Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

The Day of the Lord
Scripture: Zechariah 14:1-21
Code: 2171

Take your Bible, if you will, and let's look at the fourteenth chapter of the book of Zechariah...Zechariah chapter 14. I feel that if there's anything that I feel somewhat comfortable with it's the Greek of the New Testament. I had about seven years of Greek study and so I feel like I really can handle that. And when I get to the Old Testament, I don't quite feel as capable and consequently it makes greater demands on me in terms of my own study time to draw out of any given passage what's there, trying to deal with the language with which I am less familiar. And then to compound my own lack of alacrity in Hebrew, Zechariah is an infinitely complex prophecy. And to make matters worse, I try to cover 21 verses for tonight. So in the complexity of all of that kind of effort we're going to see what we can do with the whole fourteenth chapter at one shot. Get comfortable. We'll see what happens.

This is our last look at Zechariah's wonderful message. And I really believe that God has used this in my own life to increase my understanding not only of this book but of much of the Old Testament apocalyptic literature, of much of the heart of a prophet, much of God's attitude toward His people Israel and much of it, of course, carries right on into the New Testament as God doesn't change. So it's been a refreshing study.

The basic theme of the book of Zechariah, just to remind you, is the sweep of Israel's history from the time of Zechariah when the nation returned from the Babylonian captivity right on till the establishing of the millennial kingdom on earth. That is the subject of this fourteenth chapter, the establishing of the millennial kingdom. We started out in chapter 1 with Zechariah dealing with the people as they had come back, were endeavoring to rebuild their city which was in rubble, to rebuild the wall, etc. And Zechariah came along as a great prophet of comfort, a great prophet of hope and his message was to tell Israel that God was going to let them rebuild, God was going to let them restore their city. But more than that, God had an incredible future for them way off in the distance when all of human history came to its climax.

Now as we come to the fourteenth chapter, we really come to the climax, the final establishment of the millennial kingdom, the end of human history, as it were. And it's a tremendous chapter, it's just loaded with prophecy, some of it is very, very amazing. Some of it is very difficult to understand with our own limitations. But I do feel this way about it, I want to reaffirm this as we approach it. I do feel that we must interpret the fourteenth chapter literally. I read about five commentaries this week on this chapter that do not interpret the chapter literally. But they make it a symbolic chapter. They do not wish to have a restored Israel in their theology. They do not believe that God has anything left for the nation itself. They do not see a restoration of the people to the land in prophecy. They do not see an actual setting up of an actual earthly kingdom. And so there's some question about an actual battle of

Armageddon, etc. So they want to make these things figures or symbols rather that literal reality. And in so doing they are left with some very, very, very difficult problems. In fact, no less a man of God than Martin Luther himself wanted to approach the fourteenth chapter of Zechariah in a figurative way. He wanted to approach it as symbol language. And taking a figurative approach, he confessed after writing this particular chapter in commentary fashion these words, "In this chapter," said Luther, "I surrender for I am not certain of what the prophet speaks," end quote.

In other words, approaching it from a figurative or symbolic angle, Luther could make really no convincing sense out of it. He went on in expounding the chapter but didn't think it could have any reference to the end times and related it only to the period of the destruction of Jerusalem and all of the language was somehow symbolically fulfilled around 70 A.D.

Well, he was not alone, he was followed by many theologians in modern day times, those who are amillennial, those who do not believe in a literal kingdom, those who would take what is known as a covenant view of theology also want to do the same thing. The problem with it is that it leaves you with some very, very difficult issues to settle which could never be resolved. A very modern commentary written by a person named Baldwin attempts to take the same approach, very scholarly, very capably done, but hopelessly muddled in trying to interpret the chapter.

So, what I'm saying is the best way to approach it is simply to take it for what it says in its clearest literal meaning and leave it at that and let the Spirit of God worry about how He's going to bring it all to pass. Because when you try to make symbols out of it, your guess is as good as anybody else's, and none of really makes much sense.

In 1919 there was written a commentary on Zechariah by a man named David Baron...B-a-r-o-n. In my judgments, probably the finest work that's ever been written on the book of Zechariah. And David Baron took a literal approach. He took a literal approach to interpreting this book when literal approaches to these kinds of things were not really very popular, simply because it looked impossible for these things to happen. This is what David Baron wrote in 1919.

"First of all, we have to suppose a restoration of the Jews into their land in a condition of unbelief, not a complete restoration of the whole nation which will not take place until after their conversion, but a representative and influential remnant will return. It seems from Scripture that in relation to Israel and the land, there will be restoration before the Second Coming of our Lord, a very much the same state of things as existed at the time of His first coming when the threads of God's dealing with them nationally were finally dropped, not to be taken up again until the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled."

Now let me stop at that paragraph just to say this. Baron predicted a literal actual return of Israel to the land, a restoration of the nation in unbelief prior to any conversion experience. He goes on:

"There was at that time a number of Jews in Palestine representative of the nation but compared with the number of their brethren who were already Diaspora among the nations, they were a mere minority and not in a political independent condition."

Now this is what he's saying. He's saying when they come back in the end times, it seems to be the indication of Zechariah's prophecy that the whole nation will not come back initially, but a portion of

