Zechariah 10:1-5

**Digging Deeper in the Word**

Wyn Laidig

July 2016

***Zechariah 9:17b***Grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the young women.

***Zechariah 10:1–5***  
**1** Ask rain from YHWH in the season of the spring rain, from YHWH who makes the storm clouds, and he will give them showers of rain, to everyone the vegetation in the field. **2** For the household gods utter nonsense, and the diviners see lies; they tell false dreams and give empty consolation. Therefore the people wander like sheep; they are afflicted for lack of a shepherd. **3** “My anger is hot against the shepherds, and I will punish the leaders; for YHWH **Tsava’ot** cares for his flock, the house of Judah, and will make them like his majestic steed in battle. **4** From him shall come the cornerstone, from him the tent peg, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler—all of them together. **5** They shall be like mighty men in battle, trampling the foe in the mud of the streets; they shall fight because YHWH is with them, and they shall put to shame the riders on horses.

1. Chapter 10 continues with the same communication begun in Chapter 9. Summarize the message of Chapter 9.

While this likely has some historical relevance as well, it is largely 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. Some people think Zech 9:17, especially the last half, more likely serves to begin the section of Chapter 10, rather than to close the section of chapter 9. What do you think, and why?

I think probably it begins chapter 10, since the grain and new wine refer to harvest which is always associated with rains referred to in Zech 10:1. See for example Dt 11:14.

***Deuteronomy 11:14***  
He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the later rain, that you may gather in your grain and your wine and your oil.

1. From whom are God’s people to ask rain? Why? What is the contrast in Zech 10:2? From where else might people seek rain?

Ask from YHWH. Implied is that they are not to ask from household gods and diviners who cannot provide rain. Only YHWH can provide the rain.

1. The word “spring rain” in Zech 10:1 is Hebrew מַלְקוֹשׁ **malkos** “later rain, or latter rain”, referring to the rains just prior to the harvest (springtime) as opposed to those just after planting (autumn). Look up some other references to the “latter rain”, such as Hosea 6:1-3, Jer 3:2-6, and Joel 2:23-28. What does the latter rain seem to be symbolic of?

***Hosea 6:1–3***  
**1** “Come, let us return to YHWH; for he has torn us, that he may heal us; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up. **2** After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him. **3** Let us know; let us press on to know YHWH; his going out is sure as the dawn; he will come to us as the showers, **as the spring rains that water the earth**.”

***Jeremiah 3:2–6***  
**2** Lift up your eyes to the bare heights, and see! Where have you not been ravished? By the waysides you have sat awaiting lovers like an Arab in the wilderness. You have polluted the land with your vile whoredom. **3** Therefore the showers have been withheld, and the **spring rain has not come**; yet you have the forehead of a whore; you refuse to be ashamed. **4** Have you not just now called to me, ‘My father, you are the friend of my youth— **5** will he be angry forever, will he be indignant to the end?’ Behold, you have spoken, but you have done all the evil that you could.” **6** YHWH said to me in the days of King Josiah: “Have you seen what she did, that faithless one, Israel, how she went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and there played the whore?

***Joel 2:23–28***  
**23** “Be glad, O children of Zion, and rejoice in YHWH your God, for he has given the early rain for your vindication; he has poured down for you abundant rain, **the early and the latter rain**, as before. **24** “The threshing floors shall be full of grain; the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. **25** I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent among you. **26** “You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of YHWH your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame. **27** You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am YHWH your God and there is none else. And my people shall never again be put to shame. **28** “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will **pour out my Spirit on all flesh**; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.

The rains mean agricultural blessing, but also seem to be symbolic of the general broader blessings of YHWH. His abundant blessings will be most obvious in the latter days when restores Israel and dwells with her in her midst. In Joel the timing of the latter rains is a future event to make up for the devastating losses of the past. This future blessing seems to come in connection with the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, so these two seem to be linked together, causing some to symbolically associate the latter rains with the outpouring of the Spirit.

1. Recall that the Holy Spirit is compared with water in John 7:37-39. What is that comparison? Why do you think that some people link this to the early rains (autumn rains) after the planting. What is the possible connection?

***John 7:37–39***  
**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.

This refers to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Shavuot. If the “latter rains” are connected to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the latter days when Messiah returns prior to his millennial kingdom, then some suggest that giving of the Spirit at Shavuot in Acts 2 is symbolized by the “early rains”. The new covenant was initiated at planting time (Passover and the crucifixion) the first rain of the Spirit at Pentecost immediately followed. Now the seeds are growing and we are approaching harvest time. Just prior to the final harvest we will received the second rains as His Spirit and blessing are poured out upon His people when He returns.

1. In Zech 10:2b, why do the people wander like sheep without a shepherd?

They are seeking help from household gods and diviners rather than YHWH. Furthermore, they have no leaders directing them to YHWH and leading them to the true source of protection and provision.

1. What is the Father’s response to the shepherds? Why? Who are the shepherds? Who are the sheep?

He is angry at them for the not providing care and protection to the sheep. The sheep are the people of Israel. The shepherds are their leaders – probably referring to both their kings and their priests.

1. Compare the sheep and shepherd passage of Zech 10:2b-3a to Ezekiel 34:1-23. What more do you learn about sheep and shepherd? What is the problem described, and what is God’s solution?

***Ezekiel 34:10***Thus says the Lord YHWH, Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my sheep at their hand and put a stop to their feeding the sheep. No longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, that they may not be food for them.

The leaders of Israel have not taken care of the people. Rather than protect them, they have taken advantage of them. God says that he will remove them as shepherd and he himself will be the shepherd of his people. He will rescue them. He will set up “David” to the be their shepherd, referring go the Messiah, son of David.

