

## ZECHARIAH

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Zechariah as we continue our study through the Word of God. As you may remember from our last study, Zechariah was a post exilic prophet along with Haggai and Malachi. What that means is that they were prophets when the Jews returned home from their Babylonian captivity.

Now Zechariah was born in captivity in Babylon and returned home with Zerubbabel and Joshua, along with the under 50,000 Jews who also made that long journey. And as we saw in our study of Ezra, when the Jews returned to Jerusalem one of the first things they did was to build the altar of sacrifice or the altar of burnt offerings, Ezra 3:1-6. Then, during the second year the foundation of the Temple was laid, Ezra 3:8-13. But, because of external oppression and internal depression, the work on the Temple stopped and the people began to fix up their own homes, negating the house of God.

Thus, God raised up Haggai to confront them on this issue, their failure to rebuild the house of God. And Haggai explained to them that the reason they were having such difficult times is because they were not placing God first in their lives. So Haggai's call is to repent and get started on the work. He was encouraging the people not to give up but to forge ahead!

Now Zechariah also comes on the scene to encourage the people, to give them a future and a hope in the Lord even though things may not look good at this point. You see, the name Zechariah means, "***YAHWEH remembers***" and that was an encouragement to the people, that God would fulfill the promises He made to His people.

In regards to Zechariah's message, Boice writes, "Like Haggai, Zechariah's message is one of encouragement. But he was aware that not all the returned remnant were fully sincere in their desires to serve God, and he therefore counseled them to repent of sin and return to God will all their hearts and minds."

Let's face it. We can get discouraged very easily and all that we wanted to do, all that we thought God wanted us to do can get put aside. John Calvin writes the following in regards to how the words of Zechariah fit into his day and I believe our day as well! He wrote,

"This doctrine may be fitly applied to our age: for we see how Satan raises up great forces, we see how the whole world conspires against the Church, to prevent the increase or the progress of the kingdom of Christ. When we consider how great are the difficulties which meet us, we are ready to faint and to become wholly dejected. Let us then remember that it is no new thing for enemies to surpass great mountains in elevation; but that the Lord can at length reduce them to a plain. This, then, our shield can cast down and lay prostrate whatever greatness the Devil may set up to terrify us: for as the Lord then reduces a great mountain to a plain, when Zerubbabel was able to do nothing, so at this day, however boldly may multiplied adversaries resist Christ in the work of building a spiritual temple to God the Father, yet all their efforts will be in vain."

- John Calvin, Commentaries on the Twelve Minor Prophets, Vol. 15, Lect. 142, Trans. John Owen, p. 114

That should be an encouragement to us because, as you well know, it is easy to get discouraged in the work. But also remember what the Lord tells us in I Corinthians 15:58, **"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."**

In Galatians 6:9-10 Paul tells us, “**And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.**”

Yes, the battle is intense and it does seem to be getting worse but, as Zechariah is going to find out and as we need to understand and believe, is that it is “**. . . ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ Says the LORD of hosts. . .**” Zechariah 4:6. That should be a great encouragement to us as we serve the Lord and as He calls us to do things that may seem impossible to do.

And yes, from a human perspective they may seem impossible but with God all things are possible. Thus, may we learn to walk by faith and not by sight, encouraged in the work we are doing for the Lord knowing He will accomplish what He has set out to do!

With that said, let’s begin reading in Zechariah chapter 1 beginning in verse 1 and let’s see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through His Word.

## **ZECHARIAH 1**

### **VERSE 1**

1. One month after Haggai’s second prophecy, Zechariah comes on the scene speaking forth the Words of God and trying to encourage the people who were discouraged over what was before them. That puts the date of this prophecy between October and November of 520 B. C.

Remember what Zechariah's name means, "***YAHWEH remembers.***" We are also told that he is the son of Berechiah, and his name means, "***YAHWEH will bless.***"

Not only that but we are told that Berechiah is the son of Iddo, and his name means, "***At the appointed time.***"

Now think about this for a minute. The people are discouraged and the Lord sends Zechariah to them to encourage them, to get them back on track. And thus, "***YAHWEH remembers and YAHWEH will bless at the appointed time!***" God is calling for them not to give up and the encouragement is seen here, God is with them and He will bless them, hang in there and see what God is going to do in His time!

