

## ***Session 9 Israel: Delivered, Blessed, and Regathered (Zech. 9-10)***

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. After the visions in Zechariah 1-6, the question arises, what about the Gentile nations who oppressed Israel? Zechariah receives *two prophetic oracles* (Zech. 9-11 and Zech. 12-14) that answer this question. Their theme is the messianic King who brings judgment and blessing as He empowers Israel, defeats the Gentile world powers, and establishes the kingdom (Zech. 9-14). These two chapters give us significant insight into the message of comfort to Israel (Isa. 40:1-2).
- B. Both prophecies begin with *burden*, which is translated as *oracle*, or a heavy burden (9:1; 12:1).  
*<sup>1</sup>The burden [oracle] of the word of the LORD against the land of Hadrach. (Zech. 9:1)*
- C. Both oracles speak of war between the Gentile world powers and Israel, but in different ways. The Messiah will deliver, empower, and regather Israel and overthrow her enemies (Zech. 9-11). The Messiah will save, refine, and transform Israel in the context of a global war (Zech. 12-14). The second oracle gives more details about the global war that is introduced in the first oracle.
- D. Jesus will use the weak military power of Israel as the weapon in His hand against the nations.
- E. The complete fulfillment of most of the events in these six chapters will occur at the time of Jesus' second coming. In the second oracle the phrase "in that day" occurs 18 times, and indicates the end of the age (Zech. 12:3, 4, 6, 8 [2x], 9, 11; 13:1, 2, 4; 14:1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 20, 21).

### **II. ISRAEL WILL BE DELIVERED FROM THE NATIONS SURROUNDING HER (9:1-8)**

- A. Judgment and salvation will come to the nations surrounding Israel (9:1-8). Zechariah specifies three cities in *Syria* (Hadrach, Damascus, and Hamath; 9:1-2a), two in *Phoenicia* (Tyre and Sidon; 9:2b-4) and four cities in *Philistia* (Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and Ashdod; 9:5-8). The order of the cities mentioned is from north to south.
  - 1. Zechariah 9:1-8 is a prototype of what the Lord will do to ungodly nations that oppress others. What He does reveals His nature. He humbles their pride (9:6a), cleanses their sin, (9:7a), and offers them His salvation (9:7b) and participation in His kingdom (9:7c).
  - 2. The fulfillment of this prophecy initially occurred when Alexander the Great swiftly conquered these nations. He was God's tool of judgment against them. These events have a dual fulfillment, initially in Alexander's time, and then ultimately at the end of the age.
  - 3. After defeating the Persians (333 B.C.), Alexander moved towards Egypt. On his march there he conquered the major cities of Syria and those on the Mediterranean coast. Yet, he refused to harm Jerusalem. For an account of the powerful dream that led Alexander to spare Jerusalem, see Flavius Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, 11:8:3-5.

B. Judgment came to Syria and Phoenicia (9:1-4) before the eyes of men (9:1) and God (9:8).

**<sup>1</sup>The burden of the word of the LORD against the land of Hadrach, and Damascus its resting place (for the eyes of men and all the tribes of Israel are on the LORD); <sup>2</sup>also against Hamath, which borders on it, and against Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise. <sup>3</sup>For Tyre built herself a tower, heaped up silver like the dust, and gold like the mire of the streets. <sup>4</sup>Behold, the LORD will cast her out; He will destroy her power in the sea. (Zech. 9:1-4)**

1. **Damascus:** The burden of this judgment prophecy fell first on the capital city of Syria. God's wrath "rested" there until it accomplished the Lord's full purpose. Hadrach and Hamath were Syrian cities near to Damascus.
2. **The eyes of men:** The eyes of men and all Israel looked to the Lord as He judged the cities of Syria using Alexander the Great as His instrument of wrath. The nations were filled with fear at seeing how quickly Alexander conquered each nation. They looked to the Lord in fear, especially knowing about Zechariah's prophetic words against them.
3. **Tyre and Sidon:** Tyre and Sidon were major cities of Phoenicia. Tyre built a fortress city on an island about one-half mile from the mainland, with walls 150 feet high that were so strong that the Assyrian king Shalmaneser besieged it for five years, and the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar for thirteen years. Both failed to capture it. Tyre mocked Alexander as she foolishly trusted in this fortified city and in her abundance of wealth for security. Alexander built a causeway from the mainland to the island city and quickly destroyed it.