them will come back and the remainder of them will stay scattered all over the nations as they were in the time of Jesus. That is precisely what has happened. There is a remnant that has gone back. There is a great number that has gone back. But not comparable to the amount that still remains scattered around the world. So Baron was exactly accurate in his interpretation literally of Zechariah. "So it will be," he says, "they will be at first as compared with the whole nation only a representative minority in Palestine, and," he says, "a Jewish state will be probably formed either under the suscerainty(??) of one of the great powers or under international protection." Baron predicted the establishing of a Jewish state by virtue of his understanding of prophecy. Well in 1919 he was still a long ways off but he was right. And he said it will be done probably by some cooperation of a politically...or rather of an international protection agency. And you know as well as I do that the basic grant for Israel's existence in 1948 was given by the United Nations. So he was right again.
"And what follows after a brief interval of prosperity, there will come a night of anguish. What occasions the darkest hour in the night of Israel's sad history since their rejection of Christ is the gathering of the nations and the siege predicted in this fourteenth chapter."
Now in 1919 David Baron then predicted they would go back, only a minority would go back while the rest would remain scattered. They would go back in unbelief. They would go back and establish the nation. They would establish the nation under some kind of international protection. And they would remain there in prosperity for a while, until finally a great holocaust would come upon them from which they would be delivered by the Lord Jesus Christ and at that time they would see Him for His Messiah and they would enter into faith and salvation and the Kingdom. What he said in 1919 so far has come to pass step by step without missing a button because he took a literal approach.
Now the only reason I bother to tell you these things is because I want to reaffirm in your minds that you can take a literal approach to the Bible and be vindicated. And that's precisely what David Baron did and so far he has been vindicated in his interpretation. So we make no apology for taking this very literally.
Now as we come to chapter fourteen, I want you to realize what's happening. In the last days of Israel's history, you and I are seeing Israel regathered. They've established their nation under a grant given to them by the United Nations, international protection. They are there in unbelief as would be indicated by the prophets. They are waiting the time of salvation. And it can't come until Jesus returns and they look on Him whom they have pierced. Prior to that time, they will make a pact with a false Messiah. Remember that? With the foolish shepherd that Zechariah talked about in chapter 12. They will make a pact with the Antichrist. And everything will go along fine during this seven-year covenant, but in the middle of this seven-year covenant this beast, this Antichrist, this foolish shepherd, this false Messiah will break his covenant with Israel. And when he breaks the covenant with Israel, he will require that they worship him and him alone. And when the people of Israel refuse, he gathers the armies of the world together to march against Israel. And he comes against Israel under really the command of Satan to exterminate the Jews...the people of God.
This leads then to a great siege of the city of Jerusalem and the land of Palestine as we know as the battle of Armageddon. So what do we have to look forward to? We've already seen Israel beginning

to be regathered. We've already seen them establish their state. We've already seen some of these things come to pass. They're there in unbelief. Some are still scattered. We know that their mentality is such as would be looking for someone who could offer them international protection, and there is coming that individual. When he comes for three and a half years, everything will be fine. And then he will cause them to go into chaos literally when he desecrates their worship, demands worship of himself and in response, when they don't do it, he calls the armies of the world to come and storm Israel.

Now it is precisely at the siege of Jerusalem that we pick up the fourteenth chapter. Here are the armies of the world gathered against Jerusalem. Now we've already learned from chapter 13 that when the siege begins, it's basically successful to start with. There is tremendous blood shed. There is tremendous devastation. The book of Revelations says the blood will be to the depth of the horses' bridles for an area of 200 miles. There is going to be blood shed like the world has never seen. There is going to be a holocaust in the land. There is going to be a seeming victory on the part of Antichrist and his hosts. And precisely at the point where this victory looks secure is when Christ returns. And that's exactly what we have in the fourteenth chapter.

The chapter opens then with the defeated Jerusalem, stripped of its possessions, stripped of its honor, conquered by the world's armies. And the conquerors in fact are revelling in their spoils, having a great old time thinking they've won their battle just precisely when Jesus returns to turn the tide of battle totally.

Now as we look at the chapter, I want you to notice four major parts: the coming of the day of the Lord, the crowning of the Lord as King, the conquest of the nations and the character of the kingdom. And there is a sense of sequence in these points.

First of all, the coming of the day of the Lord. Let's begin at verse 1. We're going to move very rapidly, so stay awake. Verse 1, "Behold," that's to get your attention...hey you, listen...is what he's saying..."The day of the Lord comes and thy spoils shall be divided in the midst of thee." Now the opening phrase "the day of the Lord comes" is kind of an announcement all by itself. You can almost put an exclamation mark at the end of it and start the next phrase as a new paragraph..."the day of the Lord comes..." We have now reached a climax. Now what is the day of the Lord? Well, the day of the Lord as a term, mark it in your mind, refers to not one day but a period of time. We use the word "day" in the same way. We say this is the day of...this is the day of space travel, or this is the day of existentialism, or this is the day of alcoholism, or this is the day of marital breakup, or this is the day of whatever. We use it in that sense and that's the way it's used in this reference. This is the day of the Lord.

In other words, man has had his day, man has had his fling and now it's God's time. And the Lord is going to begin to do some things. And so the day of the Lord is a period of time beginning with the rapture of the church and extending through the millennial kingdom. It covers all kinds of events. It covers the Tribulation time when the Lord takes back the earth. It covers the conquering of the nations at Armageddon. It covers the judgment of the nations. It covers the establishment of the Kingdom. It covers the reign of Jesus Christ on earth for a thousand years. It covers the vanquishing

of Satan. It covers this whole great eschatological time block from the Rapture to the end of the Kingdom. That whole era of the end of history is the day of the Lord.
In other words, man's day is ended and the Lord begins to take back His earth...the day of the Lord. A great period of time when God sets up His own reign and takes the dominion away from unregenerate man. And so it is the day of the Lord.
And what's happening as we come to chapter 14, what facet of the day of the Lord are we dealing with? We've already seen some earlier in the book of Zechariah. At this particular point in the day of the Lord, we are at the time when Israel is under siege by the armies of the world. Now if you'll remember Daniel's prophecy and you remember the book of Revelation, you will remember there are four armies that gather against Israel...the army of the north which probably would involve the Russian nations and some Arab confederacy, according to Ezekiel 38, there is the armies coming from the south, the armies from the west, the revived Roman Empire, the armies of the east, perhaps some kind of Red Chinese confederacy, or whatever, and all of this converging on the land of Israel. And this is what we see as we begin the chapter.
And there seems to be a victory. They seem to have won their day. They seem to have accomplished their goal because it says in verse 1, "Thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of the thee." Now the "thee" here is Jerusalem, and the "thy" is Jerusalem. We know this because of the form, the feminine form, in the Hebrew. That is the antecedent, Jerusalem, which appears in the next verse.
Now it is very uncommon, now watch this, for an enemy to come in and conquer a place and then divide the spoil right in the middle of town. Usually they'll haul it off, they'll escape with their booty, they'll flee with their riches that they've gained. But they have such a sense of victory and such a sense of overwhelming confidence that they plop right down in the middle of Jerusalem feeling very smug and very secure and they begin to divvy up the booty right there on the spot because they feel so confident that the victory has been gained.
So, there they are sitting there seemingly accomplished the conquering, leisurely going about the dividing of the spoil and the booty as if they were taunting the inhabitants that were remaining in Jerusalem. And it is that...it is at that very moment that God begins to turn the tide of the battle. And Jerusalem's extremity becomes God's opportunity. Verse 2, "For I will...I'm just going to read the first part of the verse...for I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle." Now stop there.
Now we get a little hint here of something that's going on that might be a little surprising to the nation and that is that they are there because they have been gathered by whom? By God. In other words, they are not their own. They are not their own agency, they are not even really at this point accomplishing Satan's task, they are there under the sovereign control of God. And God has gathered them for two reasons. Reason number one, God is going to use them as an agency to purge out the rebels among His people. When that great battle of Armageddon comes and when those nations come and when they slaughter the ones they do, they're going to be dealing with the rebels in the nation Israel. They're going to be cleaning out and chastening and judging those that have been unbelieving. And so, God has gathered these nations with a Jewish purpose in mind and that is to act in judgment against unbelieving persons in Israel.

