

## Zechariah Chapter Nine

### Introduction

This chapter deals the conversion of the Gentiles, spoken of in general previously it is now particularly named; of the coming of Christ into the world and its advantage to his church; the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles, and of their protection, encouragement, and success. The Gentiles converted are first the Syrians that dwelt in Hadrach, Damascus, and Hamath, the Lord's eye being upon them, #Zec 9:1 next the Phoenicians, the inhabitants of Tyre and Zidon, who had a vain opinion of their wisdom, and trusted in their riches, #Zec 9:2-4 and then the Philistines, the inhabitants of Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and Ashdod, guilty of pride, murder, idolatry, and other abominations, #Zec 9:5-7 when the church and people of God should be safely protected, #Zec 9:8 to whom, for their joy and comfort, is given forth a prophecy concerning the coming of the Messiah; who is described by his character as a King, just, having salvation, lowly, and riding on an ass; by the peace of his kingdom; by the various offices he executes; the prophetic office, speaking peace to the Heathen; the kingly office, his dominion being very large; and his priestly office, in the effusion of his blood, by which the covenant is confirmed, his people delivered out of distress, and encouraged to flee to him as their stronghold, where they find plenty and protection, #Zec 9:9-12 next the apostles are represented as military men, accoutered with the bow and the sword of the mighty, #Zec 9:13 whose success is owing to the Lord's appearance over them, and the efficacy of his grace and Spirit attending the word, #Zec 9:14 who are protected and encouraged in it by the Lord, and honoured on account of it, #Zec 9:15,16 and the chapter is concluded with an exclamation, wondering at the grace and glory of Christ, and expressing the satisfying provisions of his house, #Zec 9:17.

9:1 The burden of the word of the LORD in the land of Hadrach, and Damascus [shall be] the rest thereof: when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, [shall be] toward the LORD.

The word used for burden in this verse is very interesting. I normally do not enter into much "word study" because it is too easy to get sidetracked and miss the message of the whole when attention is focused on a word rather than the passage. However concerning this word we find it has many different translations that cannot always simply be determined by context. Consider this data: TWOT-1421d, 1421e; AV-burden 57, song 3, prophecy 2, set 1, exaction 1, carry away 1, tribute 1; 66. Add to this the possible translations to English: 1) load, bearing, tribute, burden, lifting 1a) load, burden 1b) lifting, uplifting, that to which the soul lifts itself up 1c) bearing, carrying 1d) tribute, that which is carried or brought or borne 2) utterance, oracle, burden. The context here would indicate the choice of uplifting or oracle are the best fit. However there is always a sense where the word of the Lord is a burden. Never has God given His word of prophecy to one so in the receiving of this word comes the responsibility to preserve and pass to others unchanged and without subtraction or

addition. At the same time God's word is always uplifting even when it is an admonishment because the admonishments and warnings of God always point to the great promises of God.

Hadrach is not a known person or place. The early Jews say it was a person, The Messiah others that it was a place in Syria. This fits since Damascus was part of Syria. The writings of the early Jews (not Scripture) speak of the word of the Lord coming upon Damascus and the glory of God resting there. It was as we will recall on this road to this city that Paul was converted and the beginning of the conversion of the Gentiles took on its strength and began in earnest. While this definitely points to the end times when every eye shall see the Lord it is a better fit with the incarnation of Christ and the beginning of the new covenant church.

2 And Hamath also shall border thereby; Tyrus, and Zidon, yough it be very wise.

Many Jews say this is Antioch. If so the Gospel was also first preached here and this fits with our placing these events with the coming of Christ and the spread of the Gospel.

3 And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.

Tyre was a fortified and strong city renowned for its material wealth.

4 Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire.

This was literally carried out by Alexander the Great, but I also see it as the spiritual collapse of Tyre as many there will hear the word of the Lord and forsake the power and hope of such wealth and fortified cities for the strength and protection of God in Christ.

5 Ashkelon shall see [it], and fear; Gaza also [shall see it], and be very sorrowful, and Ekron; for her expectation shall be ashamed; and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.

Ashkelon was one of the five cities of the Philistines so this means that when they see the fall and submission of a stronghold like Tyre falling to Christ they likewise will humble themselves before God.

6 And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

This could be another reference to Alexander who burned this city or of Jonathan the Macabee who also burned the city and destroyed the temple of its god. Definitely speaking of the fall of a great earthly city where men had put their trust instead of God.

7 And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth: but he that remaineth, even he, [shall be] for our God, and he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite.

Some manuscripts and the Jews read this as plural and thus the blood (desire of it as in war) will be taken away from these people. Their gods will be destroyed. Yet notice that god has here in this midst of His wrath once more provided for the faithful and those who repent and call upon Him will be spared. Not only this, but a people who were not a people of God are taken in and given equal status in God's kingdom. God is not a respecter of person, but of the heart that loves Him truly.