C. Judgment and salvation will come to Philistia (9:5-7). These four Philistine cities along the Mediterranean coast saw what happened to Tyre and were filled with fear and sorrow (9:5). The term *Palestine* comes from the ancient Philistines.

**<sup>5</sup>Ashkelon shall see it and fear; Gaza also shall be very sorrowful; and Ekron... <sup>6</sup>A mixed race shall settle in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. <sup>7</sup>I will take away the blood from his mouth, and the abominations...But he who remains, even he shall be for our God, and shall be like a leader in Judah, and Ekron like a Jebusite. (Zech. 9:5-7)**

1. **Take away the blood:** This spoke of idolatrous rituals that required that they drink blood and participate in other abominations. God's judgment cleansed this city from idolatry.
2. **Shall be for our God:** Some of Israel's fiercest enemies joined them in worshiping the God of Israel. Some became like the devout Jebusites in David's day (1 Chr. 21:18). Some even became leaders in the kingdom. This great wave of conversions is yet future.

D. The Lord will camp around Israel with angels, especially in the end-time conflicts. This prophecy will not be completely fulfilled until Jesus returns, when "no more" shall an oppressor pass through Israel. The Lord will watch over Israel even as "the army" of the Antichrist passes by.

**<sup>8</sup>I will camp around My house because of the army, because of him who passes by...No more shall an oppressor pass through them, for now I have seen with My eyes. (Zech. 9:8)**

### III. THE COMING OF ZION'S KING (9:9-10)

- A. The Israelites in Zechariah's day were to rejoice because their King was surely coming (9:9-10).  
***<sup>9</sup>“Rejoice greatly...O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey...<sup>10</sup>I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem; the battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be...from the River to the ends of the earth. (Zech. 9:9-10)***
- B. ***Your King is coming:*** Israel's Messiah was to come first on a donkey in humility (9:9). Daniel spoke of the Messiah as the Son of Man coming with the clouds to rule all nations (Dan. 7:14). How could the Messiah come both as the Son of Man on the clouds and on a donkey?  
***<sup>13</sup>One like the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven...<sup>14</sup>to Him was given dominion... (Dan. 7:13-14)***
1. Verse 9 was fulfilled at Jesus' first coming by Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (Mt. 25:5; Jn 12:15). Verse 10 will be fulfilled at Jesus' second coming.
  2. Many applauded when they saw Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. They probably assumed that Jesus would soon free them from Roman oppression. They misunderstood that He came first to die, and would come later to liberate them as a king riding a white horse. Many people wanted a freedom fighter, not a redeemer and spiritual reformer!
  3. ***Having salvation:*** This speaks of deliverance spiritually, politically, physically, etc.
  4. ***He is just:*** Jesus is perfectly just in all His motives, plans, and actions.
  5. ***He is lowly:*** The only character trait that Jesus proclaimed about Himself was that He was lowly in heart (Mt. 11:29). Humility is part of His eternal nature. He has existed eternally with a servant's heart. He will forever be the greatest servant with the most humility. Jesus showed us who He is in His core identity when He took a towel to wash dirty feet (Jn. 13). Only the meek will inherit the eternal leadership of the earth (Mt. 5:5).  
***<sup>29</sup>Learn from Me for I am gentle and lowly in heart [humble]. (Mt. 11:29)***
  6. Jesus will take over the nations *only* on the basis of humility (Ps. 45:4). Everything that He does in His leadership is done from humility and to produce humility in others.  
***<sup>4</sup>In your majesty ride forth victoriously in behalf of truth, humility and righteousness. (Ps. 45:4, NIV)***
- C. ***I will cut off the chariot:*** Jesus will cause all war to cease when He returns (Isa. 2:4; 9:5-7).
- D. ***His dominion:*** His dominion will go from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth, i.e., it will cover all the earth. All the kings of the earth will worship and obey Him in the Millennium (Ps. 72:11; 102:15; 138:4; 148:11; Mal. 1:11; Rev. 15:4).

#### IV. THE KING COMES TO JERUSALEM: JESUS' GLORIOUS RETURN (9:11-17)

- A. When Jesus returns He will liberate, empower, defend, and save Israel (9:11-17). He will destroy the Antichrist armies surrounding Jerusalem and liberate Jewish prisoners (12:2-3; 14:2; Joel 3:2, 12). He will empower the Israeli army as His agents for this *before* He returns (10:3-7; 12:5-8).