Secondly, He gathers them there in order to ultimately punish them as well. So God gathers them to act as a judgment agency against Israel, even as there was a time in history when Israel was used as a judgment agency against the nation, and secondly, to bring them to the place of judgment also.
Now notice, he says in verse 2, "I'll gather all nations." Now there are going to be representatives from all over the world. And as I told you, the east, the west, the north, the south, they'll all be represented there. The armies of the world literally are going to converge on that little area.
And that doesn't seem so remote anymore, frankly. Everybody in the world is very concerned. The Arab world is concerned about it. Russia is concerned about it. The west is concerned about it because of the tremendous resources that are there. The east, Red China and so forth, for the first time in history over the last ten years has showed great interest in the Middle East. So it's not an impossibility by any means.
In Revelation chapter 16 we get a further look at this. It says in verse 13, "I saw three unclean spirits like frogs...and I guess in his vision they looked like slimy creatures coming out of some kind of muck...came out of the mouth of the dragon, the mouth of the beast and the mouth of the false prophet, they're spirits of demons working miracles that go forth to the kings of the earth and the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God almighty."
In other words, these demons are going to gather the kings from all over the whole world to amalgamate in these great armies and they're all going to come against Israel. And God will use them as agencies of judgment and God will gather them there to be judged themselves.
Notice that it's going to happen at Jerusalem. This will be the focal point of the battle. We call it the battle of Armageddon because the Bible calls it that in Revelation 16. They will extend from the plain of Megiddo on the north, clear down really to Jerusalem and beyond to the south, and cover the whole land. Much of the battle will occur on the Plain of Megiddo, much of it will occur in the city of Jerusalem. So both Megiddo and Jerusalem figure prominently in this battle.
Now let's go on in verse 2, "And the city shall be taken and the houses rifled and the women raped and half the city shall go forth into captivity." Now do you remember ever reading Jeremiah chapter 30? If you did, you read about a period of time called "the time of Jacob's...what?...trouble." Jeremiah 30 verses 5 to 7 talks about the time of Jacob's trouble. Now this is the apex of the time of Jacob's trouble. Jacob is in more trouble now than Jacob has ever been. This is it.
And four things occur. Number one, the city is taken. Number two, the houses are plundered. Number three, the women are raped. Number four, half the city is taken POW...prisoners of war. It looks very bad. They're so smug, they're there dividing their spoil. Then we come to the next part of the verse, "And the residue, or the remnant, or the remainder, or the rest...either one in the Hebrew...of the people shall not be cut off from the city." Half are going to be spared. Now I tend to feel and I'm not dogmatic about this, but I tend to feel that the judgment part of it is going to be against the half or that's not...you don't have to mean exactly half, but approximately a half of the Jewish people apparently at that time are going to fall under the judgment of God whereas the other half are going to be spared because most likely they are the believing remnant. They are the believing remnant. Earlier Zechariah had told us in chapter 12 that two out of three would die of the whole nation. Two out of

every three throughout the whole nation would perish. Here, half out of the city of Jerusalem. And I believe that for the most part, although we wouldn't be dogmatic and say that only the unregenerate would die and only the regenerate would be spared at this point, I do feel that that's probably close to what occurs...that in judgment, the ungodly perish and the remnant is spared so that they can enter into God's Kingdom. And although I say I can't be dogmatic about it, I really do feel the conviction in my heart that it is the remnant that is spared so that God will populate His Kingdom with His believing people.

Now it looks very bleak at this point. You've only got half of the people left. Now you go to verse 3 and here is a great, great statement, "Then...and that ought to come down like a sword, that is a dramatic thing...then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations as when He fought in the day of battle." Now God is not about to allow the enemy to destroy the true remnant, the believing remnant, those who are of faith in the Messiah, those who are--I should say--ready to put faith in the Messiah, they haven't seen Him yet, those who are people of faith, those who are like those baptized by John the Baptist, a people prepared for His coming. And I believe that in order to prevent that, God moves in and He goes forth to fight against those nations.

Now, beloved, this is the direct personal intervention of the Lord Himself. And He comes in an hour when an apparent disaster is looming, an hour that looks like victory for the anti-God, Antichrist forces. And the Lord, who is called in Exodus I think it's chapter 15 verse 3, He's called there a man of war, comes. He is called all over the place in the Old Testament the Lord of armies, the Lord of hosts. And you read the Old Testament and you'll see again and again and again He's fighting for Israel. You see Him in armor, as it were. And here He comes again. And He comes to fight against the nations as when He fought in the day of battle. When was the day of battle? Why just go over the Old Testament, the day of battle was when Joshua won the victory at Gibeon, the day of battle was when Canaan was conquered. The day of battle was the great defeat of Sisera by Barak. There were many days of battle when God won, when God fought for His people. And as He did then, so He'll do in that future day. So, He's kind of like Joseph of old who made himself known to his brothers in their hour of deepest distress, so will God come in the great time of Jacob's trouble, He'll come out of the sky to fight for His people. And you and I well know that when He comes, He'll come in the form of Jesus Christ. We'll see more about that in a few moments.