I hope God is speaking to you this evening and encouraging you wherever you are at in your walk with Him. Don't forget, "***YAHWEH remembers and YAHWEH will bless at the appointed time!***"

2. Now keep in mind that because some were discouraged they were moving away from God. Thus, they needed to repent and return to the Lord and that is what we will see as this prophet and priest starts out very quickly with his message and he says beginning in verse 2 . . .

#### VERSES 2-6

1. Zechariah starts out looking back at their ancestors and what they were like. It was kind of like a history lesson and a reminder of what they did so they don't continue down that same path. You see, the Jews were very proud of their heritage, make no mistake about that! But they tended to remember the good and forget the bad, and thus, you don't learn the lesson that way!

They looked to men like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, David, and-so-on. The problem was, many of their leaders were rebellious, they were idolaters. In fact, as Stephen spoke to the religious council he said in Acts chapter 7 beginning in verse 51, **“You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it.”** Acts 7:51-53.

Not only that but in II Chronicles 36:15-16, as the Babylonians were taking the Southern Kingdom of Judah into captivity, we read **“And the LORD God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy.”**

This is very clear. God is saying that He is not pleased with their fathers because of their rebellious ways. God does not want them to continue down that same destructive path that had lead them into captivity in the first place!

And notice the love of God for His people. He is crying out for them to return to Him! Now why were they discouraged? Why were they turning from God? Because of the circumstances they found themselves in.

Remember, some 50,000 Jews returned home from the Babylonian captivity and the land was desolate. They had to build homes, the Temple, the land was barren. They didn't have a lot of money and they did not have a lot of manpower to do the work. They had enemies that tried to discourage them and destroy them. And in the end, when they remembered all they had in Babylon, they were wondering if it was all worth it!

And through all that they were coming to the conclusion that God is distant, that God had turned from them and Zechariah is trying to encourage them by telling them that God is not far away. You have turned from Him and thus, return to Him!

And this is an invitation by God. God won't force Himself upon you, but He will show you it is what is best for your life. God always invites people to come to Him, but it is their choice. It is as Jesus said in Revelation 3:20, "**Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.**"

Also, in James 4:8 we are told, "**Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. . . .**" Please understand this. God hasn't moved if we feel distant from God, we have! Let me explain it like this. There was this older couple who had been married for years and they were driving in the car. As they were driving the wife noticed that in other cars the couples were sitting close together. After a while the wife asked her husband, "Why don't we sit close together anymore?" And his answer was very simple as he said, "I wasn't the one who moved!" How true that is, God hasn't moved, but we do many times and thus, the call, "**Return to Me.**"

2. We also need to keep in mind that God does warn us as we are moving away from Him just as He did with the children of Israel. Remember that He tried to warn His people of the coming judgment, of the devastation and captivity that would come upon them for their rebellious ways, but they refused to listen. And like I have said, God does the same today, warning people, but many times they refuse to listen. They think they know better than God, and in the end they find themselves in bondage to sin and many times their lives destroyed!

In John 8:34-36 we are told “**Jesus answered them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.’**” Thus, let Jesus set you free from the bondage of sin!

3. Now to drive home this point even more, listen again to what the Lord says to His people in Zechariah 1:5-6, “**Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? Yet surely My words and My statutes, Which I commanded My servants the prophets, Did they not overtake your fathers? . . .**”

In other words, their fathers have all died, either by the sword, famine, pestilence, or natural causes. Secondly the prophets have also passed away. Now, in contrast to their fathers and the prophets, God’s Word continues on, it does not pass away. What’s the point? The things that the prophets warned your fathers about came to pass, you can see it for yourself. You cannot escape the judgment of God.

