

Zechariah 13:7-14:21 • The Divine Finality

Introduction

It is important to keep in mind that the context of that which is disclosed here is first and foremost what literal Israel will experience as the 70th Week of Daniel draws to a close and “the day of the Lord” concludes to give way to the Millennial Kingdom. As is always the case with God’s judgment, it has a dual parallel working on His people for salvation but on the unsaved for judgment and destruction. Whereas the Church will endure its own time of tribulation and incur a substantial cost before being extracted with the onset of “the day of the Lord”, Israel will have to endure and go through it, paying a steep penalty before reaping the benefits for the enduring remnant. In many ways this closing passage of Zechariah provides an earth-bound view of what takes place in Revelation 19 as Christ returns and establishes His Millennial Kingdom.

“He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” — Revelation 21:7-8

13:7 “Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd,
And against the man, My Associate,”
Declares the LORD of hosts.
“Strike the Shepherd that the sheep
may be scattered;
And I will turn My hand against the
little ones.
8 It will come about in all the land,”
Declares the LORD,
“That two parts in it will be cut off and
perish;
But the third will be left in it.
9 And I will bring the third part through
the fire,
Refine them as silver is refined,
And test them as gold is tested.
They will call on My name,
And I will answer them; I will say,
‘They are My people,’
And they will say, ‘The LORD is my
God.’”

[Read 13:7-9]

Q: How do we know for sure that these verses apply to the Messiah?

A: Because Jesus quoted a section to His disciples about Himself.

Then Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, ‘I WILL STRIKE DOWN THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEP OF THE FLOCK SHALL BE SCATTERED.’ But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.” — Matthew 26:31-32

Q: Did everything in this verse and passage come true in the First Coming?

A: No. This is how we know that the partial fulfillment in the First Coming will experience yet a second, complete fulfillment in the course of the Second Coming.

Q: What are the two names assigned to the Messiah in this text?

A: “My Shepherd” and “My Associate”.

Q: What does “Associate” mean?

A: The underlying Hebrew term “*amiyth*” (Strong’s #5997) is only found elsewhere in the whole of Scripture in Leviticus. (Lev. 6:2; 18:20; 19:11, 15, 17; 24:19; 25:14, 15, 17) It is alternately rendered in English by the NASB translators as “*companion*”, “*neighbor*”, “*friend*” and “*another*”. Together they present a picture of one united to another because they have a common nature, rights and privileges. Is it the Old Testament equivalent of Christ’s statement, “*I and My Father are one*”. (Jn.10:30)

Application: *One of the greater, underlying reasons God’s Word places so much emphasis on the priority to love our neighbor as our self is that this is a direct reflection of the relationship between the Father and the Son. It shows how love of others is never undertaken at “arm’s length” but is actually the most personal, familial love possible, the greatest example being what exists between the Father and the Son.*

Q: How did the smiting of the sword take place in the course of the First Coming?

A: It was not just seen in the flight of the disciples at the arrest of Christ (Mt. 26:56), but would play out on a greater scale in the eventual dispersal of Israel as a result of its rejection of Him.

Q: How do we know that there is a yet future fulfillment of this on a greater scale?

A: Both Daniel (Dan. 11:31-33) and Christ (Lk. 21:20-21) specify that the Antichrist will be accompanied by armies when he not only invades Israel and surrounds Jerusalem, but by their aid goes into the Temple to commit the Abomination of Desolation in a public act of self-deification.

Q: What will be the literal effect of the final fulfillment according to v.8?

A: Two-thirds will die in the process and one-third brought “through the fire”.

Observation: In World War II, two-thirds of European Jewry, equating to one-third of worldwide Jewry, were killed, illustrating how that which Scripture says is yet to come will take place on an even greater, unprecedented scale.

Q: How is this process described in v.9?

A: “...I will...**refine them** as silver is refined, and **test them** as gold is tested”.

Q: How do we know that this literal event has a greater corresponding spiritual purpose?

1. “They will call on My name...”
2. “...I will answer them...”
3. “...I will say, ‘They are My people’...”
4. “...they will say, ‘The LORD is my God’”. (v.9)

Point: There is a final **refining** process of **judgment** to be ultimately experienced by Israel in the End Times through which a remnant will be saved both **literally** and **spiritually**.

[Read 14:1-5]

¹Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided among you. ²For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city. ³Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. ⁴In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. ⁵You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!

Q: What is this speaking of?

A: From this point on is provided a detailed explanation of what is going to take place in the course of what was previously described above when the final “sword” is awoken.