So, what do we have then in the first three verses? We have the nations assembled to war against Palestine, the city has been taken and plundered. The spoil is being divided in the city. Half of the people remain. And all of a sudden the Lord arrives to fight. And let's go to verse 4 and see where He arrives first.

"And His feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives which is before Jerusalem on the east." Stop right there. Where is He going to return? Some people think it's Wheaton, Illinois, but it isn't. It's the Mount of Olives. I can only tell you that it's a thrill to stand on that mount and realize that. There is a place up there where they have...they have a church everywhere there, every place that Jesus supposedly ever did any thing, they built a church. They have one up on the Mount of Olives, several in fact, but there's one particular one that I think of that's right up on the top of it and it's called the

Church of the Ascension. And it's where they...in fact, it's interesting, they believe they found a footprint, you know, which is pretty ridiculous but anyway, so you can stand on the little spot from which He went right straight up.
But anyway, right on the top of that mountain is this little Church of the Ascension. And I couldn't help as I was standing in the courtyard of that church just looking up and realizing...and the Mount of Olives is little, it really ought to be the Bump of Olives, frankly. I mean, it's definitely compared to California, it's definitely a low-class mountain, but it's a little tiny area. And when He...it's very easy to visualize exactly where Christ is going to come. In fact, from one valley on one side of the Mount of Olives clear to Bethany on the other side of the Mount of Olives is a journey of two miles. So you know it's not big...a very big mount...to the east of the city. And that's where He's going to return.
You know, I was kind of excited to read the fact that in verse 3 it says the Lord is going to come, Jehovah is going to come, el gibor(?), the mighty man, Jehovah is going to come and He's going to come and His feet are going to stand on the Mount of Olives. What a tremendous statement this is about the deity of Jesus Christ. How is it that Jehovah's feet could ever stand on the Mount of Olives? How is it that Jehovah even has feet? Well, as you and I know, He...He who came in human form will come again in human form because in Acts 1:11 it says this same Jesus who is taken up from you shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven. He'll come in the same physical literal personal visible form as when He left to that mount. That's a special mountain.
In fact, all through Old Testament history it's special. Some time if you want an interesting study, go right from the beginning of the use of the Mount of Olives and you'll find that it's used even in the time of David, all the way through. You go through the history of the Mount of Olives, you find some incredible events that occur on that place. But just a little reminder. The final overthrow of the Davidic kingdom, the final time when the kingdom was overthrown and split and divided into Israel and Judah, really the beginning of the times of the Gentiles, when that occurred Ezekiel looked in his vision in chapter 11 and he said, "I saw the glory of God departing over the Mount of Olives." In other words, when God left, when His kingdom was divided and God departed from His people, He left from the Mount of Olives.
And later on in the forty-third chapter of Ezekiel, when Ezekiel sees in the prophecy of the future the return of the glory of God, he sees it come right back to the Mount of Olives. What a beautiful picture that is because when Jesus left, He left from the Mount of Olives. And when He comes back, He'll come back to the Mount of Olives. In fact, it is He who is the glory of God incarnate. And as the Shekinah left at the breaking up of the Davidic kingdom, left from the Mount of Olives, and will return to the Mount of Olives, so did Jesus leave who is the glory of God in human flesh from the Mount of Olives and so will He return to the same spot. And what I believe Ezekiel saw when He looked ahead in chapter 43 and saw the glory of God come back to the Mount of Olives, I believe what He was really seeing was the return of Jesus Christ in His blazing glory.
How wonderful it is to think of what that mountain could tell us if it could see and talk. That same mountain on which Jesus shed so many tears night after night, that same mountain would know the denting of His knees as He prayed there night after night after night...that same mountain that heard

the precious conversations that He held with His disciples, that mountain that witnessed the agony and the bloodshed, that mountain that must have been right there watching when He came out of the grave, that mountain that knew in the days of His flesh the weary feet as they walked its paths, that mountain some day is going to receive those same feet.

You say, "Don't you think this is a figure of speech?" No, I told you that at the beginning. I believe Jesus is coming to the Mount of Olives.

Now let's go on in the verse to see what happens when He gets there. "And the Mount of Olives shall split in the middle toward the east and toward the west and there shall be a very great valley and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north and half of it toward the south." Now that's an earthquake, folks. Did you know that God sometimes uses earthquakes to announce His arrival? Well He does. I don't want to take the time tonight to go into all of it but a couple of minor prophets, minor in the sense that they had a short book, not that their message was minor, always remember that. A couple of short prophets, Micah says this, chapter 1 verse 2, don't try to find these, Micah 1:2, "Hear all ye people, hearken O earth and all that is in it and let the Lord God be witness against you, the Lord from His holy temple for behold the Lord comes forth out of His place and will come down and tread on the high places of the earth and the mountains shall be melted under Him and the valleys shall be cleft like wax before a fire and the waters that are poured down a steep place." And then Naham says the same thing in Naham 1:5, "When the Lord comes, the mountains will quake before Him and the hills melt and the earth burned in His presence, yea and all the world and all that dwell in it."

So when God starts tramping around in the end times, there's going to be some shaking going on. That's essentially what he's saying. But I want you to notice this is not just something in Zechariah. The book of Revelation talks about similar things. In Revelation 16 and verse 18, it says and here you come with the final bowl, the final act before Christ comes, the final judgment at Armageddon, this is the same time period exactly. And it says at this time there were voices and thunders and lightnings and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were on the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts and the cities of the nations fell and great Babylon came in remembrance before God to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath, and every island fled away and the mountains were not found and there fell on men great hail out of heaven, every stone about a hundred pounds.

