Zechariah 14:6-11

**Digging Deeper in the Word**

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***Zechariah 14:6–11*** (ESV)  
**6** On that day there shall be no light, cold, or frost. **7** And there shall be a unique day, which is known to YHWH, neither day nor night, but at evening time there shall be light. **8** On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea. It shall continue in summer as in winter. **9** And YHWH will be king over all the earth. On that day YHWH will be one and his name one. **10** The whole land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem shall remain aloft on its site from the Gate of Benjamin to the place of the former gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king’s winepresses. **11** And it shall be inhabited, for there shall never again be a decree of utter destruction. Jerusalem shall dwell in security.

1. Summarize the first part of this oracle, found in Zech 12-13.

The first section of Ch 12 is about victory “on that day” of the Messiah’s return. This will be a day final judgment, when God will bring both salvation to His people and overpowering wrath to the enemies of Israel. With God providing the strength, even the weakest will be like King David (recalling perhaps the battle of David and Goliath). The last section of Ch 12 speaks of the sorrow and mourning that will be the initial response of all of Israel when the Messiah returns and they realize their rejection of Him and the depth of their sins. But God will hear their pleas for mercy and pour out his grace upon them. He will bathe them in living water to cleanse them of all sin.

In Ch 13 we see that idolatry and false prophets will come to an end. The Shepherd (Messiah) will be struck down (his crucifixion) and his disobedient people will be scattered. Two thirds (or at least a majority) will be killed, but the remaining will be refined and purified with the result that their relationship with YHWH will be as it was originally intended. YHWH will be our God and we will be his people.

In Zech 14:1-5, we read that “on that day of YHWH” (or more precisely, just prior to Yeshua’s return) there will be a punishment for Israel, as the nations trample the land (intensely for 42 months). Half the city’s population will be taken. Then a great earthquake will occur, and God’s people will flee to safety. Yeshua (on the day of trumpets) will return to the Mt of Olives, from where he had ascended, and gather his holy ones (dead and alive), battling the nations and pouring out His wrath and judgement upon them.

1. List the special characteristics of that “day of YHWH” as described in Zech 14:6-7.

No light  
no cold  
no frost  
a unique day – HB **echad** “one, alone”  
no day & night  
light at evening time

1. Look at how different versions translate Zech 14:6b “cold or frost”. Why is there such discrepancy?

The LXX has “and cold/winter and frost”. However the “and” can also mean “nevertheless, but”. The Hebrew MT seems to say “the precious (fem plural) they (masc plural) will congeal.” This has a grammatical problem, and can’t be translated without making some changes. “Precious ones” יְקָר֖וֹת could come from יָקָר “precious” or possibly from קָרָה “cold”. And קִפָּאוֹן **qippa’on,** only used in this verse, comes from the root קפא “congeal, freeze, make rigid”.

Note that Job 31:26 speaks of the “moon preciously moving” linking our word “precious” with “moon”. And a variant form listed in one of the Targums reads “There shall not be the light of dawn nor the light of moon or sun.”

***Job 31:26*** (ESV)  
**26** if I have looked at the sun when it shone, or the **moon moving in splendor**,

1. How might we reconcile that Zech 14:6 says there will be “no light”, but Zech 14:7 says that “at evening time there shall be light”?

Perhaps “no light” means no sunlight. Something will apparently happen to the sun and moon so that they are no longer indicators of daytime and nighttime. The statement that would be light at evening seems to indicate that another source of light (YHWH) would be present.

Verses 6 and 7 could be prophesying about a **sequence of events** all referred to as “**on that day**”. Initially there may be no light from the sun, after which there would be light from the presence of YHWH. I suggest that other Scriptures (see below) would support this interpretation.

1. Can you find other Scripture which indicate that “on that day” there will be changes to the sun, moon, light, day and night, etc.? What do you learn from these Scriptures?

***Matthew 24:29–31*** (ESV)  
**29** “Immediately after the tribulation of those days **the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven**, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. **30** 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. **31** 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.

