

Pentwater Bible Church

Zechariah

Message 21 Messiah's Return Brings Peace

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The Triumph of Christianity by Gustave Dore Cir. 1866

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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Zechariah
Message Twenty-One
The Messiah's Second Advent Brings Peace
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Painting by Sharlene Lindskog-Osorio

THE MESSIAH WILL COME & TRULY CONQUER

Zechariah 9:10-11

¹⁰And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. ¹¹As for thee also, because of the blood of thy covenant I have set free thy prisoners from the pit wherein is no water (ASV 1901).

INTRODUCTION

This text brings the Second Coming into focus after a period in excess of two thousand years of the Church Age. It continues from verse nine, the previous verse which described the Lord's first advent. In verse ten we see the Second Coming of the Lord. Carefully

analyzing this text gives us a model of The Law of Double Reference. The two comings of Christ are seemingly blended into one passage consisting of two verses with no indication of a separation of time between them. It is important to realize this hermeneutical principle because the Scriptures frequently make use of this law. This is not double fulfillment, which is not an acceptable hermeneutical principle. If that were the case the reader would be in a position to decide which outcomes he would like the passage to refer to instead of the passage itself making the reference to specific events. Following that so called principle would only lead to confusion. We then are faced with an eisegesis (reading into) of a passage instead of exegesis (reading out from). There are multiple examples of this in the Bible. One of these is Daniel 9:26. In this single verse there two separate events discussed separated by a time gap of more than two thousand years. The first part of the verse discusses the First Coming of the Messiah while the last part of the verse describes the work of the Antichrist. Another example is the twenty-eighth chapter of Ezekiel. In verses one to ten Ezekiel is seen addressing a human king called the Prince of Tyre. After verse ten the dialogue shifts to an individual known as the king of Tyre. In the first instance the “prince” is a man who was able to control sea traffic in the Mediterranean off the coast of present day Lebanon where the island of Tyre was situated. As we have seen in previous passages Alexander the Great destroyed it in 332 B.C. The *prince* of Tyre demonstrated his worldly wisdom by amassing great material prosperity and therefore power and authority. In verses ten to nineteen the text begins to address the *king* of Tyre. The king of Tyre is the fallen anointed cherub Halal also known as Satan. So in these verses we have two events being spoken of, not a double fulfillment but two separate events. One other misunderstanding of these passages needs to be addressed.

Zechariah 9:11 is one of the six passages (Isaiah 4:4; Micah 7:8; Malachi 3:2; Zechariah 9:1; I Corinthians 3:13-17; 15:29) that the Roman Catholic Church sites in their defense of the doctrine of Purgatory. Originating in the Dark Ages its name comes from the Latin term to purge. This doctrine teaches that this place is where individuals go for final purification that have not done enough good deeds to enter Heaven after death. The length of time one spends in Purgatory is dependent on the needs of the individual. It can vary and additionally prayers, good works, Mass attendance, penance and the purchasing of indulgences can shorten it. In actuality none of these passages support the concept of Purgatory. In fact the Bible teaches that for the believer once dead we are glorified (Luke 23:43; Romans 8:17, 30; etc.). All six of the passages refer to the Second Coming, Jerusalem being purged, God acting like a refiners fire and the Judgment seat of the Messiah. There is *no* actual mention of any post death refinement period known as Purgatory. In an attempt to provide proof of the concept the proponents cite the apocryphal Jewish book of II Maccabees 12:41-45. Even though these are a weak set of passages upon which to set a doctrine such as Purgatory the Roman Catholic Church includes this book in their Scripture. It has never been part of the Jewish canon and it was not in the Bible at the time of Christ’s First Coming. Nobody except the Roman group has ever given the apocrypha canonicity.

MESSIAH’S SECOND ADVENT

Zechariah 9:10

¹⁰And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth (ASV 1901).

This passage is diametrically opposite from the last one where the Lord in His humility and affliction came to the earth to suffer and die for us and to cleanse the Heavenly Tabernacle (Hebrews 9:23), provide a means by which we can receive salvation (Hebrews 9:13-14), and to ratify the New Covenant (Hebrews 9:15-22). When he returns again it will be to take back the earth with force, establish a worldwide peace, and set up Millennial reign as King Messiah (Hebrew *Mashiach Nagid*). Only Christ has the authority to bring the Great Tribulation (Revelation 5:5) on this earth to finally establish the peace promised in this passage. He will, therefore, “cut off” the apparatus of war and emblems of worldly power at the great final battle in the Campaign of Armageddon, which ends in Jerusalem.

There are three principal reasons for the Great Tribulation coming on this earth.

