

Last week, when we returned to our study, I previewed the remaining chapters of the book of Zechariah. Chapters nine through fourteen contain two oracles given to Zechariah, both burdens ('massa' in Hebrew) of severe judgment. In chapter nine, we saw God's protection of Jerusalem and the promise of a coming King and Savior, the long-awaited Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Tonight, we'll examine the blessings of redemption for the people of Israel.

This passage has an overarching theme: the work of Israel's True Shepherd for His people, from 9.8 to 10.12.

We'll cover this passage by starting where we must start, though it's not in verse order. Turn your attention to chapter 10, verse 4.

The Messiah Comes

While this chapter is filled with God's goodness toward His people, the beginning of it all is the Messiah Himself. We see in verse three that the pronoun "him" refers back to the tribe of Judah, and we know from **Genesis 49.10**, **Micah 5.2**, and **Isaiah 11.1-5** that the Messiah would come from that kingly tribe. It's confirmed in the NT in the genealogies and stated in **Revelation 5**, speaking of the opening of the scroll. ⁴ **and I began to weep loudly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it.** ⁵ **And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."**

Verse four describes this descendant of Judah in four unique ways. No one can fulfill this messianic prophecy except the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's look at the details.

From him shall come the cornerstone. The phrase "the cornerstone" is a well-known name for the Messiah in both the Old Testament and the New. We see it in **Isaiah 28.16.** ¹⁶**therefore thus says the Lord God, "Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation.** The most crucial part of any building is, of course, the foundation.

Without a sure foundation, the superstructure built on it will not be stable or secure, and so it is with God's people. The redeemed of both Israel and the Church could not exist without the perfect Cornerstone, who is Christ. The Holy Spirit speaks through Paul to the Church about this truth in **Ephesians 2.12-22.** ¹²**remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.** ¹³**But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.** ¹⁴**For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility** ¹⁵**by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace,** ¹⁶**and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.** ¹⁷**And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.** ¹⁸**For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.** ¹⁹**So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household**

of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Here in Zechariah, the Cornerstone is the basis for the redemption of Israel, but Paul applies that same work to the New Testament Church, and marvelously extends it to not just the saving of two very different peoples, but their reconciliation and integration into one. Jesus Himself speaks of this in **John 10.16** as He says, ¹⁶**And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.**

Christ is not only the savior and redeemer of Israel, but the NT assures us He will include the Church in the family of God also, alongside, not in place of, the Jews. Our mighty Lord is the savior of the nations, too, for we are His “other sheep”. Peter continues this thought in **I Peter 2.6** as he quotes Isaiah ⁶**For it stands in Scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”**

Anyone, Jew or Gentile, who trusts in Jesus Christ will find a sure and certain salvation. He is the one Cornerstone, but if anyone rejects Him, to him or her He will be a different type of stone, a stone not of redemption but of judgment. **I Peter 2.7-8** says ⁷**So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe, “The stone that the**

builders rejected has become the cornerstone,”⁸ and “A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.” Here Peter quotes **Psalm 118.22-23.** ²²**The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.** ²³**This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.**

We find this quoted by Jesus Himself in **Matthew 21.42.** The “builders” here are the religious leaders of the Jews, the Pharisees and scribes of Jesus’s day. They rejected the precious Cornerstone, and instead stumbled over Him. And through their rejection, they tragically led God’s people away from the Messiah, rather than to Him. Yet their rejection is not the last word for God’s redemptive work. To His own, He is chosen and precious, the One Who unites the redeemed of all the ages, both Jews and Gentiles, and grows us up into a holy Temple in the Lord. **blesed be the Name of the Lord!**

from him the tent peg. from the well-known title, “Cornerstone,” we find a lesser-known but important messianic title. Here, the Messiah is also called “the tent peg”. The passage from the former prophets, **Isaiah 22.22-24,** speaks of this truth. There, the text speaks in human terms of Eliakim, king of Judah, also known as Jehoiakim. But in divine terms, the greater fulfillment of this description is of Jesus Christ. Verse 22 says ²²**And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.** We find this language repeated and applied to the Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ, in **Revelation 3.7.** ⁷**“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: ‘The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens.’”**

Make no mistake: the Lord and Messiah, Jesus, is the One in full view here. Then Zechariah continues in the imagery of Isaiah as he says, ²³ **And I will fasten him like a peg in a secure place, and he will become a throne of honor to his father's house.** ²⁴ **And they will hang on him the whole honor of his father's house, the offspring and issue, every small vessel, from the cups to all the flagons.**