Note that all the tribes of the earth will mourn, as we discussed in Zech 12:10:

***Zechariah 12:10*** (ESV)  
**10** “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.

***Luke 21:25–27*** (ESV)  
**25** “And **there will be signs in sun and moon and stars,** and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity because of the roaring of the sea and the waves, **26** people fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. For the powers of the heavens will be shaken. **27** And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

***Mark 13:24–26*** (ESV)  
**24** “But in those days, after that tribulation, **the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, 25 and the stars will be falling from heaven,** and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. **26** And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory.

***Amos 5:18–20*** (ESV)  
**18** Woe to you who desire the day of YHWH! Why would you have the day of YHWH? It is **darkness, and not light**, **19** as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned his hand against the wall, and a serpent bit him. **20** Is not the day of YHWH **darkness, and not light**, and gloom with no brightness in it?

***Amos 8:9–10*** (ESV)  
**9** “And on that day,” declares the Adonai YHWH, “**I will make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight.** **10** I will turn your feasts into mourning and all your songs into lamentation; I will bring sackcloth on every waist and baldness on every head; **I will make it like the mourning for an only son** and the end of it like a bitter day.

***Isaiah 13:10*** (ESV)  
**10** For the stars of the heavens and their constellations will not give their light; **the sun will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light**.

***Isaiah 24:3*** (ESV)  
**3** The earth shall be **utterly empty and utterly plundered;** for YHWH has spoken this word.

***Isaiah 60:19–20*** (ESV)  
**19** **The sun shall be no more your light by day,** nor for brightness shall the moon give you light; **but YHWH will be your everlasting light**, and your God will be your glory. **20** Your sun shall no more go down, nor your moon withdraw itself; for YHWH will be your everlasting light, and **your days of mourning shall be ended.**

Note that after the days of mourning as seen in Matt 29:30 and Zech 12:10 will end; then YHWH is our everlasting light.

***Ezekiel 32:7–8*** (ESV)  
**7** When I blot you out, I will cover the heavens and make their stars dark; **I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give its light. 8 All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark** over you, and put darkness on your land, declares Adonai YHWH.

***Joel 2:10*** (ESV)  
**10** The earth quakes before them; the heavens tremble. **The sun and the moon are darkened,** and the stars withdraw their shining.

***Joel 2:30–31*** (ESV) (Also quoted by Peter in **Acts 2:20, re the Holy Spirit at Shavuot**)  
**30** “And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. **31** The **sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood,** ***before*** the great and awesome day of YHWH comes.

Note that here it seems the unique darkness occurs **just prior** to the day of Yeshua’s return.

***Joel 3:14–15*** (ESV)  
**14** Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision! For the day of YHWH is near in the valley of decision. **15** **The sun and the moon are darkened,** and the stars withdraw their shining.

***Revelation 6:12*** (ESV)  
**12** When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake, and **the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood**,

***Revelation 8:12*** (ESV)  
**12** The fourth angel blew his trumpet, and a third of the sun was struck, and a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of their light might be darkened, and a third of the day might be kept from shining, and likewise a third of the night.

***Revelation 21:22–25*** (ESV)  
**22** And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. **23** **And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light**, **and its lamp is the Lamb**. **24** By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, **25** and its gates will never be shut by day—and **there will be no night** there.

***Revelation 22:3–5*** (ESV)  
**3** No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. **4** They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. **5** **And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light**, and they will reign forever and ever.

It seems that just prior to Yeshua’s return, there will be a great darkness. Then Yeshua will return and there will be mourning (due to the acknowledgement of sin and/or because of the bloodshed from the battles taking place). Following His return, His people will live by His light, reigning with Him forever. The timeframe of “on that day” may be quite protracted, since Rev 22 speaks of the new heaven and the new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth have passed away (Rev 21:1)

1. Look at Jer 4:23-28. What does this add to our understanding of Zech 14:6-7?

***Jeremiah 4:23–28*** (ESV)  
**23** I looked on the earth, and behold, it was **without form and void**; and to the heavens, and they had no light. **24** I looked on the mountains, and behold, they were quaking, and all the hills moved to and fro. **25** I looked, and behold, there was no man, and all the birds of the air had fled. **26** I looked, and behold, the fruitful land was a desert, and all its cities were laid in ruins before YHWH, before his fierce anger. **27** For thus says YHWH, “The whole land shall be a desolation; **yet I will not make a full end**. **28** “**For this the earth shall mourn,** and the **heavens above be dark**; for I have spoken; I have purposed; I have not relented, nor will I turn back.”

