Zechariah 9:14-17

**Digging Deeper in the Word**

Wyn Laidig

July 2016

***Zechariah 9:14–17a***Then YHWH will appear over them, and his arrow will go forth like lightning; Adonai YHWH will sound the trumpet and will march forth in the whirlwinds of the south. YHWH Tsava’ot will protect them, and they shall devour, and tread down the sling stones, and they shall drink and roar as if drunk with wine, and be full like a bowl, drenched like the corners of the altar. On that day YHWH their God will save them, as the flock of his people; for like the jewels of a crown they shall shine on his land. For how great is his goodness, and how great his beauty! Grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the young women.

1. Briefly summarize the message of the first part of this chapter, Zech 9:1-13.

YHWH will both punish and purify Israel’s enemies who have occupied the Promised Land. He will purify and then gather the remnant from ALL peoples (both Israel and the Gentiles who were former enemies of Israel) and dwell with them in the promised land, protecting them from future oppressors. God’s judgment and his punishment is His way of bringing people to know Him. His desire is for the enemies of Israel to be joined as one with Israel, and He is working for that purpose.

The Messiah is coming as King – righteous, but lowly and humble, not bringing war but peace. With his blood of the covenant he will bring salvation to those living apart from YHWH. There is hope for the lost... if they return to YHWH they will be doubly blessed. God will use his people as his tool for bringing justice and peace to the nations. All for the purpose of bringing both Jew and Gentile into a covenant relationship with YHWH -- as in Zech 9:7, the Gentile nations “shall be a remnant for our God” and “shall be like a clan in Judah”.

1. What is the arrow in Zech 9:14? What does the picture of an “arrow going forth like lightening” communicate?

This is continuation of the prior verse, which speaks of God using Judah and Ephraim like a bow and arrow bringing judgment against their oppressors. So the arrow refers to the people of Israel being used as God’s tool.

And arrow like lightening – it strikes in a fast and powerful manner, bringing immediate destruction to whatever it strikes.

1. Who blows the trumpet (Hebrew **shofar**)? What does that signify?

YHWH blows the shofar. A shofar was used to call people together. YHWH is cleary the one in charge. He is calling the troops into battle.

1. According to wording in Zech 9:14, who will march forth? Why?

Adonai YHWH is the one marching forth. He sounds the trumpet and he leads the charge.

1. What do the whirlwinds of the south represent?

Judah and Ephraim were in the south, in comparison to their main enemies who would come the north, like Assyria, Babylon, Greece, and Rome. The picture is of YHWH marching forth, leading his people (Judah and Ephraim, his bow and arrow) against their oppressors.

1. In Zech 9:14a, it says “YHWH will appear over them”. Who do you think the “them” refers to? Why?

The picture of this verse is of YHWH blowing the shofar and leading his people, as he marches forth with them. So it would seem that YHWH (the One from heaven above) will be appearing “over them” – over his people – as they march forth to deliver a lightening attack to their oppressors.

1. It is interesting that in this Zechariah passage we see that YHWH blows the trumpet to gather his people for final battle in the last days… when the coming King arrives bringing salvation. Look for passages in the Apostolic Scriptures (New Testament) that speak of the trumpet sounding in the latter days. What parallels do you see? Note Amos 3:7.

***Amos 3:7***“For Adonai YHWH does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.

***Matthew 24:30–31***Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

***1 Corinthians 15:51–52***Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

***1 Thessalonians 4:15–17***For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.

***Revelation 10:5–7***And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it, that there would be no more delay, but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.

***Revelation 11:15***Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”

Zechariah is predicting the end times. The trumpet will sound and the elect will be gathered, even those who have physically died. The battle against evil will be victorious, and will end in peace and salvation for all God’s people.

1. In Zech 9:15, why is the term **YHWH Tsava’ot** so appropriate?

Tsava’ot “hosts” can literally means “armies”. He is the ruler of ALL armies... all hosts… all beings whether in heaven or earth. He is certainly capable of offering protection to his people as he leads them in this charge.

1. What is the meaning of the phrase “they shall devour and tread down the sling stones”? What were sling stones used for? Whose sling stones are being treaded upon?

Sling stones were the bullets of war in those days. These sling stones were thrown by their enemies, but they would be ineffective in stopping God’s people. God’s people would walk over them. They would devour their enemies.

1. In Zech 9:15b, there is some uncertainty in knowing what the original text said. The Hebrew manuscripts read: “they will drink and roar as if drunk with wine”. However the Greek Septuagint manuscript reads: “they will drink them like wine”. What might each possibility be communicating? Which one do you think makes most sense? Why?