This speaks not of a tent stake as we know them today, but of a tent peg, a sturdy piece of wood driven into the central upright of the nomad's tent. It is a sizable and strong piece of wood. This is what Jael used to kill the enemy commander, Sisera, in **Judges 4**. It was on the tent peg that all a family's valuables would be hung, from small items to large. The idea is that Messiah is like a tent peg in God's dwelling from which all of the divine glory is hung. As noted here, **he will become a throne of honor to his father's house.** ²⁴ **And they will hang on him the whole honor of his father's house, the offspring and issue.** This is reinforced by Zechariah himself in **6.12-13**. ¹² **'Thus says the Lord of hosts, "Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord. ¹³ It is he who shall build the temple of the Lord and shall bear royal honor, and shall sit and rule on his throne.**

"The Branch" is another messianic title, and it is He who shall **"bear the royal honor"**. KJV says "bear the glory," meaning to carry or hold up that which is weighty. Jesus Christ will bear the weight of divine glory and honor as the Anointed One of God, just as a tent peg bore the weight of all the vessels in the tent.

from him the battle bow. Clearly, a weapon of war, one of the most effective and commonly used weapons in ancient warfare. The term “battle bow” is used in the ESV only twice, here in **Zechariah 9.10** and **10.4**. However, the two references are quite different: in chapter nine, the battle bow is said to be “cut off” by Yahweh as Messiah comes to speak peace to the nations. ¹⁰**I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; 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.**

Referring to a time of great peace under Messiah's rule. But here in chapter ten, the meaning is reversed. **from him will come the battle bow.** He is fully armed and will crush His enemies, just as Zechariah tells us in chapter nine, verse thirteen, God Himself will wield Israel as a bow and arrow against the adversaries.

from him every ruler—all of them together. This is an interesting description in Hebrew. The word rendered “ruler” is the Hebrew word ‘no-ges’ (nah-gos’), which doesn't mean “king” (‘me-lek’) as we might think, but instead means “tyrant”, “oppressor”, “taskmaster”, “slave-driver”. It's used in Exodus and the former prophets of those who oppressed the Jews in captivity, both in Egypt and Babylon. The sense is that **from Him**, from the Messiah, all those of all the ages who oppress and subjugate His people will be driven out, **all of them together**. Once and for all, the wrongful domination of the Jewish people, and in fact, all God's people, will end, a thought we celebrate at Christmastime, when we sing “O Holy Night”:

Truly He taught us to love one another;

His law is love, and His gospel is peace.

Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother,

And in His name **all oppression shall cease.** Hallelujah!

To review: what comes from the Messiah? Because He is the Cornerstone, His people shall know stability and safety in the house of God; because He is the tent peg, His people shall know the honor, glory, beauty, and splendor of the King; because He is the battle bow, His people shall know victory over their enemies; and because He banishes all oppressors, His people shall finally know true freedom.

He will bless His people.

But those four blessings, as wonderful and glorious as they are, are not the complete story of God's redemption of His people, Israel.

To cover this fully, I'll have to go back a bit into chapter nine. This is one time the chapter break might have been differently placed. Let's pick it up at chapter nine, verse eight. I'll briefly cover these again, since I addressed them last week.

Security: ⁸**Then I will encamp at my house as a guard,
so that none shall march to and fro;**

**no oppressor shall again march over them,
for now I see with my own eyes.**

This was fulfilled in the near-term when God intervened to ensure Alexander the Great did not harm Jerusalem in any way during his military conquests.

Peace: ¹⁰ **I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the war horse from Jerusalem;
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.**

This is still to be completely fulfilled when the Lord Jesus Christ judges the nations and initiates the Millennial Kingdom.

Freedom: ¹¹ **As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you,
I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.** Based not on their faithfulness but on God's covenant faithfulness, Israel will be set free from captivity.

Blessing in their land: ¹² **Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double.** And once they are set free, they will return. There are two senses present here. One is Jerusalem as the stronghold of Zion, and the Jews will

indeed return to Jerusalem, but more important is the meaning of “stronghold” in David’s psalms. David speaks not of Jerusalem as his stronghold, but the Lord Himself, as we see in **Psalm 18.2.** ²**The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.**

Victory: ¹⁴**Then the Lord will appear over them,**

and his arrow will go forth like lightning;

the Lord God will sound the trumpet

and will march forth in the whirlwinds of the south.

¹⁵**The Lord of hosts will protect them,**

and they shall devour, and tread down the sling stones,

and they shall drink and roar as if drunk with wine,

and be full like a bowl,

drenched like the corners of the altar. The Lord God will fight the battles of Israel, protecting them and empowering them to overcome their enemies, walking over them as one walks over fallen stones from a sling.