1. Zech 10:3b what does YHWH say of Judah? Why do you think he speaks only of Judah and not Israel?

Who is to come from Judah? The King of Kings! The Messiah. This is the one who be the Good Shepherd, the Cornerstone, the Tent Peg.

1. What is YHWH talking about when he refers to making Judah like his majestic steed in battle?

Think of the commander of the army marching in the lead on his prize stallion. This represents the best of the army, the commander leading the troops. It represents the Messiah, the true Leader who lead his host (tsava’ot) into battle in that final day of judgment.

1. What is a cornerstone, Hebrew פִּנָּה **pinnah**? And what does it mean to say “from him shall come the cornerstone”. Who is the “him”? Also look at Ps 118:22 and Isaiah 28:16.

***Isaiah 28:16***Therefore thus says Adonai YHWH, “Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: ‘Whoever believes will not be in haste.’”

***Psalm 118:22***The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

Cornerstones are large anchoring stones used at the corners of a foundation wall. They are give strength and stability to the entire structure, keeping the rest of the structure above from falling down.

This term is clearly used to refer to the Messiah in both Ps 118:22 and Isa 28:16, and also here in Zech 10:4.

The “him” refers to Judah. From Judah shall come the Messiah (the Cornerstone).

1. The Hebrew for “tent peg” is יָתֵד **yated** “peg”. It can be a peg of any kind, including a tent peg. That does a tent peg do? What is this symbolic of. Look also at Isa 22:20-24.

***Isaiah 22:20–24***In that day I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, and I will clothe him with your robe, and will bind your sash on him, and will commit your authority to his hand. And he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David. He shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. **And I will fasten him like a peg in a secure place,** and he will become a throne of honor to his father’s house. And they will hang on him the whole honor of his father’s house, the offspring and issue, every small vessel, from the cups to all the flagons.

Eliakim was the palace administrator under King Hezekiah. In some ways he seems to be a type of Messiah. He is to the King as the Messiah is to the Father. He is like a “tent peg” fastened in a secure place.

A peg fastened in a wall becomes a strong point to hang or attach other objects. It is a source of strength, used for anchoring. The same of a tent peg. It is an anchoring point, that is needed to hold up the entire tent, without which the tent would collapse.

The peg, like the cornerstone, provides an anchor point for whatever is built upon it or attached to it. This is a picture of the Messiah, which serves as an anchor point or foundation for his people.

1. Consider the term “battle bow” and look back at Zech 9:13. What does the battle bow here represent? Is that consistent with Zech 9:13?

***Zechariah 9:13***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.

In Zech 9:13 Judah was being bent as the bow. Now in Zech 10:4 we understand that the battle bow will come FROM Judah. So these are consistent pictures with each other. How is Judah being bent as the bow? By one of the offspring of Judah emerging as the leader. This one would be the bow. We know from the other terms such as cornerstone and peg, that this refers to the Messiah.

1. The Hebrew in Zech 10:4b is literally translated “from him go every oppressor”. The ESV takes this to mean “all leaders will come from Judah”. But it could also mean “all oppressors will depart from Judah”. The Hebrew is נָגַשׂ **nagas** “oppress, exploit”. Do a bit of research and explain how you think this should be translated and why.

The word for oppressor (or leader?) is Hebrew נָגַשׂ **nagas** “oppress, exploit”. It is normally used in a negative context, as of the slavemasters in Egypt.

1. If it means all leaders come from Judah, it would seem to imply that all future leaders will come from within Judah, like the Messiah. In other words, Judah will no longer be ruled by outsiders. However that doesn’t seem to be the case. Rulers from Judah were certainly not in place all the time since Zechariah. And if we say that applies to when the Messiah returns, then it would seem the Messiah and the Messiah alone would be the ruler. So it wouldn’t be plural in that case. Plus there is the problem that the word for ruler is really tyrant or oppressor, not “ruler”.

2. It seems to make much more sense to understand this as “all oppressors will depart from Judah”. This would flow nicely from the context, speaking of the Messiah coming from Judah. As the result of the Messiah coming from Judah, all the oppressors would be forced to leave.

1. The Hebrew literally reads, “From him go every oppressor **together** they like mighty men in battle”. Some people think the word “**together**” goes with the previous phrase (like the ESV translates it), while other people think that it goes with the following phrase. What do you think and why? If it went with the following phrase, what does that phrase mean? Who are the “they”?

It doesn’t seem to matter all that much, but I favor putting “together” with the following phrase. It would then seem that the “they” refers to all the people of Judah. In that case it would mean that as a result of the Messiah coming, all the people of Judah together would march into battle to trample the enemy. The Messiah like a mighty steed leading them into battle, would force out all the oppressors.

1. Examine Micah 7:10 in light of Zech 10:5. How are these prophecies similar?

***Micah 7:10***Then my enemy will see, and **shame will cover her** who said to me, “Where is YHWH your God?” My eyes will look upon her; now she will be **trampled down like the mire of the streets.**

***Zechariah 10:5***They shall be like mighty men in battle, **trampling the foe in the mud of the streets**; they shall fight because YHWH is with them, and they shall **put to shame the riders** on horses.

Both passages use the same phrase “trampling the enemy like mud of the street”. Both passages also speak of the **enemy being shamed**.

1. How can you summarize this section?

The Messiah will return and save his people. He will again shower his blessings upon his people and their land. Blessings of a physical nature as well as a spiritual nature. He returns to gather his flock and save them from their oppressors. The Messiah will come from Judah, and He will lead his people into battle as mighty men, trampling their enemies like mud on the street.

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