<sup>11</sup>*“As for you also, because of the blood of your covenant, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. <sup>12</sup>Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of hope...I will restore double to you. <sup>13</sup>I have bent Judah, My bow, fitted the bow with Ephraim, and raised up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and made you like the sword of a mighty man.” (Zech. 9:11-13)*

1. ***I will set your prisoners free:*** The Lord will set prisoners free from the waterless pit, which is a dry well, like Joseph and Jeremiah were thrown into (Gen. 37:24; Jer. 38:6-9). They were grateful that there was no water in it or they would have drowned.
2. ***Prisoners of hope:*** The remnant of Israel today are “prisoners of hope,” as they set their hope on God. Zechariah 9:12 is the only place in the OT where the article is included with the word *hope*—as in “*the hope*” of Israel, to which Paul refers (Acts 26:6; 28:20).
3. ***Blood of your covenant:*** The Lord delivers us based on the blood of the covenant. The expression *the blood of the covenant* is found in Exodus 24:8. Jesus uses this phrase when speaking of His death—only in Him is our deliverance found and fulfilled (Mk. 14:24). The blood of the covenant is God’s pledge of faithfulness to deliver us.  
<sup>24</sup>*“This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many.” (Mk. 14:24)*
4. ***Restore double:*** The Lord promises to restore double of what the enemy took from Israel. A double restoration means a complete restoration (Isa. 40:2; 51:19; 61:7). Joseph was delivered from a waterless pit to sit on a throne and receive the double portion inheritance as Jacob’s first born. He is a picture of Israel’s salvation; they are God’s first-born nation.
5. ***Return to the stronghold:*** The prisoners of hope are exhorted to “return.” Many agree that physically the stronghold is the land of Israel (or Jerusalem) and that spiritually it is the Lord (Ps. 9:9; 18:2; 31:3; 71:3; 91:2; 94:22; 144:2; Jer. 16:19; Nah. 1:7; Joel 3:16).
6. ***I raised up your sons like a mighty man:*** The Lord promised to raise up *sons of Zion* as mighty men to overthrow Greek oppression. He will make Judah His bow and Ephraim His arrow. The Lord promised to anoint Jewish soldiers to do battle against oppressors or to defend Israel against an attack, but not to wage war as aggressors seeking conquests.
7. ***O Greece:*** Greece defeated the Persians to become the next great world power. The initial fulfillment of Israelites being anointed to fight against the Greeks was seen when the Jews overthrew the Greeks during the Maccabean revolts in the second century BC. The Maccabean uprising against Greece was only a partial fulfillment of this prophecy. The ultimate fulfillment of this will be in the future battle of Jerusalem (10:5-7; 12:3-9).

**V. JESUS WILL PERSONALLY INTERVENE IN THE BATTLE (9:14-17)**

- A. The Lord will be “seen” over His people (9:14) and will defend Israel (9:15) when Israel’s sons are raised up as mighty men to resist a military attack from the sons of Greece (9:13). This seems to be the same situation as Zechariah 12:3-10, where Israeli soldiers are anointed, like David, to resist the Antichrist’s armies, and then “see” the One whom they pierced (12:10).
- <sup>13</sup>***“I raised up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and made you like the sword of a mighty man. <sup>14</sup>Then the LORD will be seen over them, and His arrow will go forth like lightning. The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet, and go with whirlwinds from the south. <sup>15</sup>The LORD of hosts will defend them; they shall devour and subdue with slingstones.”***  
***(Zech. 9:13-15)***
- B. ***Jesus will be seen:*** When Jesus returns, every eye will see Him (Mt. 24:30; 26:64; Rev. 1:7).
- <sup>7</sup>***He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him...all the tribes of the earth will mourn.***  
***(Rev. 1:7)***
- <sup>30</sup>***All the tribes of the earth...will see the Son of Man coming...with power and great glory.***  
***(Mt. 24:30)***
- C. ***The Lord will blow the trumpet:*** When Jesus returns, the trumpet of God will be blown (Mt. 24:31, 1 Thes. 4:16; 1 Cor. 15:52; Rev. 10:7; 11:15; Isa. 27:13; Zech. 9:14)
- <sup>16</sup>***The Lord Himself will descend...with the trumpet of God. The dead in Christ will rise first.***  
***(1 Thes. 4:16)***
- <sup>13</sup>***In that day the great trumpet will be blown; they will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, and they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem. (Isa. 27:13)***
- D. ***Whirlwinds from the south:*** Jesus will come up from Bozrah in the south as He marches into Jerusalem (Isa. 63:1-6; 34:6-8; 19:20; Mic. 2:12-13; Hab. 3:3-5, 12-13; Zech. 10:11; Ps. 45:3-5; 68:24, 29-33; 110:5-6). The Lord is pictured as “marching” through the wilderness to lead the people to the land of Israel in the days of Moses (Deut. 33:2-5; Judg. 5:4-5; Ps. 68:7-9).
- E. ***The Lord shall defend them:*** They shall devour and subdue with slingstones, even as David did.
- F. The overthrow of the Gentile powers is followed by the exaltation of God’s people (9:16-17). God’s people are so valuable to Him, even like precious stones in a king’s crown, and we are lifted like a banner in the sky to proclaim our worth to Him. Zechariah proclaims the greatness of the goodness and beauty of God and of His people as a crown of jewels (9:17).
- <sup>16</sup>***The LORD their God will save them in that day...They shall be like the jewels of a crown, lifted like a banner over His land—<sup>17</sup>For how great is its goodness and how great its beauty!***  
***(Zech. 9:16-17)***
- <sup>3</sup>***You shall also be a crown of glory...and a royal diadem in the hand of your God. (Isa. 62:3)***

