

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
Sunday Sermon

Date: December 15, 2019

Text: Zechariah 9:1-9

Scripture Reading: Zechariah 9:1-9

Subject: Zechariah Series, Chapter 9, Burden on Palestine and Christ's first advent

In our last message, we considered the contents of chapter eight in which we saw the reiteration of God's promise to bless Israel in the kingdom. We saw the LORD's words to the returning remnant encouraging them to finish the temple and we studied the fact that Jerusalem would be the worship center of the whole earth in the kingdom of Christ.

Now we come to the 9th chapter which is divided into three parts. **Part 1** is verses 1-8 which tells of the burden upon cities in the area of Palestine; **Part 2** is just one verse, verse 9, which is prophetic of our Lord Jesus Christ's first coming to Jerusalem and showing himself to be king; **part 3** is verses 10-17 which tells of the future deliverance of both Judah and Ephraim (Israel), and the world-wide kingdom. Since preaching through this entire chapter would require a very long message, I plan to preach from chapter 9, verses 10-17 on January 5, 2020, Lord willing.

Let us now consider our text for today – the first nine verses of chapter nine.

Part 1 – (Verses 1-8) tells of the burden upon cities in the area of Palestine;

The land or city of Hadrach against which the first burden in chapter 9 commences cannot be correctly located. Its closer connection with Damascus and Hamath shows that the Hadrach must have been a province of the Syrian kingdom then in existence. The Phoenician Cities Tyre and Sidon are next, and then mention is

[Type here]

made of four Philistine cities. Against these, Syria, Phoenicia and the cities of the Philistines a great calamity and overthrow is prophesied by Zechariah. They are conquered by the hosts of an enemy, and the rich treasures of Tyre are heaped together in the streets--silver as the dust and gold as the mire--the bulwarks are smitten, and she herself consumed by fire. From there the conquest goes on rapidly to the Philistinian cities, and the King of Gaza perishes.

The question arises, What conquest and calamity is this? Is it accomplished or is it still future? History records one great conqueror who rapidly overthrew the countries and cities mentioned in this burden. Alexander the Great and his expedition so successfully carried on is undoubtedly meant here. All students of the prophetic Scriptures know how prominently he likewise stands out in the book of Daniel. The young monarch, after the battle of Issus, besieged and quickly captured Damascus about 332 BC. We recall from our study of Ezekiel chapters 26-28, that Tyre was effectively destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon about 588 BC – about 256 years before Alexander came to Tyre. Sidon was easily taken, but Tyre resisted him some seven months and was burned to the ground. Gaza and the other cities came next. Thus the burden of the word of Jehovah as uttered here by Zechariah was literally fulfilled in the Syrian conquest of Alexander the Great. However, history tells us that the armies of the youthful monarch passed by Jerusalem a number of times without doing harm to the city. This is remarkable, and in accord with the prophecy of Zechariah, for we read in the eighth verse, *"And I will encamp against mine house, against the army, against him that passes through and returns, and no oppressor shall come over them any more, for now I have seen it with mine eyes."*

Zechariah 9:1 (KJV) *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 burden of the word of the LORD in the land of Hadrach, and Damascus shall be the rest thereof: -- The Syrians had been horrible neighbors to Israel, and God had a controversy with them. The word of the Lord shall be a *burden in the land of Hadrach*, that is, of *Syria*, but it does not appear why it was so called. We are not told where Hadrach is located, but the fact that Damascus is mentioned tells us that the place is in Syria. That that kingdom is meant is plain, because Damascus, the metropolis of that kingdom, is said to be the *rest* of this burden; that is, the judgments which are threatened shall fall and lie upon that city. Those are miserable upon whom the burden of the word of the Lord rests, upon whom *the wrath of God abides*; for it is a weight that they can neither shake off nor bear up under.

when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the LORD.-- I think this is not speaking of the conversion of the gentiles – but the fact that, at this time, the eyes of all the gentiles in that area were looking to the LORD for judgment, even as all the tribes of Israel did.