**tohu wa-boho** “without form and void” as in Gen 1:1. At creation, the earth was without form and void, and darkness covered the earth. Then YHWH created light. Now in the “day of YHWH”, it happens in reverse. He takes away the light, and darkness covers the earth. And destruction dominates to the point that it again appears “without form and void”. However, God does “not make a full end”. The creation process is not entirely reversed. He stops short of complete annihilation, that He might yet save His people because of a promise made to Abraham.

**for this the earth shall mourn** – here we read a direct answer to why there will be mourning on the day of YHWH. It is because of the great destruction and desolation that prevails over the earth at this time

1. In Zech 14:8, on that day living water will flow from Jerusalem. What is “living water”, and where will it flow?

**mayim chayyim** “living water” is water that flows. Traditionally this water whose path has not been broken by man containing it. Living water can be channeled and redirected but never isolated from the source.

It will flow to the eastern sea (Mediterranean) and the western sea (Dead Sea).

1. What is this living water a picture of? See Jer 2:13. Jer 17:13, John 7:37-39, John 4:7-15.

***Jeremiah 2:13*** (ESV)  
**13** for my people have committed two evils: **they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters**, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

***Jeremiah 17:13*** (ESV)  
**13** YHWH, the hope [lit. **mikveh**] **of Israel**, all who forsake you shall be put to shame; those who turn away from you shall be written in the earth, for they have forsaken **YHWH**, **the fountain of living water**.

***John 7:37–39*** (ESV)  
**37** On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him **come to me and drink**. **38** Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow **rivers of living water**.’ ” **39** Now this he said **about the Spirit**, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

***John 4:7–15*** (ESV)  
**7** A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” **8** (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) **9** The Samaritan woman said to him, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) **10** Jesus answered her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you **living water**.” **11** The woman said to him, “Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? **12** Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.” **13** Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, **14** but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. **The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.**” **15** The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.”

Living water represents eternal life. Life that is not separated from the Source of Life, which is YHWH (be it the Father, the Son, or His Holy Spirit).

1. What is significant about the statement that the flow of living water “shall continue in summer as in winter”?

In the summer (harvest season) it is hot an dry. This would be a time when water does not normally flow as it does in the winter season when it normally rains. This living water of YHWH provides life even in the harshest of circumstances.

1. How does Joel 3:18 relate to Zech 14:8? Recall also Zech 13:1.

***Zechariah 13:1*** (ESV)  
**1** “On that day there shall be a **fountain opened** for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.

***Joel 3:18*** (ESV)  
**18** “And in that day the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the streambeds of Judah shall flow with water; and a **fountain shall come forth from the house of YHWH** and water the Valley of Shittim.

Shittim is noted as the place God’s people got involved with Moabite women which led them into idolatry. It was located in Jordan valley just north of the Dead Sea. From here Joshua sent spies to Jericho (Rahab’s house) to check out the city prior to their crossing the Jordan. So Shittim was in the Arabah by the Dead Sea, and represented the place where Israel diverged into idolatry. This place would be washed with the living water of YHWH.