Salvation: ¹⁶**On that day the Lord their God will save them, as the flock of his people;**

for like the jewels of a crown they shall shine on his land. As a shepherd rescues his flock from predators, so will the Lord save His people, and they will reflect His beauty, shining with His glory as a royal crown.

Sustenance: ¹⁷ **For how great is his goodness, and how great his beauty!**

Grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the young women.

Ask rain from the Lord in the season of the spring rain, from the Lord who makes the storm clouds, and **he will give them showers of rain, to everyone the vegetation in the field.** In a society based on agriculture, this blessing is critically important. The Lord is always pictured as the provider of the early and latter rains, so essential to life in the region. The 'yo-reh' are the early rains, falling in October through December, during planting season, and the 'mal-qosh' are the latter or spring rains, falling in March and April, just before harvest.

He will punish the false shepherds.

The Lord is also concerned about the leadership of His people. Yahweh blesses His people even through conviction of sin. Here, the Lord reprises the now-familiar sins of both Israel and Judah. Idolatry that led to the deadening of the spiritual condition of the people, false prophecies, and divination that misled the people. The nations endured far too many incompetent and godless leaders, from kings to princes to priests and prophets. **2 Kings 17.14-15a.** ¹⁴ **But they would not listen, but were stubborn, as their fathers had been, who did not believe in the Lord their God.** ¹⁵ **They despised his statutes and his covenant that he made with their fathers and the warnings that he gave them. They went after false idols and became false.** As the leaders failed, the people suffered.

² **For the household gods utter nonsense,**

**and the diviners see lies;
they tell false dreams
and give empty consolation.
Therefore the people wander like sheep;
they are afflicted for lack of a shepherd.**

**³ "My anger is hot against the shepherds,
and I will punish the leaders;
for the Lord of hosts cares for his flock, the house of Judah,
and will make them like his majestic steed in battle.**

Idolatry was rampant in both Israel and Judah prior to the Babylonian captivity. Widespread idol worship and even divination led the people astray, and the leaders, far from moving the people back toward God, were themselves guilty of hypocrisy and devotion to the false gods of the nations around them. The proof of God's love and care for His people was His punishment of their false leaders.

The former prophet **Jeremiah** says it well in **23.1-2**. **"Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" declares the Lord.** ² **Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: "You have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the Lord.**

"Woe to the shepherds" indeed!

He will strengthen and save them.

The Messiah will take the initiative regarding His people, blessing them with strength and salvation.

**⁵They shall be like mighty men in battle,
trampling the foe in the mud of the streets;
they shall fight because the Lord is with them,
and they shall put to shame the riders on horses.**

**⁶"I will strengthen the house of Judah,
and I will save the house of Joseph.
I will bring them back because I have compassion on them,
and they shall be as though I had not rejected them,
for I am the Lord their God and I will answer them.**

**⁷Then Ephraim shall become like a mighty warrior,
and their hearts shall be glad as with wine.
Their children shall see it and be glad;
their hearts shall rejoice in the Lord.**

Notice the first-person statements: "I will strengthen," "I will save," "I will bring them back," "I will have compassion". God was determined to bless His people, not based on their obedience but in spite of their disobedience. Though they failed in every point, God would keep His good word toward them because of His own faithfulness. See verse six: **for I am the Lord their God and I will answer them.**

He will bring them home.

Finally, and graciously, God will restore His people and bring them home.

⁸ **"I will whistle for them and gather them in,
for I have redeemed them,
and they shall be as many as they were before.**

⁹ **Though I scattered them among the nations,
yet in far countries they shall remember me,
and with their children they shall live and return.**

¹⁰ **I will bring them home from the land of Egypt,
and gather them from Assyria,
and I will bring them to the land of Gilead and to Lebanon,
till there is no room for them.**

¹¹ **He shall pass through the sea of troubles
and strike down the waves of the sea,
and all the depths of the Nile shall be dried up.**

**The pride of Assyria shall be laid low,
and the scepter of Egypt shall depart.**

**¹² I will make them strong in the Lord,
and they shall walk in his name,"
declares the Lord.**

Even a cursory reading of the OT makes it clear how important the land was to Israel. That's one reason the captivities in Assyria and Babylon were so devastating to the people, for they were out of their land. This blessing is so important, for here the Lord promises that ultimately He will call for His people from all the places to which He has scattered them, and they and their children will come back home. His redemption and their return are foundational to all the blessings we see in this chapter. And all of this is the Lord's work on Israel's behalf.

Application

What do we learn? What do we do? I think there are two primary lessons here:

- o The greatness and glory of the Messiah
- o The goodness and grace of His blessings to His people

What do we do?

- o Praise: for He is good!
- o Petition: for we need Him!
- o Persist: for we must follow Him!