

“Summer in the Minor Prophets - Zechariah” | Zechariah

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Please turn with me in your Bibles to the Old Testament book of Zechariah, chapter 1 (p. 793). Zechariah is the 2nd to the last book of the Old Testament, so if you turn to Matthew just page backward past Micah and you'll arrive at Zechariah. Last week we were in the book of Haggai and both Zechariah and Haggai prophesied in Jerusalem at the same time around 520 B.C. So their contexts are identical. They were both prophesying to the Jews who had returned to the ruins of Jerusalem from exile in Babylon and Persia. Out of all the minor prophets, this is the largest, containing 14 chapters but right now, let's read the introduction to the book, Zechariah 1:1-3, which declares one of the most important themes of this book – that God's people need the LORD to return to them.

Zechariah 1:1-3 (ESV)

1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, son of Iddo, saying, ² “The Lord was very angry with your fathers. ³ Therefore say to them, Thus declares the Lord of hosts: Return to me, says the Lord of hosts, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts.

Arguably one of the best childhood toys are Legos. They encourage imaginative play, creativity, play with other children, they develop mechanical and building skills, and the ability to follow step-by-step instructions. There are an endless variety of things a child can build and imagine.

Now imagine working for Lego in 2003. It was a dark year. The company was bleeding out. It had lost \$300 million that year and was projecting an additional loss of \$400 million the following year. Lego was facing bankruptcy.¹ If you were working for

¹ <https://www.wired.com/story/building-success/>
<https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/innovation-almost-bankrupted-lego-until-it-rebuilt-with-a-better-blueprint/>?
<https://www.lego.com/en-us/aboutus/lego-group/the-lego-group-history?locale=en-us>

Lego, you'd be worried about your future. You'd be wondering how on earth one of the most successful toy companies ever could be on the brink of closing shop.

Lego was founded in 1932 with wooden toys and then invested in plastics in 1946. In 1958 the recipe was perfected – they invented the interlocking brick design. Then the company took off. It reached \$1.2 billion in revenue in 1993. They had theme parks, clothing, and a variety of Lego sub-brands like Duplo and Technic. But then in the 90s sales began to plummet. And in 2003 it looked as if the end had come. Were the glory days gone for good?

But Lego didn't give up. They decided to tear down and rebuild. They hired a new CEO, discontinued many of their products and got back to the core of what Lego was originally all about. And brick by brick they rebuilt into becoming the top toy brand in the world, even surpassing Mattel. Last year their global revenue was almost \$11 billion.

The post-exilic Jews of 520 B.C. were like Lego in 2003. The glory days of David and of Solomon's temple were long gone. They were back in Jerusalem, but the city was in ruins. I'm sure many of them were wondering, *is there a future for Jerusalem and for God's people? We have no walls, no military, no king, and no temple. We're still scattered as a people. Will all this work of rebuilding even be worth it?* I'm sure these doubts clouded the minds of the Jewish people, discouraging them from rebuilding the temple. And so God sent his prophets Haggai and Zechariah to encourage them that God still had a future for his people and for his chosen city Jerusalem. Days of even greater glory were coming. But they would need to rebuild the temple, brick by brick, and restore their relationship with God. In Zechariah 4:10, he lifts up the downcast eyes of the Jews to look to a promised future, saying **"¹⁰ For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel."** 520 B.C. was a day of small things for the Jews, for Jerusalem, and for the second temple. But a day of greater glory was coming when the temple would be finished and God's blessing would return to Jerusalem.

Let's now dig into this book. We'll first consider who this prophet was and a little more about the context he was writing in. Then we'll consider the message of Zechariah – we'll look at its overall content and then we'll focus specifically on seeing the gospel in various prophecies and visions. And then we'll end with some thoughts on how this book should change our life.