1. How does Ezek 47:1-12 related to Zech 14:8?

***Ezekiel 47:1–12*** (ESV)  
**1** Then he brought me back to the door of the temple, and behold, water was issuing from below the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was flowing down from below the south end of the threshold of the temple, south of the altar. **2** Then he brought me out by way of the north gate and led me around on the outside to the outer gate that faces toward the east; and behold, the water was trickling out on the south side. **3** Going on eastward with a measuring line in his hand, the man measured a thousand cubits, and then led me through the water, and it was ankle-deep. **4** Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was knee-deep. Again he measured a thousand, and led me through the water, and it was waist-deep. **5** Again he measured a thousand, and it was a river that I could not pass through, for the water had risen. It was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be passed through. **6** And he said to me, “Son of man, have you seen this?” Then he led me back to the bank of the river. **7** As I went back, I saw on the bank of the river very many trees on the one side and on the other. **8** And he said to me, “This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, and enters the sea; when the water flows into the sea, the water will become fresh. **9** And wherever the river goes, every living creature that swarms will live, and there will be very many fish. For this water goes there, that the waters of the sea may become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes. **10** Fishermen will stand beside the sea. From Engedi to Eneglaim it will be a place for the spreading of nets. Its fish will be of very many kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea. **11** But its swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they are to be left for salt. **12** And on the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither, nor their fruit fail, but they will bear fresh fruit every month, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their **leaves for healing.**”

Ezekiel shows the same picture of living water flowing from Jerusalem. He indicates it comes from the temple itself, and gives life to even those places most noted for death, like the Dead Sea. Even the Dead Sea will support life. Death can no longer exist when touched with the Living Water.

1. How does Rev 22:1-5 compare to Ezek 47:1-12 and Zech 14:8?

***Revelation 22:1–5*** (ESV)  
**1** Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb **2** through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The **leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.** **3** No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. **4** They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. **5** And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

John sees a very similar vision to that of Ezekiel, Joel, and Zechariah. However in Ezekiel the water flowed from the temple (the Millennial Reign). In Rev 22 there is no temple (Rev 21:22) since it is in the new age.

1. In considering Zech 14:9 read Ps 47:5-9. What all do you notice?

***Psalm 47:5–9*** (ESV)  
**5** God has gone up with a shout, YHWH with the sound of a trumpet. **6** Sing praises to God, sing praises! Sing praises to our King, sing praises! **7** For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm! **8** God reigns over the nations; God sits on his holy throne. **9** The princes of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham. For the shields of the earth belong to God; he is highly exalted!

* YHWH will reign as king over all the nations.
* It begins at the sound of a shofar / trumpet.
* The princes of all the nations will gather as the people of the God of Abraham (as one clan). Recall also Zech 9:7. The pagan nations are to be a remnant for God, incorporated into his people as a clan of Judah.

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

1. What does it mean in Zech 14:9 that “YHWH will be one and his name one”? Is He not “one” now? Note that the Hebrew word is “**echad**”, the same word used at the beginning of the shema (Dt 6:4).

***Deuteronomy 6:4*** (ESV)  
**4** “Hear, O Israel: YHWH our God, YHWH is one.

**Echad** means one, but it can also mean “one of kind”, “one of class” or “**the only/unique one**”:

**only**, i.e., one of a unique class or kind, and so distinctive (Jos 22:20; 1Ki 4:19; SS 6:9; Zec 14:9); (Dictionary of Biblical Languages)

***Joshua 22:20*** (ESV)  
**20** Did not Achan the son of Zerah break faith in the matter of the devoted things, and wrath fell upon all the congregation of Israel? And he did not perish **alone** for his iniquity.’ ”

Zech 14:9 means that now ALL will recognize that YHWH is indeed the ONLY God, and that His name and His name ALONE will be recognized as the God of ALL, as YHWH Tsava’ot.

1. What can you learn about the places mentioned in Zech 14:10? What is the point of mentioning these places? Note also Jer 31:38-40.

Jeremiah has a similar prophesy of the rebuilding of Jerusalem:

***Jeremiah 31:38–40*** (ESV)  
**38** “Behold, the days are coming, declares YHWH, when the city shall be rebuilt forYHWH from **the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate**. **39** And the measuring line shall go out farther, straight to the hill Gareb, and shall then turn to Goah. **40** The whole valley of the dead bodies and the ashes, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be sacred to YHWH. It shall not be plucked up or overthrown anymore forever.”