In fact, the word “**overtake**” is a hunting term that speaks of tracking and catching your prey, and in this case, God was catching His rebellious people, the Jews. They could not deny these things, and thus they acknowledge that what God has said came to pass! And the same is true today, God’s Word will come to pass just as He said, He is coming back to set up His Kingdom and you can take that to the bank!

It is as Isaiah 40:7-8 tells us, “**The grass withers, the flower fades, Because the breath of the Lord blows upon it; Surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.**”

How true that is as skeptics have come and gone but the Bible still remains. H. L. Hastings put it this way,

Infidels for eighteen hundred years have been refuting and overthrowing this book, and yet it stands today as solid as a rock. Its circulation increases, and it is more loved and cherished and read today than ever before. Infidels with all their assaults, make about as much impression on this book as a man with a tack hammer would on the Pyramids of Egypt. When the French monarch proposed the persecution of the Christians in his dominion, and old statesmen and warrior said to him, “Sire, the Church of God is an anvil that has worn out many hammers.” So the hammers of infidels have been pecking away at this book for ages, but the hammers are worn out, and the anvil still endures. If this book had not been the book of God, men would have destroyed it long ago. Emperors and popes, kings and priests, princes and rulers have all tried their hand at it; they die and the book still lives.

- H. L. Hastings, The Greatest Book in the World, pp. 17-18



Make no mistake about it, God's Word, His promises outlived and outlasted all the previous prophets and ancestors. And yes, Zechariah is encouraging them to rebuild the Temple as Haggai did but he is also calling for them to rebuild their relationship with God, to return to Him and learn the lessons of their fathers, the ones they didn't learn! Listen to what God's Word has to say because it will not lead you astray but it will draw you close to God!

4. We now are going to move into a series of eight visions that Zechariah has. So let's read on and see what these visions are all about.

#### VERSES 7-10

1. Now some 3 months have passed, it is February 15, 519 B. C. and Zechariah was given this vision. Now a vision speaks of the person being awake, while a dream is while they are sleeping and God is speaking to them.

Does God still do that today? I believe so, even though His primary revelation is through His Word. Remember what Joel 2:28-29 says, "**And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.**" And Peter tells us that on the day of Pentecost this prophecy began to be fulfilled!

2. Now let's look at this vision. First of all, there is a man riding on a red horse and behind this man are three more horses; red, sorrel and white and these horses also have riders on them. Now as some read this they try to make this fit in with what we read of the four horsemen of the apocalypse in Revelation chapter 6.

The problem is that in Revelation chapter 6 we see a white horse, a red horse, a black horse and a pale horse. So the colors don't fit and what they are doing doesn't fit as well. So I don't think these horses here in Zechariah chapter 1 fit in with the horses in Revelation chapter 6.

Now, as we will see as we read on in verse 11 of Zechariah chapter 1, these riders on the red horse, the brown or speckled horse and the white horse are angelic beings who go throughout the earth to survey what is going on. And in verse 11 we see them report back to the "**Angel of the LORD**" which is an Old Testament phrase representing the preincarnate Christ or a theophany.

So let's read on and then I will expound more on what they are specifically looking at here.

#### VERSES 11-17

1. I think we are pretty clear that this rider on the red horse is the Lord Jesus Christ. And as you can see, in verse 14 we see the angel speaking and thus, I believe these other riders are angels!

Now they are reporting back to the Lord and they first speak of the Gentile nations that were in power and things were going well for them, but not necessarily for the Jews. Yes, these Gentile nations might have been at peace but it is not the peace that the Lord brings.

Why do I say that? Because it says that the Lord is, “**... exceedingly angry with the nations at ease . . .**” Why was He angry with them? Because of what they did to His people, the Jews. Yes, they tried to help them out but the Lord says they did so “**... with evil intent.**” The nations of the world offered some help to the returning exiles, but even their help was polluted by evil motives.

Thus, if the earth is at rest or the Gentile nations are at rest at the expense of God’s people, then there is no rest at all. God will judge them for their treatment of His people, the Jews!

And the call is for the Lord to intercede for His people, the Jews. How much longer will these Gentile nations persecute the Jewish people? There is a timeframe here and I believe this is speaking of more than just the Medo-Persian Empire who were in power at this time.