## VI. ISRAEL IS TO BE BLESSED AND REGATHERED (10:1-12)

- A. The second part of this oracle is about Israel being blessed (10:1-7) and gathered (10:8-12). Israel will be blessed agriculturally (10:1), spiritually (10:2), governmentally (10:3-4), and militarily (10:5-7). This will be the fruit of Jesus' active leadership over Israel in the end times.
- B. Israel will be blessed agriculturally (10:1). This speaks of literal rain. The rain comes in response to obedience and prayer (Deut. 28:12). He promised to send rain to bless the crops (Deut. 11:13-14). Many of God's promises are not guarantees, but invitations to partner with Him (Jas. 4:2).  
***<sup>1</sup>Ask the LORD for rain in the time of the latter rain. The LORD will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone. (Zech. 10:1)***
1. The autumn, or "early," rains usually come in October-November to prepare the soil for sowing. The period of sowing is usually between October and December.
  2. The spring, or "latter," rain usually comes in March-April to help the harvest. The harvest is usually between March and July. The dry season is usually from May to September
- C. Israel will be blessed spiritually as the Lord confronts and removes idolatry from the nation (10:2).  
***<sup>2</sup>The idols speak delusion; the diviners envision lies, and tell false dreams; they comfort in vain. Therefore the people wend their way like sheep; they are in trouble because there is no shepherd. (Zech. 10:2)***
1. ***Tell false dreams:*** The leaders giving flattering dreams to comfort people—it is vanity.
  2. ***Troubled:*** Jesus looked with compassion on the multitudes, seeing them as troubled sheep without a shepherd. It is probable that Jesus was referring to Zechariah 10:2.  
***<sup>36</sup>He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. (Mt. 9:36)***
- D. Israel will be blessed governmentally as God removes their bad leadership (10:3). His anger with false shepherds (civil and political leaders, priests, etc.) is an expression of His zeal (1:14; 8:2).  
***<sup>3</sup>My anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the goatherds. The Lord of hosts will visit His flock...and will make them as His royal horse in the battle." (Zech. 10:3)***
1. ***I will punish the goatherds:*** These herdsman or shepherds speak of the spiritual leadership in the nation. The spiritual leaders eventually killed Zechariah.  
***<sup>35</sup>From the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. (Mt. 23:20-35)***
  2. ***His royal horse in battle:*** The Lord will visit them by releasing His power through them so that they function as a royal horse that He will "ride," or use, in the end-time battles. Israel's weak sheep (10:2) will become strong horses (10:3), as seen in Zechariah 12:3-9.