Now you've got a worldwide cataclysm generated by some kind of a supernatural cosmic earthquake when the feet of Jesus Christ hit the Mount of Olives. Not exactly like the baby born in the manger the first time He came. He comes in worldwide power and immediately the world is going to know He arrived. In fact, many of them are going to scream for the rocks and the mountains to fall on them to hide them from His face because they know He comes in judgment.

Well, one of the phenomena that occurs as a result of this earthquake, one of the phenomena is going to be the creation of a valley. Now let's assume that I'm standing on Mount Moriah right here which is the temple ground and looking east. In fact, if I was standing on just the edge of Mount Moriah, the back side of the temple wall, the back of Jerusalem, right in front of me would be a valley,

very small valley. And through that valley is a dry little bed that is known as the Valley Kidron where the brook Kidron ran. Down that valley, up the other side is a little road and then is the Mount of Olives. When Jesus comes, the mountain is going to be split and it's going to split this way...so that exiting from Jerusalem you would have a flat valley going right straight out straight to the east. It is well known that the greatest obstacle to an eastern escape from Jerusalem is the Mount of Olives. Although it fortifies the city in some sense as a protection, it also confines the people in the city from having an easy way to escape.

Because if they did escape they would have to go all the way down this side, all the way up that side and over the top making it difficult. So in order to facilitate a hasty exit for the depressed people who are undergoing the siege, the Lord Jesus hits the mountain, splits the thing wide open, creates a valley and God's people Israel can flee right through that open pass.

And then you know what I believe happens? I believe that Joel chapter 3 indicates that that valley is the Valley of Jehoshaphat and Joel calls it the "Valley of...what?...Decision." And into that valley God is going to gather all the nations and judge them after His people have fled to safety. And that there's going to be some kind of devastation occur to the armies of the world as they attempt after Israel flees down that open channel, as they attempt to pursue Israel, just as Pharaoh's army did when they tried to cross the sea that God opened for Israel, that whole thing is going to come crashing down on them when God acts in mighty judgment right while they're in the Valley of Decision.

And so, God creates a valley. Verse 5, "And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains." It's called the "valley of the My mountains" in the Hebrew. It's the valley of My mountains. In other words, there was one mountain there and no valley, but I made a valley and two mountains by splitting it. He formed it by splitting Olive. It's His valley, His mountains. And they'll flee through that channel, "For the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal." Now the word "Azal" in Hebrew means "near." And it is apparent that in that period of time, the location very near to Israel on the east was an area known as Azal, sometimes spelled A-z-a-l, sometimes A-z-e-l. And what he's saying is that the valley is going to split wide open right up near the city. So you don't have to run a long way down and up any hills to get to that open channel of escape, that thing is going to split right open right up near the city so that there will be immediate access. And they'll flee for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azal. "Yea, you shall flee as you fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah."

Now we don't know much about that earthquake. Amos 1:1 talks about it, but we don't know much about it. But apparently it was an awful earthquake and the people had to flee. And so he says you're going to flee in that day just like you fled at the time of the earthquake in Uzziah's day.

And then this...this has got to be the greatest, "And the Lord my God shall come." People, that is a great statement of the deity of Jesus Christ. You get that? It is His feet on the Mount of Olives. The angel said this same Jesus shall so come in like manner as you've seen Him go. You saw Him leave physically, personally, bodily, literally, visibly from the Mount of Olives, that's the way He'll return. And this same Jesus is here called the Lord my God. He's going to come.

Just to give you a picture of His coming, look at Revelation 19. When He comes, I want you to know He's coming in battle regalia. He's coming to win a battle. He's coming to judge the ungodly. And it says in Revelation 19:11, "And I saw heaven open," this is the same scene, and John is looking at it, it's the same moment, the Mount of Olives is about to be split, here He comes, "I saw heaven open and behold a white horse." Literally in the Hebrew..in the Greek it means a dazzling brilliant horse. "And He that sat on him was called faithful and true and in righteousness He doth judge and make war." Here He comes. "And His eyes are like a flame of fire." That speaks of righteous judgment. "And on His head were many crowns," that speaks of sovereignty." "And He had a name written that no man knew but He Himself," and I don't know what that is because nobody knows. "And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood," and this is the blood splattering of the war. "And His name is called the Word of God." So we know who it is, it's Christ.

"And the armies that were in heaven followed Him on white horses clothed in fine linen, white and clean." You say, "Who's this?" That's us, folks, and I'll show you in a minute. "Out of His mouth goes a sharp sword that with He He should smite the nations and He shall rule them with a rod of iron and He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God and He has on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords." What an incredible scene.

Now go back to Zechariah. Now Zechariah sees the same scene in another manifestation, in another vision, another revelation from God. And he sees at the end of verse 5, "The Lord my God shall come," and watch this, "and all the saints with Thee." In other words, when Jesus comes, He will be accompanied by the saints. Now I believe this is indicating actually several groups of people. First of all, this term here is used in some Old Testament passages to refer to the righteous among Israel. It's used to refer to the righteous among Israel. Other times it is used to refer to angels who are also called holy ones. And certainly we understand from Paul's use of the Greek term for "saint" that it is used to refer to Christians. Now I'm convinced that when Jesus comes in that great wonderful day of triumph, He's going to be accompanied by the angels, we know that. And He's going to be accompanied by the church and I believe He's also going to be accompanied by the Old Testament saints who at that time will be resurrected to be gathered with Him to constitute the army of righteous people coming out of heaven.

What I'm saying is that you're going to be there. You say, "You sure about that?" I'm absolutely sure you're going to be there because in 1 Thessalonians chapter 3 verse 13 it says this, "Even at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."

"Now wait a minute, what are you talking about, Paul?" Well, I'm talking about you, "To the end that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God even our Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." He's saying I want you to be ready for that time. I want you to be a part of that.