“drink and roar as if drunk with wine”: they are a boisterous army, perhaps celebrating their certain victory

“drink them like wine” – this would correspond with the earlier phrase that they “devour” their enemies. Here the picture is of the victors spilling their blood of their enemies as easily as one drinks wine.

Although either possibility can fit, it would seem that “drink them like wine” really makes most sense in the context, especially in view of the next phase in Zech 9:15b.

1. Zech 9:15b says “be full like a bowl, and drenched like the corners of the altar.” The word “bowl” here is often translated “basin” and is the Hebrew מִזְרָק **mizrak**. Look at some other uses of the Hebrew word **mizrak** in Ex 27:3, Num 4:14, and 1 Kings 7:40. What do you think the basins were used for? Also look at the Lev 4:7. What is the picture we are being given in Zech 9:15b?

***Exodus 27:3***You shall make pots for it to receive its ashes, and shovels and **basins** and forks and fire pans. You shall make all its utensils of bronze.

***Numbers 4:14***And they shall put on it all the utensils of the altar, which are **used for the service** there, the fire pans, the forks, the shovels, and the **basins**, all the utensils of the altar; and they shall spread on it a covering of goatskin, and shall put in its poles.

***1 Kings 7:40***Hiram also made the pots, the shovels, and the basins. So Hiram finished all the work that he did for King Solomon **on the house of YHWH.**

***Leviticus 4:7***And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense before YHWH that is in the tent of meeting, and all **the rest of the blood of the bull he shall pour out at the base of the altar** of burnt offering that is at the entrance of the tent of meeting.

The basins were used as part of sacrificial worship ceremonies at the tabernacle and temple. They would have been used to collect the blood of the sacrificed animals which was then poured on the base of the altar.

The picture here in Zech 9:15b seems to be of the shed blood of their enemies. Not only will there be a large quantity of spilled blood (as in the continual sacrifices at the temple), but the reason for the shed blood is the same – sin. The enemies of YHWH are paying for their sins with their own blood. They, unlike the people of YHWH, are not covered by the blood of the covenant through the Messiah.

1. What are the metaphors describing God’s people in Zech 9:16? What do each of these metaphors tell us about the role or relationship of the YHWH to his people? Look also at Ezek 34:22-24 and Is 62:3 for other examples of these metaphors.

***Ezekiel 34:22–24***I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. And I, YHWH, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am YHWH; I have spoken.

***Isaiah 62:3***You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of YHWH, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

We are “his flock”. This refers to a flock of sheep. If we are the flock, he is the Shepherd.

We are shining jewels in his land. In that case he must be the jeweler. Jewels are not naturally shiny. They must be carefully cut and polished in order to shine. He is the Craftsman.

1. The passage ends with declaration of God’s goodness, which transitions into the next section. What is the result of his goodness? Look also at Is 62:8-9 and Jer 31:12. Can you find other passages in Zechariah which have prophesied this as well?

***Isaiah 62:8–9***YHWH has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: “I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink your wine for which you have labored; but those who garner it shall eat it and praise YHWH, and those who gather it shall drink it in the courts of my sanctuary.”

***Jeremiah 31:12***They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of YHWH, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall be like a watered garden, and they shall languish no more.

***Zechariah 8:12***For there shall be a sowing of peace. The vine shall give its fruit, and the ground shall give its produce, and the heavens shall give their dew. And I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things.

Grain will be plentiful and wine will abound. There will be a double blessings – life in the presence of YHWH with plentiful produce from the land.

1. How can you summarize this section, together with the whole chapter?

This is an end time prophesy. YHWH will both punish and purify Israel’s enemies who have occupied the Promised Land. He will purify and then gather the remnant from ALL peoples and dwell with them in the promised land. God’s judgment and his punishment is His way of bringing people to know Him. His desire is for the enemies of Israel to be joined as one with Israel.

YHWH will send King Messiah – righteous, but lowly and humble. With his blood of the covenant he will bring salvation to those living apart from YHWH. There is hope for the lost... if they return to YHWH they will be doubly blessed. God will use his people as his tool for bringing justice and peace to the nations.

On that “day of YHWH” he will lead His people against their oppressors. The enemies of YHWH will pay for their sins with their blood. And God will save his people, as a shepherd saves his sheep. He will make them shine as jewels in his land.

1. What do you personally take away from your study of this passage?

YHWH desires to use me as His tool to speak out against the wrongs of our world. He has saved me as a lost sheep for a purpose. I am to shine like a jewel in His land.