

Zech 12-14 (Prelude 3 – NT Help from the Apostle Peter on the When and Who of Old Testament Kingdom Prophecy)

Read Zech. 12:1-13:11. Cps. 12-14 contain prophecy that looks forward to a “day” a “time” when they will find fulfillment. And all these prophecies speak of God bringing “salvation” to his people. And as we’ve seen, these prophecies go beyond the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple. It is true that Zerubbabel as governor and Joshua as high priest would accomplish both of these in their day. BUT, these prophecies find their ultimate fulfillment in another day, a day of salvation that will come to God’s people at a later time. With this in mind, I want to ask the question: “When” and “Upon Whom” do these prophecies fall? These are my two truths with some applications to follow. Now, turn with me to 1 Pet. 1:10-12. Here we have the Apostle Peter, the leader of the early church, a Jew, a man who would have been familiar with Zechariah and the prophets and one who would have had the Lord Jesus HIMSELF to interpret these prophecies.

“Concerning this salvation,” Stop for a moment. Which salvation? Look back at v. 8 **“Though you have not seen him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, 9 obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.”** This is the salvation brought given to them through the person and work of Jesus Christ (gospel). Let’s continue: **“Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.”**

What an amazing text! And I believe it gives us a framework through which we interpret and find the fulfillment of OT kingdom prophecies such as Zechariah 12-14. So let’s begin with my two truths: 1) When, and 2) Upon Whom do these prophecies find fulfillment.

1. When do these prophecies find fulfillment? My answer is that these prophecies find their fulfillment in the kingdom of the Messiah, the Son of God. In 12:1 Zechariah speaks the Words of God to ISRAEL, the people of God. And these words are certainly true about the future of God’s people, Israel. In the Book of Zechariah, he uses the phrase **“in that day”** 18 times. Seventeen times, this phrase speaks about the future of Israel, and as we will see, the future of Jerusalem. These words look BEYOND the exile, they look PAST the rebuilding of the city and the temple. In their context, they speak of a day to come. Now, I do not believe the prophet is speaking of “one” particular day, “one” 24-hour period. Why? There are a number of reasons. But, the main one is that he speaks of so many things happening “on that day,” things that go beyond a “24-hour” period. Let’s consider this for a moment. (Look back at cp. 12)

“On that day” 12:3, Jerusalem will be a **“heavy stone”** before the nations. **“On that day”** v. 6, **“Judah”** will **“devour the surrounding nations . . .”** **“On that day”** vv. 8-9, God will protect the

“inhabitants of Jerusalem,” the *“angel of the Lord”* will go before them, and then, God will *“seek to destroy all the nations”* that come against Jerusalem. *“On the day”* v. 11, there will be great *“mourning in Jerusalem.”* *“On that day,”* 13:1 there will be a **“fountain”** opened up that will cleanse the *“house of David”* and the *“inhabitants of Jerusalem”* from sin. *“On that day”* 13:2, God will remove their *“idols”* and their *“uncleanness.”* *“On that day”* v. 4, false prophecies and deception will not be successful. *“On that day”* 14:4 the *“Lord”* will come and conquer and divide the *“land”* as we read that He will plant his feet on the *“Mount of Olives.”* *“On that day”* v. 6, there will be no *“light, cold, or frost.”* *“On that day,”* v. 8, *“living waters will flow out of Jerusalem.”* *“On that day”* v. 9, the *“Lord will be king over all the earth . . . the Lord will be one and his name one.”* And, *“On that day”* v. 13, there will be *“great panic.”* Finally, *“On that day,”* everything in the city will be holy . . . EVERYTHING.

Brothers and sisters, these are OT kingdom prophecies that speak of a “day” a period of time associated with the Messiah and the salvation he brings. Look with me at 9:9: God says: **“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!”** Why does he say “rejoice” and “shout”? Keep reading: **“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 River to the ends of the earth.”** And then continue in v. 11: **“As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. 12 return to your stronghold, O prisoners of hope; today I declare that I will restore to you double. 13 For I have bend Judah as my bow; I have made Ephraim its arrow. I will stir up your sons, Ozion against your sons, O Greece, and wield you like a warrior’s sword.”** These word speak of the Messiah coming to his people. Now, look at v. 16, which is the first time we see these words from Zechariah: **“On that day the Lord their God will save them, as the flock of his people; for like the jewels of a crown they shall shine on his land. 17 For how great is his goodness, and how great his beauty! Grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the young women.”** I believe the words *“on that day”* here in cp. 9, gives the CONTEXT for cps. 12-14 where we see the same phrase 16 times. And when we move to the NT, we see the Apostle Paul affirm this truth as he quotes the prophet Isaiah: **“For he says, “In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.” “Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2).** So . . . WHEN. I believe these prophecies speak of the day of Son, particularly his kingdom, which began with his ascension (in power at Pentecost) and will continue until He hands the kingdom over to the Father.