You say, "Well, it seems to me he's just indicating for us to be ready. Where do we get to be a part of it?" Well, to complete Paul's thought you have to go to Colossians chapter 4...chapter 3, pardon me, verse 4. It says this, "When Christ who is our life shall appear," that is at His manifestation, "then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." In Jude verse 14 it says, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten

thousands of His saints."
Now, basically "saints" can refer to angels, refer to Old Testament saints, refer to New Testament saints. I'm sure the angels will be with Him. That may be the primary reference of these texts. I'm sure the church will be with Him because that has to be the only reference indicated in Colossians 3:4. And it is possible that at that very moment the resurrection of the bodies of the Old Testament saints will occur and they'll accompany Him as well. And so the saints will be there. I know we'll be there because when He shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory.
Now watch this. At this very time, back in Zechariah, at this very time when Christ comes and all the saints are with Him riding on the white horses with the white robes and this fantastic glory comes out of heaven, at this very time I believe the remaining remnant of Israel, the remnant of Israel is going to look up and they're going to see Him whom they what? Pierced. And they're going to mourn for Him as an only son. And it is precisely at this moment that the events of chapter 12 take place, when they look on Him whom they've pierced, when a fountain of blessing is opened, when they repent. Now you say, "Well then it's going to take a little while for Him to get here." Well, I don't know. But I think at the moment that this occurs, when this thing begins to unfold, whatever the time gap is, whatever it takes for people to repent, when it begins to happen, the remnant is going to turn to Christ and the events of chapter 12 verse 4 to chapter 13 verse 2 slip right into this point. This is a fantastic day.
Look, there are some more changes in nature. Quickly, verse 6, I'm going to read you the proper rendering, "It shall come to pass in that day there will be no light, the luminaries will fade." In other words, when Jesus comes, all of the stars and the suns of heaven are going to go out. The heaven is going to just be black, all the lights are going to go out. Now this is discussed all over the Old Testament. This is not something just extracted out of this one text. Repeatedly the Old Testament talks about the day when God changes the patterns of heaven. Isaiah 13:9, "The day of the Lord comes cruel with wrath and anger, the stars of heaven and the constellations there of shall not give their light, the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause its light to shine." Isaiah 24 talks about it, Joel 3 talks about it, Matthew 24 talks about it and maybe the most clear passage is Revelation 6:12 to 14 where it says, "The lights of heaven go out, the heaven is rolled up like a scroll, the stars fall out of the sky like figs overripe when the tree is shaken, the whole place goes black." And in the midst of the blackness comes the blazing revelation of Jesus Christ with all His saints. Now I believe this is really going to happen literally. And at that moment Israel is going to turn and look and they're going to believe and they're going to turn to their Messiah and they're going to be wonderfully saved and spared judgment and gathered into the Kingdom.
You say, "What does the rest of the world do?" They cry for the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb." The unbelievers scream in fear and terror. But the remnant is redeemed. The nation is redeemed.
The next verse gives us another thought of the uniqueness of the day. "It shall be one day," and the word in Hebrew "one" here means one day, the only one of its kind, one unique day like no other day, "which shall be known to the Lord, only He can know all that it involves, it won't be day and it won't be night, it will come to pass that at evening time it will be light." In other words, the whole of nature is

just going to go into an imbalance. The whole thing is out of perspective. All that we understand as night and day is going to be ended at that point. All the stars fall, the suns and the moons are all gone. And Christ comes and it's a new kind of day. And He will become day so that even when it's evening it will be light because He'll be coming in blazing glory. This also makes me kind of think that maybe it's going to take a few days for Him to get here, not because He needs the time but because man needs the time to get ready.

And then when He comes, of course, His whole blazing glory will fill the Kingdom, fill the earth. He will arise, says Malachi, the Son of righteousness with healing in His beams. Here He comes, the blazing Son of righteousness with healing in His beams. Blazing out of heaven and for all who fall into that light in faith, there will be instant salvation. For all who curse the light, judgment. And it shall be, verse 8 says, in that day that the living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them toward the former sea, half of them toward the hinder sea, and summer and winter shall it be. Jerusalem's going to be dramatically changed.

You know what's going to happen? Right in the middle of Jerusalem, which is Mount Moriah where the temple would be, right in the middle underneath that rock that's there, somehow God's going to crack open the ground and create a gushing spring that's going to send rivers running in both directions, east and west. One toward the Dead Sea, the Dead Sea to the east. And one toward the west.

Living waters, did you notice that? You know what that means in the Hebrew? It means "gurgling, running, flowing, rushing, bubbling water," not stagnant water. Ezekiel said that in the millennial earth there will be life giving streams gushing out of the sanctuary, did you get that? Ezekiel said they would be gushing out of the sanctuary. That's what makes me believe that it's very likely that God will just split the temple ground open. He'll just split that rock Moriah and send that thing going both directions. Read Ezekiel 47 verses 1 to 12, you can read all about it. And so, God's going to crack open Jerusalem and He's going to send the waters going to the former sea, the former sea is the Dead Sea...literally means eastern. The hinder sea, the Mediterranean, and the water will flow in two directions, perennially in summer and winter throughout the Kingdom.

And I believe this is real water because Isaiah says the desert will blossom like a...what?...like a rose. Now people say, "Boy, you better get over there and see of there's water under there...prove this." There doesn't need to be water under there, God can create it at the time He needs it. And I think it's a picture, too, of how blessing is going to flow. Jerusalem will become the center of the world and blessing will just flow in all directions. What an incredible time.

So, we see the coming of the day of the Lord. Now very rapidly the rest of the chapter will flow. Are you ready? Let's go. Secondly, believe me, it's not going to take long...only got a couple pages of notes left. Verse 9 begins, the crowning of the Lord as King. We've seen the coming of the day of the Lord, now the crowning of the Lord as King. The first thing that happens when He arrives, He's going to have a coronation. Verse 9, "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord and His name one." Listen, the Lord is not only going to be the King in heaven but in that day, He's going to be the King on earth. He will not be King de jure, that is by right, but He will be

King de facto, that is in fact. This is a promised reality. The King is coming. And He is going to be King. And in that day, it says, He'll be King...now watch this..."And there will be one Lord and His name one."