I see this looking ahead into the future when the whole world will persecute the Jews, the times of the Gentiles will reach its climax, and then the Lord will have mercy upon His people and step in and the times of the Gentiles will be over and the Kingdom Age will be established.

And yes, some seventy years earlier God used the Babylonians as His instrument of judgment against His people for their idolatry and their refusal to repent of their sin. But they went too far and God judged them for that, bringing the Babylonian Empire down.

We see that again in Isaiah 47:5-7, which says, “**Sit in silence, and go into darkness, O daughter of the Chaldeans; for you shall no longer be called the Lady of Kingdoms. I was angry with My people; I have profaned My inheritance, and given them into your hand. You showed them no mercy; on the elderly you laid your yoke very heavily. And you said, ‘I shall be a lady forever,’ so that you did not take these things to heart, nor remember the latter end of them.**”

Also, God is speaking words of comfort to His people, that He will not forsake them but keep His covenant that He made with them. Remember what I said about Zechariah's name and his father and grandfather, what they meant, ***“YAHWEH remembers and YAHWEH will bless at the appointed time!”*** God will intervene for His people and He will save them, He will bless them, He will bring them home!

And as I have said, the near term fulfillment we see that the Temple would be rebuilt, and it was just as God said. But these verses also have a long term, a complete fulfillment with the Second Coming of Christ as I have also said. We see in these verses, Zechariah 1:16-17, six blessings that God is promising to His people that will be fulfilled in the Kingdom Age. Those blessings are as follows:

***A. GOD WILL DWELL IN JERUSALEM. (Zechariah 1:16, Ezekiel 43:5, Ezekiel 48:35)***

***B. THE MILLENNIAL TEMPLE WILL BE BUILT. (Zechariah 1:16, Ezekiel 40-48)***

***C. THE CITY OF JERUSALEM WILL BE REBUILT. (Zechariah 1:16-17, Jeremiah 31:38-40)***

***D. THE NATION WILL PROSPER ONCE AGAIN. (Zechariah 1:16, Isaiah 60:4-9)***

***E. WITH THE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PROMISES THE INHABITANTS OF JERUSALEM WILL BE COMFORTED. (Zechariah 1:17, Isaiah 14:1, 49:15, Deuteronomy 30:3)***

***F. THEY WILL BE GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE ONCE AGAIN. (Zechariah 1:17, Romans 11:26-27, Jeremiah 31:31-40)***

VERSES 18-19

1. Here is the second vision that Zechariah has and it has to do with four horns and then four craftsmen as we will see as we read on. Let's deal with these four horns. First of all, the horns represent power or strength and here they are symbolic of Gentile nations.

Now the big question is who are these nations that Zechariah is speaking of? One clue we have is they affected both the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Thus, it would seem to imply that these Gentile nations were Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece. But as we move into the next two verses it seems to be looking at the Southern Kingdom of Judah, which would eliminate Assyria and add Rome to the list. Let's read on and I will show you what I mean.

VERSES 20-21

1. Now these four craftsman or carpenters represent four Empires that will bring God's judgment upon these horns.

Thus, if we start with Babylon as the horn, the Medo-Persian Empire brought judgment upon them.

Then, Greece brought judgment upon the Medo-Persian Empire.

Following that the Roman Empire brought judgment upon Greece.

Now we have a pause, for Rome was never defeated. In fact, we are told that in the last days the old Roman Empire will be revived and the Antichrist will oversee it. But who will bring this horn, this Empire down? Who will be the craftsman to bring judgment upon this last Gentile World Empire? The Lord will as He comes to establish His Kingdom on this earth!

Interestingly enough, Daniel, as he is interpreting King Nebuchadnezzar's dream, speaks of this very thing. He starts out with the Babylonian Empire being the head of gold of this multi-metallic image that represent Gentile world powers and how each of these Empires is brought down by the succeeding one. And finally, all will be brought down by the Lord Himself.

