

February 13, 2011  
"God's Protection of His People"  
Zechariah 12

In the last chapter we read Zechariah's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem. We know such destruction actually happened in 70 AD, as Jesus Christ had prophesied. Yet, this chapter speaks about God's protection of Jerusalem, His protection of His people! How can this be?

I believe this chapter speaks of a different Jerusalem, a different people of God – these are those who by God's Spirit see a crucified Christ, these mourn their sins!

I. These are things the Great Creator of the Universe does - :1

The burden of the word of the LORD against Israel. Thus says the LORD, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him: (Zechariah 12:1 NKJ)

1. He is more than qualified:
  - a. He "stretches out the heavens"
  - b. "lays the foundation of the earth"
  - c. "forms the spirit of man within him"
2. He is QUALIFIED to HANDLE Israel's / His people's burden(s)

II. The Burden of God's true people is the opposition of the ungodly - :2

"Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. (Zechariah 12:2 NKJ)

1. This fierce opposition is the lot of God's people on earth –
  - a. It is our lot in Christ –

"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. (John 15:18 NKJ)

- b. It is the NORM –

Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. (2 Timothy 3:12 NKJ)

- c. This opposition is described as "drunkenness" because it is a senseless / stupid idea to attack or "lay siege" against God's people –

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31 NKJ)

III. God makes His people unbeatable, the ungodly are confounded by them –

1. It is silly to "lay siege" against them –
  - a. Not at all the case in 70 AD
  - b. Yet Assyria certainly was confounded by the prayers of King Hezekiah – Isaiah 37

Then the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when people arose early in the morning, there were the corpses-- all dead. (Isaiah 37:36 NKJ)

2. Don't try lifting or throwing them either –

"And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. (Zechariah 12:3 NKJ)

No other book has been so attacked throughout history as the Bible. In A.D. 300 the Roman emperor Diocletian ordered every Bible burned because he thought that by destroying the Scriptures he could destroy Christianity. Anyone caught with a Bible would be executed. But just 25 years later, the Roman emperor Constantine ordered that 50 perfect copies of the Bible be made at government expense. The French philosopher Voltaire, a skeptic who destroyed the faith of many people, boasted that within 100 years of his death, the Bible would disappear from the face of the earth. Voltaire died in 1728, but the Bible lives on. The irony of history is that 50 years after his death, the Geneva Bible Society moved into his former house and used his printing presses to print thousands of Bibles.

3. Horses will confused and blinded, riders made mad –  
"In that day," says the LORD, "I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness; I will open My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. (Zechariah 12:4 NKJ)

- a. Notice the fierceness of the attack seems to increase
      - b. Yet the effectiveness of the attackers decreases

4. *God's people are unbeatable –*

A. *They are strong as a people –*

"And the governors of Judah shall say in their heart, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem are my strength in the LORD of hosts, their God.' (Zechariah 12:5 NKJ)

*This is not necessarily your typical military strength –*

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. <sup>35</sup> "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:34-35 NKJ)

B. *Their Governors / Leaders are a fire to those who oppose them –*

"In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place-- Jerusalem. (Zechariah 12:6 NKJ)

• *See the example of deacon Stephen –*

And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. <sup>9</sup> Then there arose some from what is called the Synagogue of the Freedmen (Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and those from Cilicia and Asia), disputing with Stephen. <sup>10</sup> And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke. (Acts 6:8-10 NKJ)

When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with *their* teeth. <sup>55</sup> But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, <sup>56</sup> and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" <sup>57</sup> Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; <sup>58</sup> and they cast *him* out of the city and stoned *him*. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. <sup>59</sup> And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on *God* and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." <sup>60</sup> Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep. (Acts 7:54-60 NKJ)

• *God's people are victorious even in death –*

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." <sup>37</sup> Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am persuaded

that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:35-39 NKJ)

C. *These victories are David vs. Goliath type victories –*

"The LORD will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem shall not become greater than that of Judah. <sup>8</sup> "In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; the one who is feeble among them in that day shall be like David, and the house of David *shall be* like God, like the Angel of the LORD before them. (Zechariah 12:7-8 NKJ)

5. *God's people not only win battles but finally they will win the war –*

"It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. (Zechariah 12:9 NKJ)

IV. *True victory is / was ultimately won at the cross –*

"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for *his* only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. <sup>11</sup> "In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning at Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. <sup>12</sup> "And the land shall mourn, every family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; <sup>13</sup> "the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself, and their wives by themselves; <sup>14</sup> "all the families that remain, every family by itself, and their wives by themselves. (Zechariah 12:10-14 NKJ)

1. *God's people are those who mourn their sins against Christ –*

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." <sup>37</sup> Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:36-37 NKJ)

2. *The response of mourning and humility, repentance of sin is very different from the stiff-necked response of God's enemies –*

"You stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so do you. ... " <sup>54</sup> When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with *their* teeth. (Acts 7:51 & 54 NKJ) ... (see thru :60)