I. What was going on? (Zech. 1:1, cf. Haggai, Ezra, Matt. 23:35)

1. The Man

So who was the prophet Zechariah? There are a handful of Zechariahs in the Bible, but we see in verse 1 that this Zechariah was the son of Berechiah and the grandson of Iddo. Iddo is mentioned in the book of Nehemiah as being in the line of Levitical priests, so that would make Zechariah a Levitical priest as well. So he was a prophet-priest combo. Ezra 6:14 records that the Jews “**prospered**” through the prophetic ministries of Zechariah and Haggai. So that’s a bit about the prophet Zechariah.

2. The Time and Context

Now what about the context that Zechariah was prophesying in? As I mentioned earlier, Zechariah began prophesying in 520 B.C., 66 years after Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the temple and brought many of the Jews to live in Babylon. Since that time, the Persians had overthrown the Babylonians, and in Zechariah’s day, the Persian empire stretched from Modern-day Turkey all the way to Iran and down to Israel, the Sinai Peninsula and all the way to Egypt. The world of the Middle East had never seen anything as great and powerful as the Persian Empire. The Jews couldn’t have a king, so Zerubbabel, who was of the kingly line of David, could only be their governor. The High Priest during this time was a man named Joshua, but without a temple I’m not sure what the High Priest’s role was exactly.

We have some specific dates in the book of Zechariah, so we can date some of these visions and prophecies down to the very day. We have dates in 520, 519, and 518 B.C., and then some of the later prophecies may have taken place years later, perhaps at the beginning of the 5th century B.C.

II. What was Zechariah’s message?

Alright, so that’s some of the background of this book, now let’s get into the message of Zechariah. There’s a lot in this book, and because we don’t want to be here until 1 o’clock, I’ll give a brief overview of its contents and then we’ll dive into some of its message, specifically what is prophetic of the gospel, of Christ’s first and second comings.

There's a lot we simply don't have time to cover - Zechariah could be a sermon series all its own, but I hope you can begin to see that this is a fascinating book.

1. The Content of Zechariah

Let's first look at the overall content of this book. There are 14 chapters and you could divide it into 4 parts: the beginning of chapter 1 is the introduction, then chapters 2-6 contain eight wild visions, then chapters 7-8 are a section on their own and contain the history for why Israel was exiled, and then chapters 9-14 contain some final prophecies and are a bit different than the previous chapters.

As I said, the eight visions in the first six chapters are pretty crazy. We won't have time to go over all of them, but to perk your interest, let me tell you that these apocalyptic visions will feel a lot like the books of Daniel or Revelation when you read them. There's a vision of different horsemen on different colored horses who are patrolling the earth, a vision of horns, a vision of a man measuring Jerusalem, a vision of Joshua the High priest, and a vision of a golden lampstand. There's also vision of a huge flying scroll that's about 30 feet long by 15 feet tall and a vision of a woman in a basket who gets flown away by two other women with stork wings. Pretty wild. The final vision in chapter 6 is a vision of four chariots, similar to the first vision.

So as you can imagine, interpreting apocalyptic and prophetic literature can be challenging. When Martin Luther was writing his commentary on Zechariah 14 he wrote this, "Here, in this chapter, I give up... For I am not sure what the prophet is talking about."² So there's nothing wrong with you if your head gets foggy or starts to melt or explode when you're reading this book.

So there's a high level of difficulty in interpreting many of these visions and prophecies. Dating prophetic fulfillment is especially difficult. When was or when will a particular prophecy be fulfilled? Was it fulfilled in Zechariah's day? Shortly after? Before Christ? At Christ's first coming? Was it fulfilled around the time of the destruction of the temple in 70AD? Or has it not yet been fulfilled? Will it be fulfilled at Christ's second

² Richard D. Phillips, [Zechariah](#), ed. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Iain M. Duguid, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2007), 303.

coming? In the everlasting kingdom of heaven? And to make matters even more difficult, many of these visions and prophecies seem to be fulfilled multiple times: in part at one point in history but then fulfilled in full on the final day of the LORD.

