Zechariah 9:1-8

**Digging Deeper in the Word**

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May 2016

***Zechariah 9:1–8***The oracle of the word of **YHWH** is against the land of Hadrach and Damascus is its resting place. For **YHWH** has an eye on mankind and on all the tribes of Israel, and on Hamath also, which borders on it, Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise. Tyre has built herself a rampart and heaped up silver like dust, and fine gold like the mud of the streets. But behold, **Adonai** will strip her of her possessions and strike down her power on the sea, and she shall be devoured by fire. Ashkelon shall see it, and be afraid; Gaza too, and shall writhe in anguish; Ekron also, because its hopes are confounded. The king shall perish from Gaza; Ashkelon shall be uninhabited; a mixed people shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of Philistia. I will take away its blood from its mouth, and its abominations from between its teeth; it too shall be a remnant for our God; it shall be like a clan in Judah, and Ekron shall be like the Jebusites. Then I will encamp at my house as a guard, so that none shall march to and fro; no oppressor shall again march over them, for now I see with my own eyes.

1. Zech 9-14 is largely poetic, as opposed to the mostly prose first chapters of Zechariah. This chapter begins stating it is “an oracle of the word of YHWH”. What is an oracle? What would be a synonym for this word?
2. The passage speaks of the judgment of YHWH which will come upon Israel’s enemies. Find out where all the places (or peoples groups) mentioned in this passage are located, and also look for anything about why these areas would receive YHWH’s judgment.

* Hadrach
* Damascus
* Hamath
* Tyre
* Sidon
* Ashkelon
* Gaza
* Ekron
* Ashdod
* Philistia
* Jebusites

1. What is common to all these places mentioned?
2. Why do you think places like Egypt, Babylon and Assyria were not included?
3. In Zech 9:1a, what does it mean that Hadrach and Damascus is “it’s / his resting place”? Who or what is resting there (or will rest there), and why?
4. In Zech 9:1b the ESV has a poor translation (in my opinion), although they have a footnote with a much better alternative. The Hebrew is literally translated “**For toward YHWH is the eye of mankind and all the tribes of Israel.**” What does that mean?
5. Look at Ps 123:1-2 where the phrase “our eyes look to YHWH” is used. What is the result of mankind’s eyes looking to YHWH? How might this relate to our Zechariah passage?
6. It seems that Hamath, Tyre and Sidon are also included with Israel in the list of “all mankind” whose eye will be toward YHWH. In Zech 9:2a, what does “**which borders on it**” refer to? Also look at Num 13:21; Josh 13:5; and Judg 3:3 where Hamath is referred to as Lebo-Hamath.
7. See what you can learn about what kind of a city Tyre was during the days of Zechariah. Also, look at Isaiah 23:8. According to our passage in Zechariah, what will happen to Tyre? Did this judgment ever take place?
8. In Zech 9:3 there is some poetic wordplay going on in the phrase “Tyre has build herself a rampart”. A literal translation of the Hebrew would be “built Tyre fortification for her”. See if you can find the Hebrew for “Tyre” and “fortification” and figure out what the poetic wordplay is.
9. In Zech 9:5 the focus shifts from the Phoenicians to the Philistines, saying “Ashkelon shall see it”. What will Ashkelon see? How will they respond?
10. In Zech 9:6a “a mixed people” is literally Hebrew מַמְזֵר **mamzer** meaning “one born of a forbidden marriage, illegitimate child, half-breed, bastard child”. How does this statement contrast with the last part of the verse (Zech 9:6b)?
11. In Zech 9:7a, what does it mean that He will take away “its blood from its mouth”? Refer also to Leviticus 17:12.
12. What does it mean that he will take away “its abominations from between its teeth”? The key Hebrew word is שִׁקּוּץ **shikkutz** “abomination”. Look at Isaiah 66:3, Jeremiah 13:27, and Jeremiah 32:34 as examples of other usages of this same word. Also look up Deut 14:3. Note however that a different Hebrew word תּוֹעֵבָה **to‘evah** “abomination” is used with food, although the context of eating fits well with the context of Zechariah.
13. WHY does God want to “remove the blood from their mouth” and the “abominations from between their teeth”? Is this judgment? Is this purification? What is God’s purpose?
14. And in Zech 9:7b, what does it mean that Ashdod “shall be like a clan in Judah” and “Ekron shall be like the Jebusites”? What happened to the Jebusities? For a hint, look at 2 Sam 5:5-10 and 2 Sam 24:16.
15. Has this happened yet? If not, when will it happen? What does this imply about Gentiles? How does this relate to John 10:14-16 and also to Romans 11:13-23?
16. Given the above, what is the meaning of the phrase “I will encamp at my house as a guard”? Has Zechariah talked about this before? Recall Zech 2:5.
17. In Zech 9:8a we read “**so that none shall march to and fro**”. The exact same Hebrew phrase was used in Zech 7:12, there translated “**so that no one went to and fro**”. Who is not going to and fro in each case? What is the contrast God is communicating?
18. In Zech 9:8b, the passage closes with the phrase “for now I will see with my own eyes”. What does this mean? Also recall Zech 4:10 and the context of that verse. What is the common point of these two verses?
19. Notice that Zech 9:1 starts out with the eyes of men upon God, and now the final verse of this passage (Zech 9:8) ends with the eyes God upon the earth. What is being communicated through this contrast? It reminds me of Gen 1:31. Why?
20. What is the main point of this passage? How would you summarize the message here?
21. What do you personally take away from your study of this passage?