Q: What is the primary difference between what will be experienced at this time by Israel from the rest of the nations?

A: Whereas this is a refining process for Israel which will result in a remnant returning to God, all that is left to be experienced by the nations is God’s judgment.

Point: This time is so unprecedented in the calamities and destructive results that God began by first assuring His people that for them, at least, there is a greater spiritual purpose by which they will overcome what is to inevitably come.

Q: How does this section begin where God’s people are concerned?

A: With a promise of a physical restoration of what will temporarily be taken from them in the course of these events. Notice that God says in v.2, “For **I will gather** all the nations against Jerusalem to battle” to show that what is to come, as bad as it may seem, is only temporary and will work for His greater purpose and will; He is in control.

Point: Temporary earthly success always eventually gives way to a divine outcome.

Q: When will the tide turn, so to speak, from an earthly point of view?

A: “Then the LORD will go forth and fight”. (v.3) God will supernaturally intervene on Israel’s behalf.

Q: What is the dual working of this supernatural intervention?

A: He will not only deal with Israel’s enemies, but at the same time provide an avenue of escape for His people.

Observation: It has been noted by a great many that a major fault line bisects the Mt. of Olives which could literally cause it to “be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south”.

Q: So how do we know for sure, contrary to what many assert, that the events of 70 AD were not a fulfillment of these Scriptures?

A: Because there was no reappearance of the Messiah, no supernatural destruction of the Roman troops, nor a supernaturally created valley by which believers escaped.

Q: What is the culmination of these events?

A: "...the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!" (v.5)

And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." — Revelation 19:11-16

Point: There is a final resolution for **Jerusalem** to come which works for the **salvation** of God's people while working for the **judgment** of everyone else.

[Read v.6-7]

Q: What is the greater, beginning work which is being described here?

A: Just as there was this kind of working in the beginning at the Creation, it is revisited in the course of transitioning to the Millennial Reign, a divine re-creation; an end to the old cosmic order gives way to the new.

Point: For those experiencing the wrath of God's judgment, all things go **dark**; for His people for whom God is instituting a new kingdom, a new day **dawns** on a physically changed **earth**.

[Read v.8-11]

Q: What is v.8 describing by "living waters will flow out of Jerusalem?"

A: Jerusalem as the established place of the Messiah's throne in the Millennial Kingdom spiritually nurtures the whole world. The great physical changes parallel great spiritual changes.

Q: Why does it stipulate that the living waters will flow equally to the east and west and during both summer and winter?

A: It represents a permanent change wherein the whole world will be continually nurtured without interruption, but emanating outward from Israel at the center. What previously took place on an individual basis will be provided globally.

"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" — John 7:38

Q: What is v.9 affirming?

A: That it is at this time Christ initiates His Millennial Rule on earth.

Q: Along with the changes in Jerusalem, what does v.10 describe?

A: The physical changes anticipated for the land of Israel itself.

⁶In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. ⁷For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

⁸And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

⁹And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the Lord will be the only one, and His name the only one.

¹⁰All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses.

¹¹People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security.

¹²Now this will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth.

¹³It will come about in that day that a great panic from the LORD will fall on them; and they will seize one another's hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another. ¹⁴Judah also will fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered, gold and silver and garments in great abundance. ¹⁵So also like this plague will be the plague on the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey and all the cattle that will be in those camps.

¹⁶Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. ¹⁷And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. ¹⁸If the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. ¹⁹This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.

Q: What is the net result for Jerusalem?

A: It is not only transformed from a vulnerable physical condition to a secure one, but likewise undergoes a parallel spiritual transformation when “*there will no longer be a curse*”.

Point: The final **physical** transformation of Jerusalem and Israel not only parallels the **spiritual** transformation of God's **people**, but becomes the **source** of transformation and sustenance for the entire **world**.

[Read v.12-15]

Q: How does this passage relate to the previous one?

A: Whereas God first reveals what will result for His people on the other side of “*the day of the Lord*”, this explains the consequences of that event for those who will not endure it.

Q: What might be spiritually significant about this judgment being directed at the “flesh”, “eyes” and “tongue”?

A: The flesh represents that which is devoted to sin, upon which one's eyes become fixed upon the objects of fleshly desire, and to which the tongue speaks to show the true object of the heart's devotion.

Q: What is the parallel working of God's judgment at this time?

A: The plague will be accompanied by “*a great panic*” (v.13) so that they will turn against each other, followed by the plague being visited on all their possessions.

Q: Why is mention of wealth visited in v.14?