That being said, although it is difficult to interpret, we have help from the *best* interpreters – Jesus and the New Testament authors. Zechariah is quoted and alluded to very often in the NT. Some have counted around 23 allusions to Zechariah in the book of Revelation, with at least a dozen allusions or quotes in the Gospels, and others in the rest of the New Testament. This makes our job of interpretation much easier. The New Testament doesn't explain everything in Zechariah, but it reveals many key prophecies and points us in the right direction in how to interpret this challenging book.

2. The Gospel in Zechariah

Let's now dive into the message of Zechariah, specifically the gospel in Zechariah, the visions and prophecies of Jesus' first and second comings and the forever kingdom he will establish.

Have you ever wondered about what it would have been like to hear a sermon from an apostle? Before any of the New Testament was written, they would be preaching only from the Old Testament Scriptures, and *so they would be preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ from the Old Testament*. The apostle Paul does this in Thessalonica in Acts 17. So if the apostles could preach the gospel of Jesus Christ from the Old Testament Scriptures, I think it's good for us to do the same. Today I plan to do that just from the book of Zechariah, though my sermon will be nowhere near as glorious and as accurate as an apostle's, and I'm still going to lean heavily upon the New Testament authors. As we go through this book, I'd highly recommend having a Bible to look at and page through, since we'll be moving around this book quite a bit.

a. A vision of the glorious future: God dwelling with his people (Zech. 1:16-17, 2:10-12)

So let's start by looking at some verses from the first two chapters. Turn with me to Zech. 1:16-17. Here we have a vision of the glorious future: God dwelling with his people. Remember, the Jews had begun to rebuild the temple, but they were likely discouraged at

the present state of things and wondering if Jerusalem would have a future. Here we'll read a couple passages where God encourages his people that there is a future for his people. And it is *glorious*. Here's Zechariah 1:16-17, "**¹⁶ Therefore, thus says the Lord, I have returned to Jerusalem with mercy; my house shall be built in it, declares the Lord of hosts, and the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem. ¹⁷ Cry out again, Thus says the Lord of hosts: My cities shall again overflow with prosperity, and the Lord will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.**" The day of small things would one day flourish into prosperity and comfort for Jerusalem, because God has returned to his people with mercy and they have returned to him in faith, expressed in their rebuilding of the temple. Now turn to the next chapter, chapter 2 verses 10-12, "**¹⁰ Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for behold, I come and I will dwell in your midst, declares the Lord. ¹¹ And many nations shall join themselves to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people. And I will dwell in your midst, and you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you. ¹² And the Lord will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.**" The future is glorious because God has promised to come and dwell in the midst of his people, and not only the people of Israel, but also many nations will "join themselves to the Lord." So the future is not just bright, it's glorious. So how will this glorious vision be realized? The rest of the book of Zechariah explains that for this glorious vision to take place, three things must first happen:

- first, the Lord must return to his people;
- second, sin must be permanently removed;
- and third, the king must return.

Let's look at those three things and see how each contributes to the full realization of this glorious vision for God's people dwelling with God in prosperity, comfort, and joy.

- b. For God's people to have a glorious future... the Lord must return to his people (Zech. 1:3, cf. Ezekiel 10-11, 43)

Turn with me back to chapter 1:3. First, for God's people to have a glorious future, the Lord must return to his people. "**Therefore say to them, Thus declares the Lord of**

hosts: Return to me, says the Lord of hosts, and I will return to you, says the Lord of hosts.” “Return to me... and I will return to you.” God is the source of all life and blessing, in his presence there is fullness of joy (Ps. 16:11), and so it’s impossible to think of a glorious vision for Jerusalem without thinking of God dwelling with his people. But God’s glorious and holy presence had left Jerusalem. We see this in the book of Ezekiel. In Ezekiel 10-11, there is a vision of the glory of God leaving the temple and ultimately leaving Jerusalem. The glorious presence of God left because of the people’s wickedness and idolatry. And so for God to return to his people, they must return to him. Like an adulterous wife, they must return to their husband in faithfulness to him and him alone.

