be a man. If the assembled Jews had not been demonically blinded by hatred and unbelief, they may have recalled the prophecy of Zechariah. Once again, He wears a real crown, a real diadem as a man...God incarnate. Then it says, "whose name is The Branch," or literally, the shoot, the sprout. Now, that is a Messianic title for Him that is used in several places in the Old Testament, here and in Isaiah, and it's also used, as we saw, in chapter 3 of Zechariah and verse 8. It says if you have...and I don't know how else to explain it...but it says if you have the fallen tree of David and it's chopped down and fallen, but in the end time it puts forth a new shoot and the fallen tree of David revives in the new life in the form of Messiah King, Jesus Christ.

Now, beloved, I want you to watch this with me because this is the exaltation of the One whom we adore, Jesus Christ. Eight things are said about Him. First of all, "and He shall grow up out of His place"... "and He shall grow up out of His place..." That echoes for us the words of Isaiah in chapter 53 and verse 2, "for He shall grow up before Him like a tender plant and like a root out of a dry ground." "He shall grow up out of His place..." What does it mean? It means that from His own people and from His own land, He shall grow up. And what did they say in the Bible of Jesus when He was 12 years old?... "and He grew in wisdom and stature and"... what?... "favor with God and man." He grew up as a man among men although He was God of very God. The prophecy says the Messiah will grow up out of His own place. He will be one of the people of God, one of the people of Israel. He will come where you would expect Him to come from. He will sprout from the fallen trunk of David to reign and rule.

Secondly, it says of Him in verse 12, "He shall build the temple of the Lord"... "He shall build the temple of the Lord." Do you know what happened after the first time Jesus came? When Jesus came the first time, He cleansed the temple and then just after He left, God came in 70 A.D. and did what?...destroyed the temple. But there's coming a day, beloved, in the future when God is going to send the Messiah back to rebuild the temple. And if you will read Ezekiel 40 to 42, you can read a description of the temple He will build on the earth during His kingdom. And there is repetition in the Hebrew that makes it emphatic. And what's beautiful here is the contrast. In spite of His lowliness, in spite of the fact that He is just a shoot, in spite of the fact that He comes from the common people, rising out of His own place, He...and it's emphatic in the Hebrew...He, Himself shall build the temple of the Lord. He isn't gonna need any help. You say, why? Because there's coming a day, beloved, in the end time when Christ rules in the world that the whole world will worship God, the whole world, or they will be judged instantly.

The third thing it says about Him, verse 13, again it says, "Even He shall build the temple of the Lord" emphasizing the emphatic character of that statement. And then it says, "He shall bear the glory..." Boy, that's such a great statement. You know, I feel like John in Revelation, chapter 10. You know, when I think about the coming of Jesus Christ, I have two reactions. One is negative because my heart aches for people who will be left without Him. But my reaction is also positive because it's time for Christ to be exalted, isn't it. And you see, what He's saying here is this. "He will bear the glory." He finally will be laden with majesty. He finally will be laden with glory and with honor and He will receive what He is due and it will be then that the choirs of Revelation 4 and 5 can shout their hallelujahs. It's certainly a deserved day when He comes as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. "He shall bear the glory." He, Himself...again, in the Hebrew...He, Himself shall bear the glory. In the Old Testament God said, "My glory will I not give to another." And it'll all be His in that day and we'll be a part of the hosanna chorus that sings glories and hallelujahs to His name. What a deserved day for the humiliated One.

Then further it says about the Branch who will come, He "shall sit and rule upon His throne,"...now, watch this..."and...shall be a priest upon His throne..." Boy, that's new. Listen, as I told you earlier, kings and priests just didn't mix. There was no way that someone could be both of those, but the end time comes and the Messiah comes to be the King and the Priest. In Psalms 110 and verse 4 the psalmist says regarding this, "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent"...this is a prophecy of the Messiah..."Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." And what kind of priest was Melchizedek? Go back to Genesis and read about him. He was a priest who was also a king. The Messiah will be the same. Listen, in Hebrews 1 He is at the right hand of the Father as a priest, verse 3, but in Hebrews 1:13, all things had been put under His feet. He is also a King, see. And as King, He rules and as Priest, He intercedes.