1. To Make and End of Wickedness and Wicked Ones or sinfulness (Isaiah 13:9, 24:19-20)
2. To Bring About Worldwide Revival (Revelation 7:1-17).
3. To Break the Power of the Holy People (Daniel 12:5-7)

The way in which this will occur is clearly explained in Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 20:33-38

³³As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, surely with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you: ³⁴and I will bring you out from the peoples, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with wrath poured out; ³⁵and I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there will I enter into judgment with you face to face. ³⁶Like as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I enter into judgment with you, saith the Lord Jehovah. ³⁷And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; ³⁸and I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me; I will bring them forth out of the land where they sojourn, but they shall not enter into the land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah (ASV 1901).

Here Ezekiel uses a simile of the Exodus. What is important to note here is that after God gathers the Jews from around the world He will enter into a period of Judgment with them

(The Tribulation). The “rebels” are the Jews who will simply not believe and therefore will be purged out from among them through this judgment. They are going to die during the Great Tribulation. Only then will the whole new nation, a regenerate nation, be allowed to enter the Promised Land under King Messiah (Jesus the Christ). Zachariah 13:8 says that two thirds of the world’s Jews will perish in this time of great distress. Adolph Hitler killed one third of the world’s Jews in his holocaust, which can be viewed as a model of what will happen. This will be discussed at length in the twelfth through the fourteenth chapters.

HE SPEAKS PEACE TO THE NATIONS

The Lord Jesus will establish His Millennial Theocratic Kingdom after the end of the Campaign of Armageddon. Most of His enemies will have been destroyed during the Great Tribulation. Millions will die with only the righteous who did not align themselves with the Antichrist or the False Prophet either being resurrected or going alive into the Millennial Kingdom. The final event regarding the destruction of His enemies will be the judgment in the Valley of Jehoshaphat of the Gentiles who made it through the Tribulation. This judgment will be in the seventy-five day interval immediately preceding the Kingdom’s establishment. This peaceful period of time will be with Jesus Himself ruling the government of the world from David’s Throne in Jerusalem. He will speak the law of the earth and it will be done. The text affirms this with, “*And His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth*”—which is a quotation from the 72nd Psalm, where the effects of the blessed reign of the true Son of David, Israel’s ideal “King,” is explained, and where it states, “*He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him, and His enemies shall lick the dust. . . . Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him.*” The phrase from sea to sea *miyyam ad yam*—is idiomatic, and equivalent to “from the sea to the other end of the world where the sea begins again.” The *nahar* (“river”) is the Euphrates, and is mentioned as the remotest eastern boundary of the Promised Land, according to the Abrahamic Covenant. The Jews will get all the land promised to them at the time of the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom.

PROMISES OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

Zechariah 9:11

¹¹As for thee also, because of the blood of thy covenant I have set free thy prisoners from the pit wherein is no water (ASV 1901).

The Lord God has promised to finally redeem all Israel (Romans 11:26 etc.). This will happen according to His covenant with Abraham, which was ratified by a blood sacrifice. This is not a reference to the conditional Mosaic Covenant, which begins in Exodus nineteen and is comprised of 613 individual laws comprising “The Law.” The one He made with Abraham, which was not of a contract between two parties, but of a promise to the fulfillment of which God alone was pledged. It is completely unconditional. Neither

Abraham nor anybody connected to it had any performance instruction, which entitled them in some manner to receive the covenant's benefits. And in connection with that covenant there was shedding of the blood of the animals and birds which Abram was commanded to slay (Genesis 15:9-10). God Himself provided the fire, which caused the animal parts to burn. Within the Mosaic Covenant there was substantial requirements for blood shedding of various animals. All these sacrifices pointed to the great sacrifice of our Lord Jesus with His far more precious blood, which alone secures to sinful man God's covenanted blessings. This sacrifice allows all that are trapped in their sinful state to be reconnected to God and receive His covenanted salvation to the Jew first then to the Gentile (Romans 1:16). God sets His called ones free *from the pit wherein is no water*. This is a metaphor of imprisonment. God says He will release Zion's prisoners from the waterless pit. Pits or dry cisterns were common places of confinement in the ancient world. Joseph was thrown into one, it without water (Genesis 37:24). Jeremiah, too, was incarcerated in a pit without water (Jeremiah 38:6). The significance of this is that pits frequently were dug precisely to contain water, so that one without it was useless and abandoned. Moreover, a waterless pit would guarantee quick death by thirst unless the prisoner was supplied with drinking water. Speaking of the Second Coming the text provides the ultimate release of imprisonment for the Nation Israel. They will all (who survive and confess the name of Christ) be sin free, have resurrected bodies and live in peace and safety for a thousand years with the Jewish Messiah.

