

The last chapter of the prophecy of Zechariah includes the invasion of Jerusalem and the emancipation of the entire world from sin into service to the King. It continues the theme of “In that day” which is repeated a further seven times and an additional mention of the day of the LORD. There is also a reference to it shall be one day, which focuses on the unique period in the out workings of the plan of God. There are links to both Gog’s invasion in Ezekiel 38 and the battle of Armageddon in Revelation 16v16.

The content is dealing with the time of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the manifestation of the “King” to a wider world.

“Behold the day of the LORD comes” v1	thy spoil divided in the midst!
“In that day” v4	his feet shall stand
“In that day” v6	the light shall not be clear
“But it shall be one day” v7	which shall be known to the LORD
“In that day” v8	living waters shall go out
“In that day” v9	there shall be One LORD
“In that day” v13	a great tumult from the LORD
“In that day” v20	HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD
“In that day” v21	no more the Canaanite

The future course set out here is not plain sailing but a stormy journey of risk and danger. The only safe haven is to anchor in the tranquil harbour of the name of the LORD, “I will be mighty ones, I will be hosts”. God manifestation through the human agency of Christ and the saints, is the promised solution to this enigma of how mankind can be saved from itself.

One of the major issues that comes across is the physicality of the future hope. It is not some airy-fairy vague notion of unspecified heavenly bliss but involves real places with real names grounded in history.

Jerusalem, mount of olives, Azal, former sea, hinder sea, Geba, Rimmon, Benjamin’s gate, first gate, corner gate, tower of Hananeel to the Kings winepresses. Judah Egypt and Canaan are also mentioned. What will happen at the return of Jesus will very much be on this literal earth.

The inclusion of summer and winter, and day and night, takes us back to Genesis 8v22 where the perennial promise of God’s dependability towards His creative masterpiece is to remain inviolate by the corrupt hand of man, in contrast with His intense intervention during the time of the Noahic deluge. “*While the earth remains seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter and day and night shall not cease*”. The delicate balance was disturbed 4,500 years ago but God has promised never to repeat that worldwide cataclysm, adding extra weight to the understanding that 2 Peter 3v6,7 is not referring to another physical disaster but instead a spiritual and political one. Even in

the midst of severe earthquakes sufficient to produce the grave effects of the chapter like the parting of the mountain into twain and the outward gushing waters.

Doctrinal issues that are found in this chapter include

- V2 Catholic or universal opposition, all nations
- V2 The city of Jerusalem not totally captured
- V3 God to fight His adversaries, His satans
- V4 Topographical changes of great magnitude
- V5 The mount of Olives a key site
- V5 The arrival of the multitudinous host of saints
- V9 Universal reign of God manifest to all
- V10 Transformation of the land
- V11 Future peace of the city of Jerusalem
- V14 Israel to fight
- V16 Hebrew feasts restored
- V18 Future punishment during the Millennium
- V20 Restoration of the Temple and altar
- V21 Animal sacrifice in the Kingdom

The King is the LORD of hosts, but Yahweh does not descend from heaven to dwell amongst His children quite yet. There is still the presence of the occasional resistance and rebellion which necessitates the hand of judgment to intervene. God has chosen to use natural resources like weather and disease to regulate this disobedience. No doubt some will come to regard this as less an act of God and more a natural phenomenon which has no bearing on the mind of the eternal whom they will still have not seen for themselves. God dwells in unapproachable light, 1 Timothy 6v16, so mercifully will delay any appearance until the final eradication of Sin under the work of His Son Jesus Christ.

The idea that verse 12-15 details the effects of the radiation from nuclear fission has caught hold with some, and whilst this can be considered, it does seem strange that the long-term destruction resulting from the widespread use of these weapons of mass destruction is set in contrast to how God usually intervenes. Fire and brimstone do not desecrate the land as nuclear bombs do, and why would God use these weapons as they have come about from the wayward mind of men who are not keen to pursue man made in the image of God and fit for an eternal purpose.

Mankind so often turns against himself, and it is no different here. "They shall lay hold everyone on the hand of his neighbour and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour" verse 13. Humanity will implode and they will destroy themselves as they so often have done down through human history.

Horses are used as the symbols of military power and the presence of horse bells in verse 20 should remind the reader of both the contrast with the Law of Moses which forbade the King to multiply horses Deut 17v16, whereas this King parades them for all to see, and brings us back to chapter One and the vision of the horse riders which were needed in order that the earth might be still and be at rest, verse 8-11.

Pots in the LORD's being like bowls before the altar suggests the idea of commonplace spirituality whereby even the common folk eating their meals will be an act of divine worship similar to the sanctity of collecting the blood in the bowls from the brazen altar. Everyday life will be consumed with an aspect of worship of the Eternal and gratefulness for His provision, the giving of thanks an antidote to so many ailments, Ephesians 5v3,4.

The very last verse highlights the separation from the Canaanite. This reversion to the ancient inhabitants of the promised land emphasises the difference between those who feel they naturally belong and those who receive something by inheritance, through the promise. It is the final fulfilment of God's promises to His people in the Land He has sworn to give them and in the House of prayer for all people except the Canaanites! This element of specific exclusion means that there is no universal salvation and that those bound to their natural origins are doomed to exclusion from the enjoyment of a wonderful and miraculous future.

It takes the reader back to such thoughts as are found in Deuteronomy 20v17 *"But thou shalt utterly destroy them....the Canaanites....as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee. That they teach you not to do after all their abominations which they have done unto their gods, so should you sin against the LORD your God."* It also reminds the people of Zechariah's day that the current occupants of the renewed temple after the return from Babylon were spiritually corrupt like the Canaanites and were not acceptable to the Eternal.

This is the outreach of a merciful God who has not abandoned the need for divine justice but has warned the whole world of what is coming and the seriousness of it, but so few are prepared to listen and change their behaviour now in the day of opportunity.