*Geba* was six miles north-north-east of Jerusalem and marked the northern boundary of Judah (1 Kgs 15:22; 2 Kgs 23:8). *Rimmon* or En-Rimmon (Neh. 11:29; cf. Josh. 15:32, where the names Ain and Rimmon should probably be combined into En-Rimmon), ‘spring of the pomegranate tree’, is identified with Khirbet Umm et-Ramâmîm, about thirty-five miles south-west of Jerusalem, where the hill country of Judah slopes away into the *Negeb* or south. (Baldwin, TNTC).

*The Gate of Benjamin*, leading to Benjamin’s territory, is likely to have been in or near the north-east corner of the wall (Jer. 37:12, 13). *The place of the former gate* is unknown, but as the *Corner Gate* marked the western limit, the former gate was possibly a site in the north wall. *The Tower of Hananel* (Neh. 3:1; 12:39) was the most northerly point of the wall, and *the king’s winepresses* were to the south, near the King’s Pool (Neh. 2:14) and the king’s garden (Neh. 3:15). Thus the naming of landmarks on the east, west, north and south walls emphasizes that the whole city is included. (Baldwin, TNTC).

It seems like the point is that all of Judah, from the north to the south, will be leveled. Except Jerusalem which will remain. The whole city, specified by listing places in all 4 corners, will remain.

1. What does it mean that all the surrounding land will be **“turned into a plain”**, but Jerusalem will **“remain aloft”**? Note that the Hebrew word translated “plain” is actually **Arabah.**

It seems like the land and people will suffer great destruction – made low and desolate like the valley of the Arabah in the region of the Dead Sea. Except for Jerusalem, the land will be totally leveled. However God will spare Jerusalem of that level of destruction. It will remain aloft (not leveled).

1. Zech 14:11 says there shall never again be a “**decree of utter destruction**”. This phrase translates the single Hebrew word **cherem**, which is difficult to translate into English. Look up other uses of **cherem** in Scripture to try and learn from the context what this word means. Start with Num 21:2-3, Deut 7:2-6, Deut 20:17-18, Micah 4:13, Ezra 10:8, Num 18:13-14, 2 Kings 19:11, 2 Chron 20:23, Mal 4:5-6, Lev 27:28-29. Based on these usages, how would you define **cherem**? How does **cherem** differ from **qadosh** “set apart, holy”? Based on the all the above, what is God saying in Zechariah 14:11?

The basic meaning is the exclusion of an object from the use or abuse of man and its irrevocable surrender to God. The word is related to an Arabic root meaning “**to prohibit, especially to ordinary use.**” The word “harem,” meaning the special quarters for Muslim wives, comes from it. It is related also to an Ethiopic root, meaning “to forbid, prohibit, lay under a curse.” Surrendering something to God meant devoting it to the service of God or putting it under a ban for utter destruction. (TWOT)

***Numbers 21:2–3*** (ESV) **cherem** implies destroy but with the idea of making it an offering to God  
**2** And Israel vowed a vow to YHWH and said, “If you will indeed give this people into my hand, then I will **devote their cities to destruction**.” **3** And YHWH heeded the voice of Israel and gave over the Canaanites, and they **devoted them and their cities to destruction**. So the name of the place was called **Hormah**.

***Deuteronomy 7:2–6*** (ESV) **cherem** again meaning to destroy as an offering to YHWH.  
**2** and when YHWH your God gives them over to you, and you defeat them, then you must **devote them to complete destruction.** You shall make no covenant with them and show no mercy to them. **3** You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons, **4** for they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of YHWH would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly. **5** But thus shall you deal with them: you shall break down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and chop down their Asherim and burn their carved images with fire. **6** “For you are a people holy to YHWH your God. YHWH your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.

***Deuteronomy 20:17–18*** (ESV) Israel was the **cherem** the cities so they wouldn’t follow them in sin  
**17** but you shall **devote them to complete destruction**, the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as YHWH your God has commanded, **18** **that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices** that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against YHWH your God.

