

Parish Fellowship Bible Study

Monday 16th May 2022

Zechariah 9-10

Zechariah 9 (NIV)

A prophecy:

The word of the Lord is against the land of Hadrak
and will come to rest on Damascus—
for the eyes of all people and all the tribes of Israel
are on the Lord—

2 and on Hamath too, which borders on it,
and on Tyre and Sidon, though they are very
skillful.

3 Tyre has built herself a stronghold;
she has heaped up silver like dust,
and gold like the dirt of the streets.

4 But the Lord will take away her possessions
and destroy her power on the sea,
and she will be consumed by fire.

5 Ashkelon will see it and fear;
Gaza will writhe in agony,
and Ekron too, for her hope will wither.

Gaza will lose her king
and Ashkelon will be deserted.

6 A mongrel people will occupy Ashdod,
and I will put an end to the pride of the Philistines.

7 I will take the blood from their mouths,
the forbidden food from between their teeth.

Those who are left will belong to our God
and become a clan in Judah,
and Ekron will be like the Jebusites.

8 But I will encamp at my temple
to guard it against marauding forces.

Never again will an oppressor overrun my people,
for now I am keeping watch.

9 Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion!
Shout, Daughter Jerusalem!

See, your king comes to you,
righteous and victorious,
lowly and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

10 I will take away the chariots from Ephraim
and the warhorses from Jerusalem,
and the battle bow will be broken.

He will proclaim peace to the nations.
His rule will extend from sea to sea
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

11 As for you, because of the blood of my covenant
with you,

I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit.

12 Return to your fortress, you prisoners of hope;
even now I announce that I will restore twice as
much to you.

13 I will bend Judah as I bend my bow
and fill it with Ephraim.

I will rouse your sons, Zion,
against your sons, Greece,
and make you like a warrior's sword.

14 Then the Lord will appear over them;
his arrow will flash like lightning.

The Sovereign Lord will sound the trumpet;
he will march in the storms of the south,

15 and the Lord Almighty will shield them.
They will destroy

and overcome with slingstones.

They will drink and roar as with wine;
they will be full like a bowl
used for sprinkling the corners of the altar.

16 The Lord their God will save his people on that day
as a shepherd saves his flock.

They will sparkle in his land
like jewels in a crown.

17 How attractive and beautiful they will be!

Grain will make the young men thrive,
and new wine the young women.

Zechariah 10 (NIV)

Ask the Lord for rain in the springtime;
it is the Lord who sends the thunderstorms.

He gives showers of rain to all people,
and plants of the field to everyone.

2 The idols speak deceitfully,
diviners see visions that lie;
they tell dreams that are false,
they give comfort in vain.

Therefore the people wander like sheep
oppressed for lack of a shepherd.

3 "My anger burns against the shepherds,
and I will punish the leaders;
for the Lord Almighty will care
for his flock, the people of Judah,
and make them like a proud horse in battle.

4 From Judah will come the cornerstone,
from him the tent peg,
from him the battle bow,
from him every ruler.

5 Together they will be like warriors in battle
trampling their enemy into the mud of the streets.

They will fight because the Lord is with them,
and they will put the enemy horsemen to shame.

6 "I will strengthen Judah
and save the tribes of Joseph.

I will restore them
because I have compassion on them.

They will be as though

I had not rejected them,
for I am the Lord their God
and I will answer them.
7 The Ephraimites will become like warriors,
and their hearts will be glad as with wine.
Their children will see it and be joyful;
their hearts will rejoice in the Lord.
8 I will signal for them
and gather them in.
Surely I will redeem them;
they will be as numerous as before.
9 Though I scatter them among the peoples,
yet in distant lands they will remember me.
They and their children will survive,

and they will return.
10 I will bring them back from Egypt
and gather them from Assyria.
I will bring them to Gilead and Lebanon,
and there will not be room enough for them.
11 They will pass through the sea of trouble;
the surging sea will be subdued
and all the depths of the Nile will dry up.
Assyria's pride will be brought down
and Egypt's sceptre will pass away.
12 I will strengthen them in the Lord
and in his name they will live securely,"
declares the Lord.

