Zechariah 9:9-13

**Digging Deeper in the Word**

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***Zechariah 9:9–13***Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. Return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double. For I have bent Judah as my bow; I have made Ephraim its arrow. I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and wield you like a warrior’s sword.

1. Briefly summarize the message of the first part of this chapter, Zech 9:1-8.
2. In Zech 9:9, the Hebrew is ambiguous. “daughter of Zion” and “daughter of Jerusalem” could also be translated as “daughter Zion” and daughter Jerusalem”. Why is the term “daughter” used? Who do these phrases refer to? Who is supposed to rejoice and shout?
3. The prophet Zephaniah prophesied to Judah during the reign of King Josiah, about 100 years earlier, just before the exile to Babylon. Look at Zeph 3:14-17. What similarities do you notice in that message to the one from our passage in Zechariah?
4. What are the qualities of this coming King, based on Zech 9:9? Which of these qualities would be expected of a king, and which would not? Why?
5. Would you expect a king bringing salvation to come on a horse or a donkey? Why?
6. The word translated as “humble” is the Hebrew עָנִי **‘ani**. What does this word really mean? What does this tell you about the “coming King”?
7. What do we know from other Scriptures about the coming king? For example, see 2 Sam 7:10-13, Ps 89:1-4, Is 9:6-7, Ezek 37:24-25, and Jer 23:5-6.
8. Look at Matt 21:1-11 and John 12:12-19. Why do you think Yeshua asked for a donkey to ride into Jerusalem?
9. If we only had the Hebrew scriptures to read, this passage about the coming King would be confusing, since it seems to send mixed signals about the nature of the King. But after reading Matt 21:1-11 and John 12:12-19, what do you conclude?
10. Compare Zech 9:10 to the prophesies of Hosea 1:7, Micah 5:10 and Hag 2:22. What is the message of Zech 9:10?
11. Where will the Coming King rule? There seem to be two layers of meaning (one more narrowly defining, and the other much more extensive in scope) in the phrases “from sea to sea” and “the river to the ends of the earth.” What river is “the River” (see Dt 11:24 and Josh 1:4, for example)? Compare to Ex 23:31. What would the more narrowly defined territory refer to? Then compare to Psalm 72:8-11. What would the extensive scope refer to?
12. What is the clue in Zech 9:10 that we need to interpret these boundaries in the most broad sense?
13. What is meant by the phrase “blood of my covenant” in Zech 9:11? Consider Gen 15:5-10, 18 as well as Exod 24:7-8 and Matt 26:27-29.
14. YHWH says he will set the prisoners free from the waterless pit. See Dt. 27:26, Is 42:7 and Is 61:1. Who are the prisoners he is referring to? And why are they prisoners?
15. Look at Gal 3:10-13 where Paul talks about the “curse of the Torah”. This passage is often misunderstood in traditional Christianity. In light of our study relating to Zech 9:11, Dt 27:26, Is 42:7 and Is 61:1, how are we to understand Paul? What is the “curse of Torah”? Is this implying that we should no longer keep the commands of God’s Torah?
16. The “waterless pit” is literally “the cistern without water”. Why is this used as a picture of our prison? Look at Ps 63:1, Is 44:3, Jer 2:13, Jer 17:13, John 4:10, John 7:37-39, Rev 7:17.
17. Consider the phrase “Return to your stronghold” in Zech 9:12. What is a stronghold? Why are the “prisoners” told to leave their dry cistern and return to their stronghold? What does the stronghold represent? Look at Ps 18:2, Ps 144:2, Nahum 1:7, Jer 16:19. Also compare to Zech 1:3.
18. What does the phrase “prisoners of hope” mean? Remember this is poetic language.
19. The word translated “restore” is a form of the verb שׁוּב **shuv** “turn, return”. Note that in the prior phrase “return to your stronghold” the Hebrew for the word “return” is also a form of the verb שׁוּב **shuv** “turn, return”. This is the same word often translated as “repent”, but the main meaning is “turn, return”. What is the message of this poetic verse of Zech 10:12? Also consider Job 42:10 and Is 61:7, as well as Zech 1:3 which we just looked at in a prior question.
20. What does it mean in Zech 9:13a when he says, “I have made Judah as my bow; I have made Ephraim its arrow?” Why does he include both Judah and Ephraim in this way?
21. YHWH is going to “stir up the sons of Zion” against Greece. When was Zechariah written? When was Greece a kingdom? When was this prophecy fulfilled (at least in part)?
22. As often with prophesy, there can be a partial fulfillment with limited scope to be followed at a later date with complete fulfillment of a much broader scope. Compare Zech 9:13 to Is 66:18-19 where the same word for Greece (Javan) is used in a general sense to refer to coastlands far away. What are the hints in these passages that the complete fulfillment has yet to take place? When will the complete fulfillment of these prophesies to take place?
23. What is the main point of the passage?
24. What do you personally take away from your study of this passage?