In recent days, there’s been some trending news of a CEO who was caught having an affair on a kiss cam at a Coldplay concert. When the camera goes on them, they immediately turn away and duck, trying to hide from the camera’s stare. Now of course many are shaming this couple for betraying the covenant of marriage, but before we join in stone throwing, haven’t we committed an even worse adultery? Adultery against God? The prophet Jeremiah says we’re like a donkey in heat, seeking other lovers, other idols (Jer. 2:24). So we are not any better, and we too would try to hide too if all our adultery against God was exposed for all to see. Isn’t it amazing that God calls us back to himself, even after all we’ve done? God’s love, his electing and faithful love, his jealous love, calls us to return to him, to come back to his presence, back to his embrace, back to a relationship with him. And when we return to him, like the prodigal son, our heavenly Father runs to us, kisses us, puts a ring on our finger, welcomes us back home and throws a giant party. Have you been wandering away from God, seeking other lovers? Return to him and he will return to you with all his heart, with his very presence.

- c. For God’s people to have a glorious future... sin must be permanently removed (Zech. 3, 9:9-11, 11:12-13, 12:10, 13:1, 13:7, 6:12-13)

So for God’s people to have a glorious future, God must return to them and they to God. But one of the most common themes in the Old Testament is a reoccurring cycle of God’s people straying away from him, falling into idolatry, being awakened by the word of God, and then returning to a right relationship with God. But then the cycle starts all over

again. And again and again God's people turn away from him. How will this cycle ever be broken?

That brings us to the second step: for God's people to have a glorious future, sin must be permanently removed. Turn with me to Zechariah 3, the vision of Joshua the High Priest. Now let's get into some of the most amazing prophecies of Jesus' first coming. This vision in chapter 3 is a vision of a courtroom. Joshua the High Priest is the accused, Satan is the prosecutor, the one bringing the charges against him, the angel of the LORD is standing by like a defending attorney, and the LORD is presumed to be the judge. Look with me starting at verse 1: **"Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. ² And the Lord said to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you, O Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this a brand plucked from the fire?" ³ Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments. ⁴ And the angel said to those who were standing before him, "Remove the filthy garments from him." And to him he said, "Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments." ⁵ And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord was standing by."** This is an amazing vision of the doctrine of imputation. Here we have Joshua the High Priest, the representative of all the Jews, and he is filthy. It is as if he had taken a swim in the sewer. His filth is representative of the sin of the people of Judah. And so Satan, our great adversary, speaks the only truth he likes to speak. He likes to speak the truth of how guilty we are before God. He is honest about what we've said, what we've done, what we've desired and thought. In this courtroom, he speaks no lies. He lied to tempt you into your sin, but now he uses truth to try to put you into hell.

But even though the charges are true against Joshua, the judge has mercy. The Lord rebukes Satan and declares that he has chosen Jerusalem and has saved him like a charred piece of wood plucked out of a fire. God has saved his people from the fires of hell. And then in verses 4 and 5 we see that Joshua's filthy clothes are exchanged with pure, clean garments. This is a picture of the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness. We also call it the Great Exchange. On the cross, Jesus took away our sin from us and put it on himself, and in exchange, for free, he gives us his righteousness. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says,

“²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” That’s the great exchange of the gospel.