Zechariah 9:2 (KJV) *And Hamath also shall border thereby; Tyrus, and Zidon, though it be very wise.*

And Hamath also shall border thereby; -- You will recall that Hamath is at the very northern part of Israel. Hamath is mentioned as the northern border in Ezekiel 47:17. It appears that Hamath is very near to Hadrach – the place mentioned in verse 1, above. Tyre and Zidon are very close to Hamath and lie of the coast of the Mediterranean.

Tyrus, and Zidon, though it be very wise. -- particularly Tyre, which was famous for wisdom. **Ezekiel 28:3 (KJV) [The Word of the LORD speaking to the King of Tyre]** *Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee:*

Zechariah 9:3 (KJV) *And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.*

This is the history of Tyre. She had built a strong hold so that it was near impossible for an army to approach her directly and overcome the city. She was a very rich city because it was a place of commerce from all over the Mediterranean area and the world. History records this of Tyre and Alexander the Great's conquest of Tyre: After his decisive victory over the Persian king Darius III in 333 B.C. and the conquest of Persia, Alexander the Great moved his armies south, exacting tribute from all of coastal Phoenicia's city-states. Tired of Persian repressions, they mostly welcomed the new ruler, yet Tyre resisted his ambitions:

Tyre's king Azemilcus was at sea with the Persian fleet, when Alexander arrived in 332 BC at the gates and proposed to sacrifice to Heracles in the city, which was home to the most ancient temple of Heracles. However, the Tyrian government refused this and instead suggested Alexander to sacrifice at another temple of Heracles on the mainland at Old Tyre.

Angered by this rejection and the city's loyalty to Darius, Alexander started the Siege of Tyre despite its reputation as being impregnable. However, the Macedonian conqueror succeeded after seven months by demolishing the old city on the mainland and using its stones to construct a causeway to the island.

The tallest siege towers ever used in the history of war were moved via this man-made land bridge to overcome the walls of the city,

which was running low on supplies. As Alexander's forces moved forward towards linking the fortified island with the mainland, the Tyrians evacuated their old men, women, and children to Carthage. According to some historical sources, fellow Phoenician sailors from Sidon and Byblos, who had been forcefully recruited by Alexander, secretly helped many Tyrians to escape.”

Altogether some eight thousand Tyrians were killed during the siege, while Alexander's troops suffered only about four hundred casualties. After Alexander's victory he granted pardon to King Azemilcus and the chief magistrates. Yet according to Arrian, approximately 30,000 citizens of Tyre were sold into slavery.

Zechariah 9:4 (KJV) *Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire.*

The LORD did cast her out at the hands of the heathen he used for that purpose – Alexander the Great. At his hands, Tyre’s shipping was destroyed and the city burned.

Zechariah 9:5 (KJV) *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.*

Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza and were the five chief cities of the Philistines. As we can see, these cities (though Gath is not mentioned) shall see the destruction of Tyre. Gaza shall be sorrowful; Ekron’s expectation (hope) shall be ashamed; the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.

Zechariah 9:6 (KJV) *And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.*

And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, -- The word bastard comes from the Hebrew word “ממזר” mamzer *mam-zare’*” and means an

illegitimate child or child of incest. – one born to an unwed mother. The OED defines the English word “bastard” as one begotten or born out of wedlock; an illegitimate or natural child. So what does this mean that such an one shall dwell in Ashdod? I personally believe Matthew Henry has the right approach to this. He says of Zechariah 9:6: “*A bastard shall dwell in Ashdod; a spurious brood of strangers shall enter upon the inheritances of the natives, which they have no more right to than a bastard has to the estates of the legitimate children. And thus God will cut off the pride of the Philistines, all the strength and wealth which they prided themselves in, and which were the ground of their confidence in themselves and their contempt of the Israel of God.*”

And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. – In this way – that a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod and cut off the so-called “blood line” of the proud Philistines. And this was foretold before:

Zephaniah 2:4 (KJV) *For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Ashkelon a desolation: they shall drive out Ashdod at the noon day, and Ekron shall be rooted up.*

Zechariah 9:7 (KJV) ***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.***

Please notice the reading of the Septuagint for this verse:

Zechariah 9:7 (LXXE) *And I will take their blood out of their mouth, and their abominations from between their teeth; and these also shall be left to our God, and they shall be as a captain of a thousand in Juda, and Accaron as a Jebusite.*

And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth: -- As you can see the