Fifthly, it says about Him...if we had time, we could expand all of these and they are worthy to be expanded...it says at the end of verse 13, "and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." What it means there is He'll make peace between the office of king and the office of priest. And you say, what does that mean? Listen to this. Do you know how in America today and in many countries of the world there is a clear separation between...what?...church and state. Not in the kingdom. He will harmonize both. He will bring both into one. And even in Israel, throughout Israel's history, how many times the king was vile and the king was rotten. On the other hand you had the priests and the prophet crying out to God and there was no harmony. And how many times in the history of the world has there been a terrible dichotomy between religion and politics? Not in the kingdom because the same One who rules with the role of King is the same One who intercedes and makes the worship of the true God the measure of every man, the Lord Jesus Christ. No discord, no disharmony.

Sixthly, it says of Him, and this is in verse 15 at the very beginning, "And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord..." Let me ask you this. To a Jew, who was the one who was far off?...a Gentile. You have that very same phrase in Ephesians. You have it in Romans. Those who were far off have become near. The far off are the Gentiles and you know what it's saying? I like this. Notice, "And they that are far off shall come and build **the** temple..." No, "build"...what?...**the** temple..." Who's gonna build the temple? Christ is. Boy, I'll tell you, the Holy Spirit doesn't even miss a preposition. They'll come and make a contribution in it. And it says here that in the kingdom there will be a delegation of Gentiles worshipping the true God. There will be a people who were a no people who will become God's people in God's kingdom. In Isaiah 2, verse 2 it says, "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord...shall be established in the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills and all nations shall flow unto it." All nations! "And many people shall go and say, 'Come ye and let us go to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths..." Many nations, all nations in the kingdom coming into the presence and the true worship of the one true God. And so, Christ will be worshipped by nations from all over the world. In Micah 4:1, "...in the last days it shall come to pass"...almost the same statement..."the mountain of the house of the Lord...be established in the top of the mountains...be exalted above the hills and people shall flow unto it and many nations shall come and say, 'Come and let us go...to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob and He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths..." Gentiles will come in that day to worship God.

And so, we see the marvelous picture of Jesus Christ. There's one other thought. Look at verse 15 again. When He comes, it says, "you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me unto you." Listen, I'll say it again. "You shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me unto you." Listen, when Jesus comes to set up His kingdom, there isn't gonna be any question about the fact that this is an

absolutely accurate fulfillment of God's prophecy. Now, there are many people today who will deny the literal return of Christ. There are many people today who want to deny the actual physical literal kingdom on earth. But here, Zechariah is saying...really, the Word of the Lord is saying...in that day, when He comes, you will know that God's Word has come to pass. Christ comes, then, as a confirmation of God's Word. In fact, I'm convinced that Christ is actually speaking here. You say, why so? Look at the phrase again. "You shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent"...what's the next word?... "Me unto you." I will come as a confirmation of God's truth.

And then this condition, "And this shall come to pass if you will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God." You say, what is He asking there? What is He saying? Is He saying that the kingdom is dependent on us? No, He's not saying that at all. What He is saying is that your participation in the kingdom is dependent on you. The fulfillment of the kingdom is gonna happen because God has so planned it. But whether or not you're a participant of it or not is gonna be dependent upon whether you obeyed His voice. Now, it is true that the kingdom cannot come until God judges and God saves Israel. But listen, that's God's plan to carry out. What He's saying here is, this is going to come to pass for you if you will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God. Not all will. Did you know that when Christ comes...and it says all Israel shall be saved...do you know that doesn't mean every single Jew; it just means the nation in general. Why? Because Ezekiel 20:28 says even then there will be Jews who will rebel and God will purge out the rebels. You see, the kingdom will come and God will bring it to pass but only the obedient will enjoy it.

And so, what do we learn about the Christ? He grows up out of Israel, He will come to build the millennial temple, He will bear the glory, He will rule as King and Priest, He will make peace between those two offices, He opens the kingdom to the Gentiles, all nations of the world, He comes to corroborate God's Word and finally, He demands...what?...obedience to His Word.