Then in Zechariah 3:8-9, God promises to permanently remove sin, **“⁸ Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who sit before you, for they are men who are a sign: behold, I will bring my servant the Branch. ⁹ For behold, on the stone that I have set before Joshua, on a single stone with seven eyes, I will engrave its inscription, declares the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day.”** Here God promises to send his servant the Branch. This is the same branch prophesied by Isaiah (11:1³) and Jeremiah (23:5⁴), a clear promise of the coming of Jesus Christ, the offspring of David and the forever king. And then at the end of verse 9 the Lord promises that through the coming of the Branch,⁵ he would remove the sin of the land in a single day. That day, we know, was Good Friday, when all of the sins of all of God’s people were put upon Jesus, the lamb of God. It is through the perfect substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross that the guilt and power of sin is permanently removed from God’s people. Zechariah chapter 6 then tells us that the Branch, Jesus, *he* will rebuild the temple and he shall sit on the throne of God as a priest-king (Zech. 6:12-13).

This is a remarkable vision, but Zechariah has much more to say about who this Branch is and what he will do. So let’s walk through this book and look at a few key prophecies. Turn with me to chapter 9:9-11, this was our call to worship this morning. Zech. 9:9-11

**⁹ Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation is he,
humble and mounted on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
¹⁰ I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the war horse from Jerusalem;**

³ Isaiah 11:1, There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

⁴ Jer. 23:5, ⁵ “Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

⁵ In verse 9, Joshua sees a stone with seven eyes. Now what is that? It’s hard to tell, but one idea is that the stone that is being looked at is the cornerstone of the temple. And who is the cornerstone of the temple? Jesus Christ. And the seven eyes idea gets picked up in Revelation 5:6 when there’s a vision of a lamb with seven eyes, clearly a picture of Jesus Christ. The seven eyes probably represent the Holy Spirit.

**and the battle bow shall be cut off,
and he shall speak peace to the nations;
his rule shall be from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.**

**11 As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.**

Here we have a passage that was quoted in the gospels of Matthew and John. This was fulfilled on Palm Sunday with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Jesus came as a humble king, riding a donkey, not a war horse like the kings of other nations. His humility is unmatched. And this king rides into Jerusalem giving righteousness and salvation to his people. Through him the LORD will establish peace with the nations, and that peace will come because this king will rule not only Zion, but as verse 10 says **"His rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth."** And then in verse 11, there's the promise that through the blood of the God's covenant with his people, he will set their prisoners free from the waterless pit. I believe this is the promise of the New Covenant. It will be through the blood of this king that those who are enslaved to sin and Satan will be rescued from their inescapable pit.

What else do we know from Zechariah about this coming Branch, this humble priest-king? Let's take a brief look at chapter 11:12-13. **"12 Then I said to them, 'If it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not, keep them.' And they weighed out as my wages thirty pieces of silver. 13 Then the Lord said to me, 'Throw it to the potter'—the lordly price at which I was priced by them. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord, to the potter."** As you probably know, this is a prophecy of Judas' betrayal of Jesus.⁶ The priest gave him 30 pieces of silver, the price of a slave, to tell them the whereabouts of Jesus at night so that they might arrest him when there was no crowd. Judas ends up throwing the silver into the house of the Lord and then hangs himself. The priests then take the blood money and buy **"the potter's field as a**

⁶ In the original context of Zechariah, the LORD was angry with the shepherds of Judah (Zech. 10:3⁶), which is another name for the leaders of Judah. And so in verse 4 of chapter 11, the LORD calls Zechariah to be a shepherd of some sheep as a sign of God's judgment of Judah. And in verse 12, Zechariah asks for wages from some sheep traders and they give him a paltry 30 pieces of silver, the price of a slave. And so Zechariah threw the pieces of silver into the house of the Lord where the potter was working. This was a picture of God's people rejecting God's servant, and Judas would be one of those.

burial place for strangers” (Matt. 27:7). The branch, the humble priest-king, would be rejected and betrayed for the price of a slave.

Turn now to Zechariah 12:10. **“¹⁰ And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.”**

This prophecy is very interesting. John cites it in his gospel as being prophetic of when Jesus’ was pierced on the cross with the soldier’s spear and out of his side flowed blood and water (John 19:34-39). And in Zechariah’s prophecy, we see that God promises to one day pour out a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that when the people of Jerusalem look on the pierced Christ, they would mourn bitterly for the high cost of their sin. This prophecy is also an amazing prophecy of the deity of Christ. Look at the change of pronouns in the middle of verse 10. The Lord says, **“When they look on *me*, on *him* whom they have pierced...”** The Lord God is the one who will be pierced, and we see this explicitly fulfilled by Jesus Christ. He is truly God and truly man.