Do you know how many religions there will be in the world in the Kingdom? One...that's all. Just one. Anybody who begins to start another one will be dealt with by the rod of iron with which Christ rules, read Revelation 19. The worldwide monotheism, one religion, all of the systems of Satan are over. And the absolutely unique and incomparable one God, the only wise God and our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, Him and Him alone will the world worship. And so in that day there will be one Lord and His name will be one.

Verse 10, and this says what happens when the Kingdom is set up. "All the land shall be turned like the Arabah from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in its place from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses." Now let me show you, this is absolutely fantastic. You say, "I didn't notice." It is...verse 10, now watch, the land shall be turned like the Arabah. When Christ comes this tremendous earthquake takes place and He creates this valley running east, Mount Moriah somehow is split and water starts to flow everyplace. The judgment of the nations takes place. And as a result of this great earthquake, this is fantastic, the entire terrain...now watch this...from Geba--which is way in the north, to Rimmon--which is way in the south, is going to become like the Arabah. You say, "Well, what is the Arabah?" Listen, the Arabah is the name of the valley that is the deepest valley in the world. It runs from way south of the Dead Sea, way south where it may be as high in some places as 300 feet above sea level, down to the Dead Sea where it is 1300 feet below sea level, and all the way to the Sea of Galilee where at the Sea of Galilee it is 650 feet below sea level, it is the lowest longest flattest valley in the world, it is the flattest valley obviously of any valley that low cause it's the only valley that low.

And what he's saying is this. Now watch this. That all the terrain around Jerusalem from Geba on the north to Rimmon on the south is going to be flattened and lowered to be made like that valley so that Jerusalem will literally stick up like a solitaired diamond on a ring. That's what he's saying. Incredible. God is literally going to flatten the whole earth all the way around. And then He's going to rebuild that city and He gives the dimensions here, from Benjamin's gate--I'm not going to tell you were all these are, they're different places on the north, the northeast, and the northwest and the southwest and so forth. He's going to give it back its...it's...it's dimensions that it once knew in its glory, see. It's not going to be some little village like it was in Zechariah's time. He's going to make it like some huge diamond. And the whole earth is going to go flat and sunk all around it so Jerusalem will just ascend out of the ground. And on that flat plateau will exist the throne of Jesus Christ. I mean, that's going to be some day, isn't it? Fabulous. The whole land made flat and Jerusalem lifted up...in the middle of the verse...Jerusalem shall be lifted up.

And it says inhabited in its place. And the implication of the Hebrew is peacefully inhabited. What a day.

And you know what? People aren't just going to live in that city, they're going to live in all the countryside around about. Remember Zechariah 2:4 where it says the city is going to be so big you can't hardly measure it. They're going to live all around it but Jerusalem will be like a crown.
And in verse 11, "And men shall dwell in it and there shall be no more utter destruction but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited." No more destruction. No more curse. Why? Well, no more idolatry, no more apostasy. And so there's no more curse. That's coronation day. Not only is the Lord crowned, but the city is crowned and it becomes the jewel of the earth and Christ is crowned King and sits on the throne in that city. What a day.
So, the coming of the day of the Lord and the crowning of the Lord as King. Thirdly, the conquest of the nations. Now having done this, there is the judgment of the nations. Verse 12, "And this shall be the plague with which the Lord will smite all the peoples that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand on their feet and their eyes shall consume away in their sockets, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor, and Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem." Stop right there.
Well, we've seen some glorious positive results and he has to say, but let me remind you of what's going to happen to the godless people. Three things, first a deadly plague...a deadly plague. It's just incredible. This plague in verse 12 with which the Lord will smite the people will cause their flesh to consume away while they stand on their feet and their eyes shall consume away in their sockets and their tongues shall consume away in their mouth. Rich Thompson and I were talking about this this week about what this may mean and I think what Rich shared with me is as close to anything that we could do to explain this. It is God who gives life, right? God breathed into man and he became a living soul. And it is God who can withdraw life. And I believe that God at this point will withdraw life so fast and so complete that they will rot and become skeletons before they're able to even fall to the ground. That's how fast God will withdraw life and deal with the ungodly.
That really constitutes the judgment of the nations. Those are the ones that He says depart into everlasting punishment while the others who are remnant who have seen Him and believed are the sheep and He says to them, Come and inherit...what?...the Kingdom prepared for you. So the first thing is a terrible plague.
And then he adds to another thing that's going to happen, and I don't know the sequence of these things and I don't know all how it fits together, "But it will come to pass in that day that a great tumult from the Lord," and the word "tumult" means a confusion or consternation, and they'll confuse themselves and they literally will lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbor and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor. In other word, what's going to happen is there will be such confusion at that moment that those who are not instantly hit with the plague are going to find themselves killing each other...terrible confusion, attacking and slaughtering each other.
You remember 1 Samuel 14 and Gideon? Gideon, they broke the pitchers and blew the trumpets and lit the lights and the army of the Medianites all killed each other. Well, this will be something of that.

And then thirdly, there's going to be a super human strength given to Judah. Judah shall fight at Jerusalem. Somehow God is going to give to Judah a great strength and Judah is going to fight and win. So a plague for some, a confused suicide by the nations and a super human strength given to Judah. And the results, in verse 14, the tables are turned immediately and here are these nations counting all their booty, the reverse occurs, "The wealth of all the nations round about shall be gathered together, gold and silver and apparel in great abundance." In other words, the wealth of all the nations is going to be gathered and brought into the hands of God's people.

Beloved, ultimately all the wealth of the world will come to the hands of the Lord and His people in His Kingdom. That's the promise.

And the plague, he adds in verse 15, will even touch the horse and the mule and the camel and the ass and the beasts. It will be in the tents. And so there's going to be a plague that not only takes care of the people but all their possessions and animals and everything. The whole encampment is going to go. In that day perhaps that has to do with some of their weaponry. And so we see the conquest of the nations, the crowning of the Lord, the coming of the day of the Lord.