In Daniel chapter 2, beginning in verse 37 we read, **“You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory; and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all - you are this head of gold. But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others. Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay. And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile. As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay. And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold - the great God has made known to the**

**king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”**

Daniel 2:37-45.

You see, just as Zechariah said! Make no mistake about it, God promises to break the power of those nations that came against His people came to pass and it will come to pass, He will do it! We see Jesus speak of this very thing, the **“times of the Gentiles”** in Luke 24:20-24 as He said, **“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.”**

This began with the Babylon Empire and it ends with the revived Roman Empire being destroyed as we have seen Zechariah and Daniel speak of this day when the **“times of the Gentiles”** is over and the Lord will set up His Kingdom on this earth!

## **ZECHARIAH 2**

### **VERSES 1-5**

1. Here in this third vision, as Zechariah looks on, he sees a man with a measuring line in his hand. And this man is going to use this measuring line to measure out the city of Jerusalem, to see how big it will be.

Apparently Jerusalem is being measured to make sure that it is large enough for the multitudes God will bring to it. Now during the time of Zechariah that must have been a funny statement because less than 50,000 Jews returned from Babylon. So there was plenty of room, why worry. In fact, there are too few people for the city in Zechariah's day!

Now let's fast forward to today. The city of Jerusalem has grown far beyond its original city walls of about 1-mile square during the days of King David. And as we can see, there are over 800,000 people living in Jerusalem today and of that number there are over 600,000 Jews! And yet, even with those numbers, this pales in comparison to what it will be like in the Kingdom Age!

Not only will the population be increased but we also see that God promises His people that they will not need walls of protection for He will protect His people. In fact, the Lord Himself will dwell amongst His people.

This, of course, is looking ahead to the Kingdom Age. It is as Isaiah 4:3-6 says, "**And it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy - everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem. When the Lord has washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purged the blood of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and by the spirit of burning, then the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and above her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night. For over all the glory there will be a covering. And there will be a tabernacle for shade in the daytime from the heat, for a place of refuge, and for a shelter from storm and rain.**" The Lord is going to be their protection!



VERSES 6-7

1. As you read these verses there are a couple of ways to look at them. First of all, and the most obvious, God was calling the remnant of His people back home from their captivity in Babylon. Keep in mind that out of the 2 to 3 million Jews who went into captivity, less than 50,000 returned home. And God is calling for the rest to get up, to get moving, don't remain in Babylon!

Now the second way to look at this is when the Soviet Union broke-up. When that happened hundreds of thousands of Jews were free to leave the Soviet Union. And guess where they went? They fled to the land of Israel! That has been fulfilled in our lifetime!

Now we also need to keep in mind that Babylon was a city but we also see that the Bible speaks of Babylon as a type, as the world. Thus, the idea is that God is calling His people to come out of the world, come to the city of God you might say, Jerusalem.

And I think that is a way we can also look at these verses, the third way and that is at the end of the Tribulation Period as God will call His people to come from all over the world and return to Jerusalem.

We see this in Isaiah 11:12, which says, **“He will set up a banner for the nations, and will assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.”**

We also read of this in Matthew 24:30-31 where we are told by Jesus of what is going to happen when He returns to set up His Kingdom on this earth, **“Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”** Keep in mind that the Lord is speaking of the Jews, His people that He will gather from all over this earth, God will do this!

And we can also apply this to our own life as God calls for us to flee the sinful lifestyles of this world and draw close to Him. Keep in mind that He is calling for us to be in the world but not of the world! It is as Peter tells us in I Peter 1:13-16, **“Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’”**

Also, in Revelation 18:4-5 we read, **“And I heard another voice from heaven saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues. For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.’”** Yes, that is during the Tribulation Period but again, I see God call us out of Babylon, in a sense, out of the world because God is going to judge this world!

VERSES 8-9

1. Now for those who think God has forsaken Israel, that He is done with Israel, think again.

Listen again to what verse 8 says, **“For thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye.’”**

And then God speaks of judging those nations who come against the Jewish people!