Now look a few verses later in chapter 13:1, **“On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.”** On that day when the Lord is pierced, a fountain would be opened to cleanse God’s people from their sin. The apostle John saw blood and water flow out of Jesus’ side and later he would write this in 1 John 1:7, **“the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.”** Blood isn’t good at cleaning, is it? It stains. But the blood of Jesus acts like water for our sins, washing it all away. It’s this picture from Zechariah 12 and 13 that inspired William Cowper to write the hymn we just sang, “There is a Fountain Filled with Blood.” So those were some of the clearest prophecies of Jesus’ first coming, there are others that we didn’t have time for.⁸

⁷ John 19:34-37, ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. ³⁵ He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe. ³⁶ For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of his bones will be broken.” ³⁷ And again another Scripture says, “They will look on him whom they have pierced.”

⁸ Another prophecy to consider is in 13:7, **“Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who stands next to me,” declares the Lord of hosts. Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered;**” Jesus quotes this verse in Matthew 26, to tell his disciples that they would all fall away from him. What’s interesting about this prophecy is that the Lord is commanding his sword to strike his shepherd, to strike the

- d. For God's people to have a glorious future... the king must return (Zech. 8, 14; Rev. 21-22)

It is through Jesus' first coming that sin will be permanently removed by his death on the cross. But something else needs to happen for the glorious vision of the future of God's people to be fulfilled: The king must return.

Turn with me to the final chapter, chapter 14. Here we have prophecies that find their fulfillment in the second coming of Jesus Christ. The first two verses seem to describe a great battle between the nations and Jerusalem where there is a great loss for God's people, but a remnant remains. But when all hope seems lost, like Gandalf arriving at Helms Deep, the LORD arrives to fight for his people. Read with me starting in verse 3, **"³ Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle. ⁴ On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward. ⁵ And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with him."** Here we have a theophany, an appearance of God, and if the mountains are split at his coming, what can the nations of the world do to him? One day the Lord God will come, and with him are **"all the holy ones,"** his host of angels, the armies of the LORD.⁹ We have heard the name "the LORD of hosts" again and again, 14 times in Haggai and 53 times in Zechariah, and now here they are, waging war with the LORD to win his people once and for all.

Now look at verses 6-7. **"⁶ On that day there shall be no light, cold, or frost. ⁷ And there shall be a unique day, which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night, but at evening time there shall be light."** Does that sound familiar? Revelation 21:23 says, **"²³ And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb."** A day is coming when Christ returns, when there will be

man who stands next to him. It was the Father's will for his Son to be crucified, he is the Great Shepherd of the sheep and who rules at the Father's right hand.

⁹

endless light, endless day. God dwells in the New Jerusalem and so his glory shines and fills everything with his light. There will no longer be shadows, no more night, no more confusion or evil or danger. That is the city that the king, the Lamb of God will establish when he returns.

Now look at verses 8-7, **“⁸ On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea. It shall continue in summer as in winter.”** In Revelation 22 we also hear of this river,¹⁰ flowing out of the New Jerusalem, out of the very throne of God, from God himself. God’s river of life gives abundant life to the whole city, to the trees and to the very tree of life that brings healing to the nations.