Septuagint uses the plural “their blood out of their mouth, and their abominations from between their teeth;” This may indicate the LORD’s dealing with a remnant out of the Philistines whose thirst for blood and seeking to idols shall be taken from them in the day when the LORD, by his grace, brings them from sin to salvation. I do not find anywhere in the scripture where the LORD “bring again the captivity of Philistia in the latter days” as he has promised to do to Moab, Ammon, and Elam. It is blessedly true that there shall undoubtedly be those out of Philistia who are in that “great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, who stood before the Lamb, clothed with white robes; and palms in their hands crying with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.’” (Rev. 7:9-10).

but he that remaineth, even he, shall be for our God,-- Out of them, there shall be a remnant, an election according to grace.

and he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite. -- The disadvantages of their birth shall be no bar to their acceptance with God, but a Philistine shall be as acceptable to God, upon gospel-terms, as one of Judah, nay, as a governor, or chief one, in Judah, and a man of Ekron shall be as a Jebusite, or a man of Jerusalem, as a proselyted Jebusite, as Araunah the Jebusite. How interesting that the Holy Spirit makes this comparison:

2 Samuel 24:16 (KJV) *And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the LORD repented him of the evil, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshingplace of Araunah the Jebusite.*

In Christ Jesus there is no distinction of nations, but all are one in him, all alike welcome to him.

Zechariah 9:8 (KJV) 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.

History tells us that the armies of the Alexander the Great passed by Jerusalem a number of times without doing harm to the city. This is remarkable, and in accord with the prophecy of Zechariah, for we read in the eighth verse, "And I will encamp against mine house, against the army, against him that passes through and returns, and no oppressor shall come over them any more, for now I have seen it with mine eyes." It is remarkable how the LORD protects his own from all their enemies. His church is, in the world, a little flock. How wonderfully the LORD has protected them in spite of those who would destroy all of them. Even as they passed through the valley of the shadow of death – there, the LORD was with them to help them and comfort them so that they could boldly say: "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear what man can do to me."

Part 2 – (Verse 9) which is prophetic of our Lord Jesus Christ's first coming to Jerusalem and showing himself to be king;

Zechariah 9:9 (KJV) 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.

This is a prophetic verse which prophesies of the first coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as the King of Zion.

Matthew 21:1-9 (KJV) *And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, 2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. 3 And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. 4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. 6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, 7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. 8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. 9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.*

As we all know this is the only time that Jesus showed himself to the nation as their king. Though He had gathered a little flock from the lost sheep of the nation of Israel and, of them, build his church – the church at Jerusalem – the nation as a whole refused him and He pronounced their doom. Remember, this church, which he called “little flock” was composed entirely of Jews from the nation of Israel. To this church, He gave the great commission to “Go into the world, make disciples, baptize them, and teach them to observe all things whatsoever the LORD commanded.” The Nation of Israel, as a whole, rejected him. After this triumphant entry into Jerusalem on an ass and the foal of an ass, he said many things to them, then said this:

Matthew 23:34-39 (KJV) *Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them*

*ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: **35** That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. **36** Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. **37** O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! **38** Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. **39** For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

Jesus prophesied of their demise. They (the nation) would not see him till they say “blessed is he that cometh in the name of the LORD.” This was about AD 33. Just about 37 years later, Titus, son of Vespasian, emperor of Rome, would besiege Jerusalem, tear it to the ground and sow it with salt. Luke’s prophecy would come true:

Luke 21:20-24 (KJV) *And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. **21** Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. **22** For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. **23** But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. **24** And they shall fall by the edge of the*

sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Look at that! Led away captive into all nation; and Jerusalem trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Despair for national Israel at that point – but hope because the times of the gentiles shall be fulfilled. What shall occur when the fulness of the Gentiles be come in?

This:

Romans 11:25-27 (KJV) *For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, **until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.** 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.*

Beloved, now is our time still. God is still calling out of the gentiles a people for his name. These are his elect among the gentiles (or heathen) as the scriptures call us. To day, if ye hear his voice harden not your hearts as Israel did in the provocation in the wilderness.

Isaiah 55:6-7 (KJV) *Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: 7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

Behold, to day is the day of salvation. Believe the Lord Jesus and be saved.