8 And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

The Jews say of this verse, "and I will cause my glorious Shechinah to dwell in the house of my sanctuary, and the strength of the arm of my power shall be as a wall of fire round about it." The cloud of glory that once rested in the Holy of Holies in the Jewish temple will rest with God's people. Except for the protection of God from the vast numbers against it, the early church would not have survived. The same is true today and the word of God would disappear in many nations other than God's personal protection of the few Christians there. Christ said, "I will build my church and the gates (power) of hell shall not prevail against it."

Some think God has seen this others that it refers to the prophet. I believe it is the prophet since it is a given that God has seen all that will be. Zechariah is then saying with my eyes in these visions I have seen this come to pass, The word is from God and thus I have seen and thus it will be.

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he [is] just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

All have always understood this to be spoken of Christ the Messiah. We watch this very event unfold as Christ the Messiah enters Jerusalem using this exact mode of transportation. This is also symbolic to the Jews as this was the mode their Kings were led in procession into the city and before

the people. Christ in fulfilling this prophecy concerning Him declares He is indeed the Messiah, the King of the Jews.

10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion [shall be] from sea [even] to sea, and from the river [even] to the ends of the earth.

I will end military power, wars shall cease. Obviously we once more move to the end times when swords shall be beat into pruning shears and war be no more. Jerusalem was not at peace in the day of Christ and there were yet many wars to come even as foretold by Christ with the words there shall be wars and rumors of wars before the final day. Not only will the word of God reclaim Israel, but God shall claim the whole of the earth. Extending it into all the world speaks of the spread of the Gospel but also points to the end time when the curse is lifted and the world renewed in the perfections of her creation by God.

11 As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein [is] no water.

The Jews miss the truth here and believe this is the covenant of Sinai, of the law of God. However the law reveals sin and does not render salvation. Christ releases the prisoner and sets men free whereas the law was a type of bondage itself. So much so that the New Testament writers use these terms and Paul asks the Galatians how they can so soon return to bondage (Jewish law and ceremonies) when they have tasted the freedom of the Son. Remember the first church s Jewish and there were many who thought all of the law and ceremonies of the Old Testament should continue. Before we get too critical here we must also recall that the Bible as such doesn't exist yet and it is by oral testimony of the apostles that the Gospel goes forth. The church meets in the Synagogue and is of primarily Jewish extraction. Yet they were told in the Old Testament this day of freedom in Christ was coming.

12 ¶ Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare [that] I will render double unto thee;

Present circumstances may seem to deny the possibility but God says turn your hope toward Me, I will deliver and that double your expectations. It is written that we cannot even begin to imagine the great things God has in store for us. Rather than the hope of the material world around us and the strength of men as witnessed in the vast armies of some nations, the real power over all thing is God. Christ says fear not him who can kill the body but Him who can destroy the soul. God has spoken so then let God be true and all men liars.

13 When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man.

The bow of the Gospel I believe is in sight here and the apostles are the arrows that strike at the hearts of all with the word and power of God. This whole chapter is so involved with the Messiah I do not see how it can be twisted to be another time in history. It is prophetic in that Greece was not the power when his was written, as Alexander is several hundred years in the future. But it is Greece via the Romans whom the Gospel conquers in that it could not be stopped but rather was spread father by the oppression of Rome. While we await the day when the symbolic Rome will be overthrown for good in the last days, Greece or Rome would be overthrown in the days of the early church. Notice that as we know it Rome was Greek, they spoke the Greek language and it had become the language of the known world, the customs were more of Greece than Roman. The tortures used by Rome and her coliseums were of Greek origin. So the prophecy rightly points to Greece as the power to be overthrown and not Rome in the day of Christ.

14 And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.

What can be said other than every eye shall see and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord? With the speed of light and nature the Gospel will descend upon the world turning men to God and building His everlasting kingdom.

15 The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, [and] make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, [and] as the corners of the altar.

Wow! God is the defense of His people! As silly as David facing Goliath with a stone and a sling so the saints will face the world and the powers of it with the mere word of God, the Gospel a foolish thing to the Gentiles and a stumbling block to the Jews. Then comes Acts and the saints stand in the full glory of God being accused of being drunk on new wine when it is the power of God and being drunk in the Holy Spirit men see. God's goodness and mercy shall overflow even as the blood of the sacrifices and offerings filled the corners of the altar so should these blessing overflow the hearts and beings of those who call upon the Lord. Drunk of the Spirit not wine as commanded of the saints in the New testament.

16 And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they [shall be as] the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.

For this purpose of being for God's glory we were created, we were chosen, we were called, we have persevered through the ages, and shall gather in one place for the glory of God alone on that last and faithful day. It is all of God and it is all of grace. Man has nothing to do with salvation, perseverance, or glorification in the end, all is of God.

17 For how great [is] his goodness, and how great [is] his beauty! Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.

Corn is the fruit or kernel of God's word as opposed to the chaff or external wrappings that the doctrines of men bring to the Gospel. Not as some think this is strong drink for the men and wine for the women. The men are strong and zealous by the truth not drink. The maids are merry and full not of wine but as with wine they too are lifted up and celebrate in the light of the Lord and His word.