Introduction to these chapters

"The Book of Zechariah is a tapestry on which unfolds the dramatic depiction of the marriage of divine sovereignty and human agency." McComiskey

"This section (verses 1-8) portends the end of Philistia's national might and glory." McComiskey

Verses 1-4

We don't know when these oracles were written.,

The words here against the Philistines seem to have been fulfilled by Alexander the Great's conquest around 333BC.

Tyre and Sidon were major cities that were once thought to be impregnable.

Verses 5-8

This passage "accurately foretells the conquest of the eastern Mediterranean coastlands by Greek armies under the command of Alexander the Great" Boice

The Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem were defeated and became part of the new dispensation.

"A commonality in the fates of the Philistines and Jebusites begins to become apparent in the parallelism, for both national entities will become part of the societal structures of God's people." McComiskey

You can read Josephus' account of Alexander's dealings with the Jewish High Priest.

Verse 9

Why is the coming Messiah depicted as writing on a donkey- quite a contrast to the conqueror Alexander the Great?

"The promise of God's watchful care over his people continued in the preservation of his ancient people until Jerusalem witnessed a king entering its gates on the foal of a donkey." McComiskey

The reason that a donkey is chosen is because the Lord cuts off horses from his people because they are implements of war.

"God had commanded the kings of Israel not to multiply horses. The kings who broke this command were miserable themselves, and scourgers to their people. Jesus came to fulfil the law. Had he in his title of king rode upon a horse, it would have been a breach of a positive command of God; therefore he rode upon an ass." Clarke

The donkey "a deliberate rejection of this symbol of arrogant trust in human might, expressing subservience to the sovereignty of God." McComiskey

“A king’s first job is to be commander in chief of the armed forces and to see that his people are defended from their enemies. But Yahweh is going to terminate war-making on the part of Ephraim and Judah, as on the other peoples’ part. The king of Israel will be able to rule the world without needing force.” Goldingay

Verse 10

Zechariah 9:9 belongs to the first coming of Jesus, but Zechariah 9:10 is associated with the second coming

“Even though the Evangelists saw fulfilment of verse 9, they did not go on to quote verse 10, which may indicate that they were conscious of having only a partial fulfilment.” Baldwin

Verses 11-17

Ephraim became a surrogate name for Israel itself.

Verse 11- you can survive in a waterless pit. If there was water in it you’d drown- but at least there is some possibility you might get out.

Joseph was put in a dry cistern and managed to survive.

Peter says that we have a living hope- 1 Peter 1:3-4

The promise is that Zion will come to prominence among the nations. The implication is that Zion will fight against Greece- and win. Isaiah shows that the two states will become one under the rule of the root of Jesse.

God will treat the other nations as he has treated Judah... “They will have a position like the original inhabitants of Jerusalem who were able to stay in their city in association with Israel on the basis of their coming to acknowledge Yahweh.” Goldingay

“The powerful forces opposing Christ’s kingdom may have periodic successes, but they will never vanquish the kingdom because it is the royal insignia of God’s sovereign rule in the world. The church is a witness to God being at work in history, fulfilling his promise of offspring to Abraham.” McComiskey

Chapter 10

Verse 1

This is reminiscent of the pre-exilic prophets. There are references to teraphim all the way through the old testament.

There was a lack of political leadership.

Verses 2-5

God is bringing about the circumstances that will lead to the arrival of the good shepherd.

Jesus is the cornerstone, the battle bow, the leader over every ruler of His people.

Verses 6-8

Ephraim was a dominant tribe in Judah.

Joseph was the father of Ephraim so his name also signifies Judah.

The words- I am the Lord their God- encompass the restoration of the people to the benefit of the promise to Abraham. Ephesians 6:10

Verses 9-12

“The God who battles with and for his people will not return them to the land until they remember him.”

McComiskey

“Only one commonality exists between Gilead and Lebanon- both are metaphors for the Restoration, the time when the blessings of the new covenant became a reality.” McComiskey

Conclusion

Put simply- these verses- like many in the Old Testament show us that: God’s people win.