What a picture here of the work of the Messiah who was sent to display the glory of God by judging the nations who had plundered Israel. You see, by touching the apple of His eye or His pupil you are touching that which is precious, easily injured and demanding protection.

Spurgeon put it like this, “He esteems them as much as men value their eyesight, and is as careful to protect them from injury, as men are to protect the apple of their eye. The pupil of the eye is the tenderest part of the tenderest organ, and very fitly sets forth the inexpressible tenderness of God’s love.”

Thus, God will protect Israel as Psalm 17:7-9 says, **“Show Your marvelous lovingkindness by Your right hand, O You who save those who trust in You from those who rise up against them. Keep me as the apple of Your eye; hide me under the shadow of Your wings, From the wicked who oppress me, from my deadly enemies who surround me.”**

And for those who come against the Jews we are told that God will deal with them. Or as we are told in verse 9 of Zechariah chapter 2, **“For surely I will shake My hand against them, and they shall become spoil for their servants. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me.”**

And in spite of that we see Christians who come against the Jewish people, who feel that God is done with the Jews and they need to remember what the Lord said to Abraham in Genesis 12:3. He said, **“I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”** Thus, to see Christians hate Jews is a sad and tragic state. It should not be so! And if you do hate the Jews, make no mistake about it, God will deal with you!

We see this ultimately during the Tribulation Period and in the end, when the Lord returns, He deals with those people, those nations who have come against the Jews!

#### VERSE 10-13

1. Look at all this singing and rejoicing, but why are they singing and rejoicing? Because the Lord is coming back to dwell with His people! You see, when Jesus came the first time the nation of Israel as a whole rejected Him. But when He comes again, they will receive Him!

And in the midst of all the difficulty they were in, remember again the names of Zechariah and his ancestors, Berechiah Iddo, putting their names together we see what they mean and the message they are giving to God’s people, the Jews. ***“YAHWEH remembers and YAHWEH will bless at the appointed time!”*** Now that time has come and they are rejoicing!

2. Now we also need to understand that when the Lord returns it is not only for the Jews, but for all people, Jews and Gentiles. And we see that in Isaiah 2:2-4 where we read, **“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD’S house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; he will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.”**

Now for those who reject this, the Lord tells them to be quite before Him! It is interesting how man is very vocal about his independence, that he doesn’t need God. But there is coming a day when the Lord will establish His Kingdom and all flesh will be silent before him. It is as Paul said in Philippians 2:9-11, **“Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”** There will be no more rebellion!

**ZECHARIAH 3****VERSES 1-3**

1. Here we see Joshua the High Priest, (Haggai 1:1) standing before God and he is representing the people of God. Also, we see the adversary, Satan and what is he doing? He is accusing Joshua, probably pointing to those filthy clothes that he was wearing, and they were filthy!

And keep in mind that Joshua is representing the people of God, how they look and what we see is a picture of sinful man clothed with filthy garments or literally, “excrement covered” garments! Not a pretty picture nor is intended to be.

And yet, it is the Lord who will pluck us up out of the fire. He knows who we are, what we look like and He saves us! Spurgeon picks up on this and he wrote, “So it is with the child of God. What is he at the best? Till he is taken up to heaven, he is nothing but a brand plucked out of the fire. It is his daily moan that he is a sinner; but Christ accepts him as he is: and he shuts the devil’s mouth by telling him, ‘Thou sayest this man is black - of course he is: what did I think he was but that? He is a brand plucked out of the fire. I plucked him out of it. He was burning when he was in it: he is black now he is out of it. He was what I knew he would be; he is not what I mean to make him, but he is what I knew he would be. I have chosen him as a brand plucked out of the fire. What hast thou to say to that?’ Do observe that this plea did not require a single word to be added to it from Joshua.”

Praise God for what He has done in our lives!

2. Now let me make one more point before we move on. Make no mistake about it, we need to remember that we are in a spiritual battle, our fight is not against flesh and blood, but many times that is who we take it out upon.

Paul, in Ephesians 6:10-13 tells us, **“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”** May we do as Paul admonishes us to do, to put on the whole armor of God because that is the only way we will be able to win these battles!