***Micah 4:13*** (ESV) Israel will take as spoil all the produce of the nations and **cherem** it God (seems to imply offering it to God, but **maybe not destroying it**).  
**13** Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion, for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hoofs bronze; you shall beat in pieces many peoples; and shall **devote** their gain to YHWH, their wealth to the Lord of the whole earth.

***Ezra 10:8*** (ESV) The **cherem** was confiscated, but **probably not destroyed**.  
**8** and that if anyone did not come within three days, by order of the officials and the elders all his property should be **forfeited**, and he himself banned from the congregation of the exiles.

***Numbers 18:13–14*** (ESV) Moses was given the **cherem** for his food, so **clearly not destroyed**.  
**13** The first ripe fruits of all that is in their land, which they bring to YHWH, shall be yours. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it. **14** Every **devoted thing** in Israel shall be yours.

Conclusion from the context of **cherem** in these verses = destroy or at least prohibit from normal use, because the item is devoted to God (prohibited from normal use by offered to God, sacrificed to God, destroyed as an offering to God).

A few times the root is used in respect to foreign nations “utterly destroying” a city or country:

***2 Kings 19:11*** (ESV)  
**11** Behold, you have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands, **devoting them to destruction**. And shall you be delivered?

***2 Chronicles 20:23*** (ESV)  
**23** For the men of Ammon and Moab rose against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, **devoting them to destruction,** and when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, they all helped to destroy one another.

Light on this may come **from the Mesha inscription**. On line 17 King Mesha (cf. II Kgs 3:4) uses the word as he explains that he slaughtered all the inhabitants of Nebo because **he made the city a “devoted” city to his god Chemosh**. (TWOT)

***Malachi 4:5–6*** (ESV) God threatens to strike to the Israel with **cherem**  
**5** “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of YHWH comes. **6** And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a **decree of utter destruction**.”

In other words, God will **cherem** the land of Israel for His purpose. He will prohibit the land being used in a common way, because it was supposed to be set aside for His purpose (**qadosh**). Since they were not living that way, it would be destroyed as an “offering”, given to God (or more accurately **taken** by God). So here again we have the element of destruction for a godly purpose. We know from other passages that His purpose is to discipline his people, that some may again seek Him with all their heart - that they can truly be His people, and He their God.

***Leviticus 27:28–29*** (ESV) in this case, that which is **cherem** is also **qadosh**  
**28** “But no **devoted thing** that a man **devotes** to YHWH, of anything that he has, whether man or beast, or of his inherited field, shall be sold or redeemed; every **devoted thing** is *most holy* to YHWH. **29** No **one devoted**, who is to be **devoted for destruction** from mankind, shall be ransomed; he shall surely be put to death.

Because the root qādaš “to be holy,” also carries the thought of setting apart from ordinary use in surrender to God (especially in the Piel), we must distinguish objects set apart because “devoted,” from those set apart because “holy.” (TWOT)

**qadosh** – ***to set apart for a special use*.** This is usually for a holy purpose; for use by God. ***The emphasis of* qadosh *is on the usage***for a special purpose designated by God.

**cherem** – ***to be set apart not to be used.*** In other words, ***to prohibit from common use.*** This could mean totally destroy or it could mean just limit usage in some way. The item is under the control of God and no longer available for ordinary use by man. ***The emphasis of* cherem *is on prohibition.*** The item may not be used for common purposes. It usually (but not always) implies the item s to be totally destroyed to prevent it’s ordinary use.

So in Zech 14:11, God is saying Jerusalem will never again be “**cherem**”. Perhaps it is similar to the usage of 2 Kings 19:11 where a foreign nation will invade and **cherem** the city as an offering to their god. This happened to Jerusalem in the past, but God is saying in the future he will never again let it happen again. And at the same time it seems to be along the same usage as that of Mal 4:5-6, where God can **cherem** the land of Israel for His purpose. In the past Jerusalem was **cherem** so that he could discipline his people, that some would again seek Him with all their heart. **The result is that they will truly be His people, and He their God.** Having accomplished that, God promises that never again will Jerusalem be **cherem**.