And then in verse 9 we read these amazing words, **“⁹ And the Lord will be king over all the earth.”** The domain of Jesus Christ has no border. The new heavens and new earth will all be under his rule and there will be *shalom*, perfect peace, in all his holy mountain. The name Jerusalem means “city of peace,” and the New Jerusalem shall be just that. Verse 11 says, **“Jerusalem shall dwell in security.”**

Look now at verses 20 and 21, **“²⁰ And on that day there shall be inscribed on the bells of the horses, “Holy to the Lord.” And the pots in the house of the Lord shall be as the bowls before the altar. ²¹ And every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holy to the Lord of hosts, so that all who sacrifice may come and take of them and boil the meat of the sacrifice in them.”** This is profound. The phrase “Holy to the LORD” was written on a pure gold plate that was only on the turban of the High Priest (Ex. 28:36). But in this prophecy, even the bells of horses will have “Holy to the Lord” written on them! Every common dish in all the land shall be holy. This is a prophecy of how everything and everyone in the New Jerusalem will be holy. All of heaven and earth will be the new Holy of Holies where God’s holy and sinless people will dwell with God’s presence, completely unhindered and free to gaze upon his face and his glory without fear.

Zechariah 8 fills out a little more what this city of peace and eternal life will be like. 8:4-5 says this, **“⁴ Thus says the Lord of hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit**

¹⁰ See also Ps. 46:4-5, ⁴ There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. ⁵ God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns.

in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of great age. ⁵ And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets." What a beautiful picture. A city full of children playing in the streets. Children we will meet for the first time. There aren't many more wonderful sounds than the laughter of children. And heaven will be full of that laughter. We will all be aged with wisdom and knowledge and we will all be childlike in our youth and life and health and joy.

This is the glorious vision that God has for his city, for his people, for his Church, for all who have returned to the Lord and found refuge in Jesus Christ. It is coming. May our Lord return soon.

III. How does Zechariah's message apply today?

So how does this glorious message of Zechariah apply to us today. I honestly think that having these glorious visions of the gospel and of the kingdom of heaven in our minds can transform every part of our lives.

Perhaps you've heard God's word and you've been sitting there thinking how you need to return to the Lord. You've been going your own way, living for yourself, looking at things you shouldn't, controlling people instead of serving them, ignoring the needs of others in your church and in your city. If you feel God convicting you, then return to him. Confess your sins to him and he will return to you with all his heart. He will give you His Holy Spirit to put to death your old ways, to put out the old idols of the temple of your heart, and he will replace it with the adoration of Jesus Christ. Return to the Lord, look on him whom you have pierced, and mourn.¹¹

And with a heavenly perspective, we can see all aspects of this life clearly. The fights we have with others, really lose their significance. We see that when we fight with other Christians and accuse them of all their sins, all we are doing is siding with Satan, the accuser. We're parroting him. We're saying *Amen* to his accusations. Instead, with a

¹¹ Mourn today, for there is coming a day when Christ will return and there will be a far greater mourning. Revelation 1:7 quotes Zechariah, saying this, **"Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him."** Mourn today or you will mourn and even wail when Christ returns. There is a world of a difference between the mourning of repentance today for sin and the mourning of the fear of judgment and hell when Christ returns. Mourn today. Consider the wickedness of your sin. Consider how you have pierced Christ with your wounds of Christ, his suffering that he chose out of love for you.

heavenly perspective of what God has done in his courtroom, we need to look not at the filthy garments on the floor that our brother or sister in Christ was wearing, we need to look at the clean and pure garments that they're wearing now, the righteousness of Christ. And we need to forgive them as Christ has forgiven us.

And with this vision of the glorious kingdom, we don't need to live in a world of regrets, of wishing that our life here on earth was different, that we missed out on opportunities that we'll never get back. Brothers and sisters, do not despise the day or even the life of small things. A far more glorious day is coming. 1 Peter 1:13 says, "**Set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.**" You are heirs of eternal life, of the faithful city, and there you will have opportunities that you could never dream of. Let the vision of Zechariah quiet and content your heart. And once your heart is quieted and your complaining has stopped, busy yourself with building God's Church, the temple of his people. Help build it brick by brick, person by person, using whatever gifts and abilities God has given you to edify the body of Christ.