- E. Israel will be blessed governmentally, with leadership in society (10:4; Isa. 22:22-24; 28:16).  
**<sup>4</sup>From him comes the cornerstone, from him the tent peg, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler together. (Zech. 10:4)**
1. From him (the house of Judah; 10:3) the Lord will raise up leaders to use as His “royal horse” (10:3) to provide strong godly leadership for their social infrastructures. A society is built on the quality of its civil, political, financial, military, and spiritual leadership. These four figures together describe strong, reliable, skilled, and trustworthy leadership.
  2. The “cornerstone” unites two walls at the corner—such a leader brings unity to society. The “tent peg” holds the tent in place, even in the pressures of a storm. The “battle bow” speaks of military leadership in the end times (9:13; 10:5-7; 12:5-8). The “ruler” is a Hebrew word that speaks of a strong, determined leader.
- F. Israel will be blessed militarily (10:5-7) as emphasized elsewhere (9:13; 10:3; 12:5-8). Later, Zechariah develops the theme of the Lord being with the military force as He was with David, by empowering the Israeli army to resist the Antichrist even *before* Jesus returns (12:5-8)  
**<sup>5</sup>“They shall be like mighty men, who tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle. They shall fight because the LORD is with them...<sup>6</sup>I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph...<sup>7</sup>Those of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man...their children shall see it and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD.” (Zech. 10:5-7)**
1. Zechariah specifically says that the “house of Judah” in the south of Israel (10:3, 6) and the “house of Joseph” (10:6), which is the same as the “Ephraim” in the north, (10:7) will be empowered and blessed together, thus fully overcoming the historic rivalry (12:7).
  2. **Their children**: The children will also have a dynamic relationship with Jesus (10:7, 9). They will personally see the Lord as their joy and source of security and strength, instead of only relying on what their parents say and experience in the Lord (Mal. 4:5-6).
- G. Israel will be regathered from the nations in great numbers (10:8-12).  
**<sup>8</sup>“I will whistle for them and gather them, for I will redeem them; and they shall increase as they once increased. <sup>9</sup>I will sow them among the peoples, and they shall remember Me in far countries; they shall live, together with their children, and they shall return.” (Zech. 10:8-9)**
1. **I will whistle**: This describes the Lord arresting Israel’s attention in a way that causes them to respond swiftly to Him, even from the far countries of the earth (Isa. 5:26).  
**<sup>26</sup>He will lift up a banner to the nations from afar, and will whistle to them from the end of the earth; surely they shall come with speed, swiftly. (Isa. 5:26)**
  2. **I will sow**: He will sow Israel into the earth to reap a harvest (Jer. 31:27; Hos. 2:23).  
**<sup>23</sup>Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, and I will have mercy on her. (Hos. 2:23)**

3. This scripture speaks of Israel turning to God while still in the “far countries” of their dispersion. This appears to be in conflict with the prophecies that predict a restoration of Israel in unbelief, and their conversion in the land at the visible appearing of Christ.
  4. A large number of Jews will be in the land of Israel in unbelief when the Lord appears, and will be converted there. The remaining ones will still be in the dispersion, and on them the spirit of grace will come in “far countries.”
- H. Zechariah gives details about the end-time regathering of the Jewish people (10:10-12). In particular, they will return from Egypt and Assyria (10:10) because of great miracles (10:12)
- <sup>10</sup>***“I will also bring them back from the land of Egypt, and gather them from Assyria. I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon...<sup>11</sup>He shall pass through the sea with affliction, and strike the waves of the sea: all the depths of the River shall dry up. Then the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart. <sup>12</sup>I will strengthen them in the LORD, and they shall walk up and down in His name.” (Zech. 10:10-12)***
1. **From Egypt and Assyria**: The Lord will bring the remnant of Israel back from Egypt in the south and the former region of Assyria (parts of Iraq, Syria, and Jordan) in the north (Isa. 11:11, 16; 27:13; Hos. 11:10-11; Mic. 5:6; 7:12-15; Zech. 10:10-11).  
<sup>16</sup>***There will be a highway for the remnant of His people who will be left from Assyria, as it was for Israel in the day that he came up from the land of Egypt. (Isa. 11:16)***  
<sup>13</sup>***In that day the great trumpet will be blown; they will come, who are about to perish in the land of Assyria, and they who are outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem. (Isa. 27:13)***
  2. **Captives**: Zechariah promised that the Lord would liberate Jewish captives (9:11; 14:2).
  3. **Gilead and Lebanon**: Since Gilead is east of the Jordan River and Lebanon is west of it, part of the meaning here is that the Lord will resettle them throughout the whole land or region and not just in Jerusalem.
  4. **Great miracles**: The dividing of the Red Sea when Israel was released from captivity in Egypt foreshadowed the great miracles in the end times that will be seen by the nations.  
<sup>15</sup>***“As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them wonders.***  
<sup>16</sup>***The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall put their hand over their mouth...<sup>17</sup>They shall be afraid of the LORD our God.” (Mic. 7:15-17)***
  5. At key times in history, the Lord drew attention to His power by great miracles related to water, such as parting the Red Sea, drying up the Jordan River, Jesus calming the Sea of Galilee. He will do this again when He dries up the Euphrates River (10:11; Rev. 6:12).  
<sup>12</sup>***...poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up. (Rev. 16:12)***