1. Zech 14:11 says that Jerusalem will dwell in security. The word “**dwell**” is a form the same Hebrew word translated “**inhabited**” earlier in this verse. What is the contrast being communicated? Recall also that security was a major theme in Zechariah 8. Look also at Zech 2:5, Jer 31:38-40, and Ezek 34:27-31. How was this message to encourage the people?

***Zechariah 2:5*** (ESV)  
**5** And I will be to her a wall of fire all around, declares YHWH, and I will be the glory in her midst.’ ”

***Zechariah 8:3–13*** (ESV)  
**3** Thus says YHWH: I have returned to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of YHWH Tsava’ot, the holy mountain. **4** Thus says YHWH Tsava’ot: **Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of great age. 5 And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.** **6** Thus says YHWH Tsava’ot: If it is marvelous in the sight of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvelous in my sight, declares YHWH Tsava’ot? **7** Thus says YHWH Tsava’ot: Behold, I will save my people from the east country and from the west country, **8** and I will bring them to dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. **And they shall be my people, and I will be their God,** in faithfulness and in righteousness.” **9** Thus says YHWH Tsava’ot: “**Let your hands be strong**, you who in these days have been hearing these words from the mouth of the prophets who were present on the day that the foundation of the house of YHWH Tsava’ot was laid, **that the temple might be built.** **10** For before those days there was no wage for man or any wage for beast, **neither was there any safety** from the foe for him who went out or came in, for I set every man against his neighbor. **11** But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as in the former days, declares YHWH Tsava’ot. **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. **13** And as you have been a byword of cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing. **Fear not, but let your hands be strong.**”

The land will be inhabited again, but not like before when there was uncertainty and the threat of destruction. In the future the land will be inhabited with security. People will live to a ripe old age, and children will play safely in the streets. (See Zech 8.) How will that be possible? God will himself be a wall of fire around the city. He will be their protection. (Zech 2:5). This verse in Zech 14 refers his listeners back to his prior message in Zech 8 where he spoke in much more detail about dwelling in security in the future.

***Jeremiah 31:38–40*** (ESV)  
**38** “Behold, the days are coming, declares YHWH, when the city shall be rebuilt for YHWH from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate. **39** And the measuring line shall go out farther, straight to the hill Gareb, and shall then turn to Goah. **40** The whole valley of the dead bodies and the ashes, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be sacred to YHWH. **It shall not be plucked up or overthrown anymore forever**.”

***Ezekiel 34:27–31*** (ESV)  
**27** And the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase, and they shall be secure in their land. And they shall know that I am YHWH, when I break the bars of their yoke, and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them. **28** **They shall no more be a prey to the nations**, nor shall the beasts of the land devour them. **They shall dwell securely, and none shall make them afraid.** **29** And I will provide for them renowned plantations so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land, and no longer suffer the reproach of the nations. **30** **And they shall know that I am YHWH their God with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are my people,** declares Adonai YHWH. **31** And you are my sheep, human sheep of my pasture, and I am your God, declares Adonai YHWH.”

They were living as slaves to Persia, returning to a land that was destroyed by war, and probably a land that was not noted for its peace and safety at this time. They were trying to rebuild the temple which probably seemed impossible and perhaps not even worth doing. This vision of the future, and the reminder that God would again restore security for them was to encourage them to “let their hands be strong” and keep doing the work God had called them to do.

Furthermore, in saying “**you will be my people and I will be your God**” (Zech 8:8 and Ezek 34:30-31) he reminds them of his initial covenant with Abraham (and later with Moses). He will be faithful to that promise, and he will restore them. They will have the relationship He originally intended, “in faithfulness and righteousness.” This knowledge was to encourage them to be strong and stay focused on the task at hand. Finish the temple… the job they were tasked to do.

1. How would you summarize this section (Zech 14:6-11)?

That day of YHWH will be like no other time in all of history. The Light of World will be visible. The Living Water will bring life to even those places filled with death. Yeshua will reign as king over all. Israel will be inhabited again, and will live in security, never again to be destroyed.

1. What does this passage say to you, personally?