A: It is to show God's promise of restoration to Israel, a reversal to what occurred in v.1-2 where their wealth was originally plundered. What was temporarily taken away has been supernaturally restored and then some by the qualification, “*in great abundance*”. (v.14)

Point: The final disposition of those in **rebellion** to God's Word and ways will come by the hand of God at the **appointed** time and place.

[Read v.16-19]

Q: Why might this closing section of Zechariah sound familiar?

A: It mirrors the closing of the first section of Zechariah 1-8.

“Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘It will yet be that peoples will come, even the inhabitants of many cities. The inhabitants of one will go to another, saying, ‘Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I will also go.’ So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD.’ Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.’” — Zechariah 8:20-23

Observation: The account of the separation of the nations depicted as sheep and goats in the Olivet Discourse speaks of an event at the outset of the Millennial Reign. Readers are encouraged to pursue a more detailed study of parallel Scriptures speaking of this time, in particular Isaiah 2:2-4 and Ezekiel 40-48.

Q: What is different about the way God's people are described in this overall chapter versus those spoken of here?

A: Whereas God's people are referred to as a remnant, the rest are characterized as survivors.

Q: What does it mean when Scripture specifies someone will or will not “go up”?

A: This refers to making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the specific purpose of worship and ritual observance. In this case, it is “to celebrate the Feast of Booths”. (v.18)

Q: When and for what purpose is the Feast of Booths celebrated?

A: It takes place on the 15th of the seventh month after the final harvest of crops, when the people were to live in temporary shelters for seven days as a reminder of the Exodus from Egypt.

Q: How might the whole world relate to this meaning?

A: In Scripture, Egypt represents the old life, so for everyone this would be a representation of having come out of the world by the hand of the Messiah.

Q: Of the scripturally mandated feast days, how was the Feast of Booths always, even at present, seen to represent something even greater?

A: It has been and is acknowledged as representing the Millennial Reign of the Messiah.

Q: Why do you suppose that punishment is mentioned? Won't the Millennial Kingdom be a time of perfection when everyone is living in the shadow of Christ's reign from Jerusalem?

A: The Millennial Kingdom must not be confused with heaven; it is showing what the Garden of Eden would have been like without Satan's influence. Sadly, it also shows that even without that seminal influence, man's own nature will cause him to fall short in an illustration that man ultimately cannot successfully live apart from God.

Point: A time will come when the whole world will **adopt** the same **practices** of worship and service to the Messiah and be held equally **accountable**.

[Read v.20-21]

Q: To what greater thing is this speaking of where Israel is concerned?

A: That biblical holiness will finally be achieved.

Q: What is important about the inscription, “HOLY TO THE LORD”?

A: This was the same inscription written on the High Priest's turban as a perpetual reminder of his consecration to the Lord. This would indicate that God's standard of holiness will, at this time, extend to the whole nation.

“You shall also make a plate of pure gold and shall engrave on it, like the engravings of a seal, ‘Holy to the LORD.’ — Exodus 28:36

Q: But how would this phenomenon of this inscription being on bells attached to horses be especially powerful to Old Testament Jews?

A: Bells adorned the priestly vestments (Ex. 28:33; 39:25-26). So the extension of this practice, in tandem with the high priestly inscription, was a dramatic way of describing a condition of holiness that extends to every corner of the land, every facet of the nation; it blankets and characterizes everything. Likewise, the illustration of the pots, where previously only vessels in service at the Temple would undergo a ritual process to make them holy, holiness will be so pervasive at this time that even the common, ordinary, everyday items are holy.

²⁰In that day there will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, “HOLY TO THE LORD.” And the cooking pots in the LORD's house will be like the bowls before the altar. ²¹Every cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to the LORD of hosts; and all who sacrifice will come and take of them and boil in them. And there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts in that day.

Q: What may be ironic about the use of the term “Canaanite” and that such will no longer be found “in the house of the Lord”?

A: The Hebrew term “*kenaan*” (Strong’s #3669a) can also mean “merchant”. There may be a dual meaning here that refers not only to a complete absence of false worship, but finally achieving a pure motive of worship when no one any longer seeks to benefit financially as was so often the case in Israel’s storied past.

Point: A time will come when **purity** of **worship** on earth will be achieved.

Overall Application

There are many reasons for the End Times process employed by God aside from just that of rendering the wrath of His judgment on the unsaved and effecting the rescue of His people, first of the Church and ultimately of Israel. Even above these and many others is the attainment of a time when, as it was before the Fall of man, all things on earth existed in a condition spiritually suitable to be called, “HOLY TO THE LORD”.