2. Upon whom do these prophecies fall? I believe these OT kingdom prophecies are directed to God’s new covenant people. This merely follows the “when.” This is what Paul is saying, **“NOW, the days of salvation found in the Messiah and his kingdom is happening now . . . as salvation has come to you Corinthians.”** Before moving to the NT to show this, let me spend

just moment reminding us of Israel under the old covenant. In the old covenant, God protected his people Israel. He preserved them. Even when they broke his covenants, He kept them from being completely destroyed. Yes, he disciplined them; Yes, He judged them with many judgments, culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem, its' temple, and Babylonian exile. And, we know that Israel of the old covenant was a "mixed" community. There was always physical Israel. But, within this physical community, there was always a remnant, a people of faith. And God preserved them both. This preservation had to happen! Why? God MUST keep them, or He would break his promise to send the Messiah through the seed of a woman through the line of Abraham. We know God keeps his promises. Now, this is a general summary of old covenant Israel.

But, as we have seen through Zechariah (and all the other prophets), we find prophecies that speak of a new covenant, a new people, a FULFILLMENT of God's promises to bless his people through the Messiah (ie. God's "servant," the "branch," the true "priest," the "great" king from David's line, who is superior to Solomon, the true "prophet" of whom Moses says, "***Listen to him***" (Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22). This means that these OT kingdom prophecies find their fulfillment in the "new" covenant, in a "new" people (not that they are separated from God's OT people of faith). But, they will be included in a new covenant that fulfills the old. This is why Jesus says not to put "**new wine into old skins**" (Luke 5:37). And this new people will include all the nations of the earth, both Jew and Gentile. Over and over and over we see this truth. Though this does not happen until the Messiah and the great works of God in the Messiah. These are the days of the kingdom of the Son, not God's plan B for the church.

With this in mind, I do not believe these OT kingdom prophecies speak of a future "Israel" of "ethnic" "Jews" where God's kingdom is set up around a "physical" "Jerusalem" with a "physical" "temple," separate from the church. God does not have two plans: one for physical Israel and one for the church. In the new covenant, there is only one people. This means these OT kingdom prophecies (ie. Zech. 12-14) find their ongoing fulfillment in the church.

Look with me at Eph. 2:13 ff. as Paul speaks about God's salvation coming to both Jews and Gentiles. V. 13: "**But now in Christ Jesus you have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one . . .**" Then in v. 15b "**that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross . . .**" Then in v. 18: "**For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.**" Then in v. 22: "**In him you are also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.**" Today, by the Spirit that came at Pentecost, Christ is building his church, his "people," God's "building." Today, "in these days" we are "being built."

Listen to the words of Peter when he writes to both Jews and Gentiles dispersed throughout the world in 1 Pet. 1:10-12 (turn with me again). "Concerning this salvation" (which salvation?

Zech. 9:16 says, **“On that day the Lord their God will save them, as the flock of his people.”)**
“Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories.”
Stop for a second. The prophets were “inquiring” as to what “PERSON” or what “TIME” these things were to happen. Peter says to them, and to us, **“WE/YOU are the recipients” “at THIS time.”** **“It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.”**

Brothers and sisters, I know this is a lot to think about. And this sermon is quite different than the sermon I will preach later this afternoon. But, these kinds of sermons will help YOU read the OT, particularly OT kingdom prophecies, which I think as you see these kinds of prophecies, you will begin to make more and more sense of them. So, these kinds of sermons help our understanding of the overall Bible. And, as we get into the text of cps. 12-14 next month, we will find that the truths for God’s people are very much the same in principle, truths like: God will keep his promises. God will never abandon his people. God will save his people. God will comfort his people. God will make his name known throughout the entire earth as he saves his people, etc. etc. And, let me say that these prophecies are so full and so deep that the angels long to look into them. Let me finish this part with the reading part of Rom. 11. In vv. 33-36 Paul says, **“Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor? Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever!”**