3. So here stands Joshua in these filthy garments and I love what the Lord does as Satan is there opposing him or condemning him for how he looks, the rags he is in. I am sure he was pointing his finger going, “Looking how filthy dirty this man is. How can he stand before You?” Let’s read on and see.

VERSES 4-5

1. Joshua was guilty of standing before the Lord in filthy garments and Satan was correct with what he said. That is not the issue. The issue is who is clothing Joshua with new clothes and what I want you to see is that man is not cleansing himself of his sin but the Lord is removing the sin from Joshua's life and our life by the blood of Christ applied to our lives. He is covering him with the righteousness of Christ that is imputed into his life and our life by faith. And once we receive that free gift, once our clothes are changed in a sense, we are as white as snow.

We are told in Isaiah 1:18, **“Come now, and let us reason together,’ Says the Lord, ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.’”** That is what God has done and that is the picture that is being painted for us here. It is as Paul said in Romans 6:23, **“For the wages of sin is death, but the [free] gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

It is like the song, “Are You Washed in the Blood?” They go like this, you probably know them,

Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power?  
 Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?  
 Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour?  
 Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

[Chorus:]  
 Are you washed in the blood,  
 In the soul-cleansing blood of the Lamb?  
 Are your garments spotless are they white as snow?  
 Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Lay aside your garments that are stained with sin  
 And be washed in the blood of the Lamb.  
 There's a fountain flowing for the soul unclean.  
 O, be washed in the blood of the Lamb!



[Chorus]

Are you washed in the blood  
 In the soul-cleansing blood of the Lamb?  
 Are your garments spotless are they white as snow?  
 Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb!

VERSES 6-7

1. Notice that as he is cleansed by God he then is admonished to walk in the ways of God and to keep God's requirements. Be faithful stewards of the things of God and as you are, more will be entrusted to you!

I see that in what Paul said in Ephesians 4:1-3, "**I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**" Now that you are in Christ, now that you know all that Christ has for you, walk accordingly!

VERSES 8-10

1. When you look at the Jewish people they are a "**wondrous sign**" in that it is amazing that they are even around today. They should have been wiped out or assimilated into other cultures, but they have remained a distinct people to this day. And it is out of the Jews that the Messiah will come and has come!

You see, that "**BRANCH**" that is spoken of is an Old Testament reference to Jesus Christ, the Messiah. We see that in Isaiah 11:1-2 where we read, "**There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.**"

So that **BRANCH**, that **STONE**, is speaking of Jesus Christ and the seven eyes speak of His omniscience or that he is all-knowing. And the Lord Jesus Christ, in one day, cleansed the land of sin by His death and resurrection and He will also cleanse all Israel in His Second Coming.

2. Now what happens when the Lord returns to rule and reign from Jerusalem? Zechariah 3:10 tells us, **“In that day,’ says the Lord of hosts, ‘Everyone will invite his neighbor Under his vine and under his fig tree.’”**

It is a time that speaks of peace, prosperity and we know that peace, righteousness will fill the land when the Lord returns! It is as Micah 4:4-5 tells us, **“But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken. For all people walk each in the name of his god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever.”** Peace, security, prosperity will fill the land as the knowledge of the Lord flows throughout the world, and what a day that will be!

3. Now as we close this evening listen to these words from James Montgomery Boice. He wrote,

Only on the basis of Jesus’ sacrifice can anyone properly sit under his vine and fig tree, enjoying the blessings of this life - as the last verse of the chapter reminds us. If we are not justified, prosperity is a fatal illusion. It tempts us to believe that all is well when all is not well. It lures us to the fires of hell. It is only when we are justified that we can see these things as having come to us from the hands of God and praise him for them.

Remember how we opened up and I know I have repeated this several times but I think it is very important we understand this because maybe you are going through a tough time, a time that may seem hopeless, dark, frustrating. If you are and even if you are not going through a tough time, don't forget, ***“YAHWEH remembers and YAHWEH will bless at the appointed time!”***