The concept of the Messianic Kingdom coming on this earth, its government and population are given primarily in the Old Testament. The apocalyptic writers of the Kabbalistic literature pictured that serenity accurately. Not only were the Jews to be freed from all foreign domination and to be raised to a position of supremacy over all the earth, the Messianic age, the age of the kingdom, was to be a period of unexampled fruitfulness, of unmeasured health and prosperity, of unbroken peace and joy. But more than that, it was to be a time of perfect holiness and righteousness, when law and temple service should be observed with scrupulous and unvarying exactness, and all should be pure and upright in God's sight. Upon this feature of the coming kingdom the greatest stress was naturally laid, and it was widely believed that such perfect and permanent holiness would be secured through the influence of the Messiah, who would then be poured out upon the faithful and would guide and control all their activities.

The Messianic Kingdom will be the final fulfillment of God's covenant with Abraham. God had promised Abraham a land and a seed. The seed promise was fulfilled with the birth of Isaac and ultimately in the person of Christ. Paul says in Galatians 3:16.

"Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as referring to many, but rather to one, 'And to your seed,' that is, Christ."

The land promise, never before fulfilled, will be fulfilled in the Messianic Kingdom. In Genesis, God says to Abraham, *"To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates (Genesis 15:18). This land is an everlasting possession.* God declares to Abraham, *"And I will give to you and to your*

descendants after you, the land of your sojourning, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God" (Genesis 17:8).

The chief characteristics of the Mosaic system were law and obedience. The chief characteristics of the present system, the Church age are belief and grace. The chief characteristics of the Messianic Kingdom will be peace and righteousness cf. Isaiah 2:1-5, Isaiah 11:1-10, Jeremiah 23:5-8. Other characteristics are long life, perfect environment, and wealth.

During this period the New Covenant will be completely established with the House of Israel and the House of Judah where Israel will become a nation of priests. This covenant will be fundamentally different from the Mosaic Covenant, which Israel could not obey. God will write his laws upon their hearts rather than on stone cf. Jeremiah 31:31-37. The Church has been the benefactor of some of the aspects of this covenant since Jesus ratified it with His shed blood. The Church is saved by Jesus' blood. The Jews will realize it during the millennial reign as it comes to its complete effectiveness.

There are many verses in the Old Testament prophesying the Messianic Kingdom. The Jews had long awaited it. *Some* Old Testament references to the Kingdom are listed below.

1. Isaiah 52:1 Jerusalem will be pure and no longer trodden down by the Gentiles. (Uncircumcised and unclean ones)
2. Isaiah 60:3 Gentiles with their leaders will serve the Jews
3. Psalm 15:1-5 People in the Kingdom will possess a kind of righteousness
4. Isaiah 11:6-9 Universal peace will be prevalent and the world's animals will be at peace with each other and be vegetarians
5. Isaiah 65:17-25 Here Isaiah describes the Millennial Kingdom's new heaven and new earth. This is a renovation. This is not a description of the eternal order, which will be a complete new order.
6. Micah 4:1-5 Jehovah's house becomes a center of attention, with Messianic teaching, the absence of war and universal peace

It was this kingdom that John the Baptizer proclaimed, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2). Jesus proclaimed the same message that John had begun, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). Even while the nation of Israel rejected their Messiah and the kingdom the disciples expected it even after his crucifixion. Right before his ascension, the disciples said, "And so when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6). Jesus replied that he could not reveal this knowledge. His answer affirmed the prophetic Scriptures. He just could not reveal the timetable. All the prophecies in the Old Testament related to the Messiah's first advent have been literally fulfilled, therefore we can expect that the prophecies related to the Messiah and his Kingdom will be fulfilled literally also. Some New Testament references to the Kingdom are shown below.

1. Mark. 1:15 - "the kingdom of God is at hand"
2. Luke. 17:20,21 - "the kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed... behold, the kingdom of God is in your midst"
3. John. 3:3 - unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God
4. Romans. 14:17 - "the kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit"
5. Matthew. 3:2; 4:17 - "the kingdom of heaven is at hand"
6. Matthew. 5:3,10 - "theirs is the kingdom of heaven"
7. Matthew. 5:19,20 - "enter the kingdom of heaven"
8. Ephesians 5:5 - "inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God"
9. Colossians. 1:13 - "the kingdom of His beloved Son"
10. II Peter. 1:11 - "eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"
11. Matthew. 6:33 - "seek first His kingdom and His righteousness..."
12. John. 18:36 - "My kingdom is not of this world/realm"
13. Acts 20:25 - "went about preaching the kingdom"

As Jesus taught His apostles to pray: Thy Kingdom come Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. It is coming. (Matthew 6:10) He let them know that the Kingdom would come upon earth, it would mirror God's heavenly Kingdom and it was sometime yet future to the time of the Sermon on the Mount and as we have seen yet future to Acts 1:6-7. With the world in increasingly worse turmoil we can say that the Kingdom has not yet arrived and it is still yet future to us.

NEXT WEEK: SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST PART II

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