And so we see the symbol, the crowning of Joshua, the significance, it's a picture of Christ, lastly, the shrine, verse 14. "And the crown shall be to Helem"...which is simply another name for Heldai back in verse 10...and many people in those days had multiple names so it's just another name for him..."and to Tobijah and to Jedaiah and to Hen"...and, incidentally, Hen is another name for Josiah...the crown shall be to those four "for a memorial in the temple of the Lord." You tell those four fellows to give you that gold and silver. You make a crown and after you've put it on His head and it's made its symbolic statement, take it off His head and put it in the temple as a memorial. Zerubbabel's temple, according to Jewish tradition, had a big high window in it up somewhere on the wall. And hanging in that window at the height of the temple, says Jewish tradition, hung that crown for years and years. Why? So that it might be a constant reminder that the King was coming.

Well, Zechariah has taken us on a long trip from the troubles of Israel in the time of his life to the kingdom. What are the implications of this? Well, I guess there are two. Let me remind you of them. One, the message the Spirit of God would speak to you tonight is, are you a part of that kingdom? Is it true of you that you belong to God's kingdom? Is Colossians 1:13 a reality in your life? Have you been translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son? Are you a child of the kingdom? Can you claim the reality, say, of these words: "Hearken, my beloved brethren. Hath not God chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom?" Are you one of that little group sitting there hearing Jesus say, "Fear not, little flock, for it's your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." There's only one condition and that's to be obedient to the voice of the Shepherd, obedient to the voice of the King, the Lord Jesus Christ. And so the first thing we need to say then is, it's gonna happen and soon. Will you be a part of it? You have to be a son of the

kingdom to be in the kingdom and that comes by putting your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly, you say, I'm already a Christian, John. Well, that's good. You're already a child of the kingdom, aren't you? Oh, yeah, I'm gonna be there. I'm gonna enjoy that thing to the hilt. I feel the same way. I'm gonna live it up in the kingdom. But may I remind you of this, that there is some great responsibility for being a child of the kingdom. Listen to I Thessalonians 2:12, Paul's prayer, "that you would walk worthy of God, who has called you unto His kingdom." You see, if God has called you to His kingdom, that has implications, doesn't it. You can't run around saying, Say, everyone, I'm a child of the heavenly kingdom. I belong to the King and I want to dwell with God in His kingdom, and then live a life that mocks God. So, you see, if you're not a Christian, you need to become one so you can be in the kingdom. It's coming. And, incidentally, I would add, I already and you already who know Christ, enjoy the benefits of the kingdom right here and now, don't we, cause Christ lives in us. And then, if you are a Christian, you need to take seriously the responsibility of walking worthy of one who is called into His kingdom. That's a high calling. Let's pray.

Father, we've had a good time tonight. It's been good because we love each other and we've shared that love and we love You and we've shared it with You and we've shared Your Word, Your love letter to us. We don't rejoice over judgment, but it's part of the message we have to preach. It's part of what we have to say. We thank You for warning us. We thank You for being faithful to put stop signs all the way along the road saying, please, please, My holy nature has to judge sin. Please accept My provision. And Father, we know because of Your holy nature if we don't accept that provision, You have no other choice but to judge us. We're not happy about that. That's a sad thing and we don't rejoice in condemnation but on the other hand, we certainly rejoice in coronation because Jesus is so worthy. And we do wait the day when we can cry hosanna to Him who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords and He can take the earth, which once crucified Him, and cleanse it and make it His own. And we think with the apostle John, Father, that what we ought to say now is that You said "Behold, I come quickly," and our response is "Even so, come Lord Jesus," for whatever foolish reason we would desire to hold onto this life is paled when we consider that You deserve to be glorified. So glorify Yourself and the sooner, the better. Thank You for our fellowship. And for those who may not know You tonight, we pray that this might be the night that they become children of the kingdom. For all of us as Christians, may we begin that fresh commitment today to walk worthy of the kingdom of which we are citizens and we'll praise You in Jesus' name. Amen.

Available online at: <http://www.gty.org>

COPYRIGHT (C) 2017 Grace to You

You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (<http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright>).