Lastly, the character of the Kingdom. Now that all the ungodly are judged, Christ is on the throne, the land is flattened, Jerusalem is a solitary diamond on the globe, Jesus is reigning on the throne, the people of God have received Jesus Christ, the remnant is ready, they're ready to take their Kingdom, what happens? Here's the Kingdom, the character of the Kingdom, and this is simple, I'm just going to read it with a few comments..."It shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the nations," and I believe this is going to be the believing remnant out of the nations. There will be believing Gentiles, I know that because Revelation 7 says so many Gentiles are going to be saved you can't even count them. And the Lord's not going to come down and destroy them, so there will be those out of the nations. They're going to come to Jer...which came against Jerusalem. They're literally going to come out of those nations which came against Jerusalem, though they themselves did not agree with what their nation did. They were believing, or else they turned when Christ came. But these people from the nations will go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of host, and keep the feast of tabernacles. You see, the feast of tabernacles celebrated the time when God tabernacled with Israel in the wilderness. And here it is fulfilled, you see. In that day God comes down and His glory again tabernacles with His people and so they celebrate that feast again. Annually the people of the world are going to come to keep the feast.

"And it shall be," verse 17, "that whoever will not come of all the families of the earth to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of host, even upon them shall be no rain." In other words, if people from nations don't come, if nations rebel, God's going to turn off the rain and it won't rain. And if it doesn't rain, they'll have a drought. And if they a drought, they're going to have a disaster.

And there would be one nation that would say, "We don't mind if it doesn't rain, we don't depend on rain." And that nation would be Egypt. Because Egypt might say, "Well, we have the Nile and, you see, the Nile is fed by those little lakes in the mountains and they drip the water down and the Nile comes. And the winter rains way away in the mountains in the south and the snows when they all melt, they cause this Nile to inundate the land. And do you realize that annually up until modern times

when they prevented it, the Nile literally drowned the entire land of Egypt every year for about three months? And without that inundation they couldn't exist, and now they've channeled it into canals it still occurs. And so, Egypt says, "Well, maybe we'll be a little smug and we won't mind if it rains."
But the Lord says in verse 18, "If the family of Egypt goes not up and come not, that have no rain, there shall be the plague with which the Lord will smite the nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles." He says if the rain doesn't get you, the plague will. This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.
Now listen to me. When God sets up His Kingdom and He reigns, He says the world is going to worship. And it's not going to be optional. Today it's optional. This is the optional age. That won't be...a rod of iron will come to judge sinners. And so they'll keep the feast of tabernacles, they'll celebrate again the time when God came in His glory and tented with His people. You remember in the time when they wandered in their tents, which the tabernacles refer to, how the glory of God led them every day and every night and dwelt in the tabernacle? It will be that again.
And then he concludes, I love this, "In that day," this is so beautiful, get this, "in that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD. And the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts: and all they that sacrificed shall come and take of them and boil in them and in that day there shall be no more a Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts."
Now I want you to get this. This is literally fantastic. Watch. See the little phrase in verse 20 "HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD"? That phrase was very special. That phrase was engraved in one place in Israel's history. The high priest Aaron had a turban, on the front of his turban was a gold plate and engraved on that gold plate were the words, "HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD." What did it mean? It meant that there was something about that man that set him apart from every other man. He was an uncommon man. He was especially holy. He was unique. There was no one like this high priest, holiness unto the Lord. But he says in that day every single thing that exists is going to be just as holy as the high priest, even the little bells that ding on the horses are going to say holiness unto the Lord. You see?
Fantastic, isn't it? I mean, that's going to be a holy Kingdom. It isn't going to be like it is in the world today. There aren't just going to be a few holy folks, it's going to be a holy world in that day. And even the bells on the horses are going to say holiness to the Lord, and even the common pots and pans are going to be just as sacred as the altar bowls, he says. I mean, when you go to your kitchen...you won't be here cause you're in the church...but the people who are here go to the kitchen and get their pots and pans, they'll be just as holy as the headdress of the high priest. There will be no secular and sacred in that world, there will only be the sacred.
Just think of this, take every single thing in our society that isn't sacred and subtract it and you've got the Kingdom. What would they advertise in the paper? What would you do for entertainment? I wonder how many programs would be on TV. Even the horses' bells will be holy, even the pots and pans.

Then he closes by saying, "And there won't even be a Canaanite in the place." You say, "What's He got against Canaanites? Why does He say that?" The word "Canaanite," beloved, is a byword. It's an epithet, it's a title. It's a figure of speech referring to a morally and spiritually unclean person. The Canaanites were unclean...morally and spiritually. And the word "Canaanite" became a proverb in Israel for a degenerate person. In the Kingdom there won't be a degenerate person. What a time...what a time. Anybody who comes along that way, the Lord will judge. And the whole world will be holiness unto the Lord.

You know, the Lord wants a holy people, doesn't He? He's called His church to be holy. Couldn't help but think of Ephesians 5 where he says, "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loves the church and gave Himself for it that He might present it to Himself as a holy church, spotless, without blemish." He wants a holy church. He wants a holy people. And in that day He's going to have it.

Well, that's Zechariah. Listen, in Ezra chapter 6 and verse 14 we are told these words, we are told that the people prospered through the message of Zechariah. I hope you did. I hope you prospered. And maybe your life can be just a little more holy and a little more like what He wants and shall gain in His Kingdom.

I close with this. The theme of Zechariah, I'll tell you in one word, "Christ." He's the theme. In chapter 1 He is the riding one. In chapter 2 He is the measuring one. In chapter 3 He is the cleansing one. In chapter 4 He's the empowering one. In chapter 5 He's the judging one. In chapter 6 He's the crowned one. In chapter 7 He's the rebuking one. In chapter 8 He's the restoring one. In chapter 9 He's the kingly one. In chapter 10 He's the blessing one. In chapter 11 He's the shepherding one. In chapter 12 He's the returning one. In chapter 13 He's the smitten one. In chapter 14 He is the reigning one. Zechariah saw Christ. I hope you caught his vision. And I hope you know the Christ he looked forward to. Let's pray.

Thank You, Father, for helping us to be able to search this book and mine its depths. Thank You for the patience of these dear people who come with eager hearts, hungry souls for a glimpse of Your glory. May it change our lives that we might be more the holy people that You so much want. We'll thank You in Christ's name. Amen.

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