

Post-Exile Prophets
FEAST OF WORSHIP
Thursday, September 25
Reading: Zechariah 14:16-21

Zechariah 13:9 *"This third I will put into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on My name and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is our God.'"*

After the horrific description of the judgment of the wicked, Zechariah's prophecy concludes with the glorious kingdom that Messiah will set up. The Old Testament is full of short glimpses into this Kingdom where Jesus will reign from Jerusalem (more on this tomorrow), but Zechariah focuses on only two aspects.

WORSHIP OF THE LORD (14:16-19) – The survivors are those from Israel who repent and those from the nations who did not rebel against God by attacking Jerusalem. Instead of these Gentile nations coming to destroy Jerusalem, they will come to worship the Lord. This is also described by the prophet Isaiah:

Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us His ways, so that we may walk in His paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:3; Micah 4:2)

Zechariah specifically mentions the Feast of Tabernacles. This feast was given by God through Moses to help the people remember how the Lord had led them through the wilderness to the Promised Land. It occurred five days after the Day of Atonement, so it also celebrated God's forgiveness of sin. Jews and Gentiles will "worship the King, the Lord Almighty" together. Those who refused to worship would "have no rain." Tabernacles was also a celebration of the fall harvest. If people refused to be thankful, they would have nothing to be thankful for! Egypt may be singled out here as this feast remembered God's provision for Israel in the wilderness after their deliverance from slavery in Egypt. Egypt may also think they don't need the rain because the Nile River makes their land fertile. But anyone who refuses to worship the Lord will not escape judgment. Plagues would follow (and Egypt knew all about plagues).

HOLINESS TO THE LORD (14:20-21) – The high priest wore a turban that had a plaque saying, "Holy to the Lord" (Exodus 39:30). But during the reign of Messiah on earth, even the horses will have bells that read "Holy to the Lord." All the common pots and bowls will be like the sacred bowls used in the temple to worship God. God's temple, though often defiled by greed and deception through the centuries, will no longer have any false or deceitful presence in it (Canaanite). And all people will come to worship "the splendor of His holiness" (Psalm 29:2; 96:9).

While we look forward to the future when Jesus sets all things right, these final verses should challenge us today. The central focus of our lives should be to worship the Lord. Some people think of life in terms of "sacred" and "secular" – that what they do outside of church doesn't affect what they do in the church community. But our entire life should be sacred. Everything we do should be honoring to Him. Finally, our lives should have "Holy to the Lord" written across them. When people see us are they seeing Jesus? How is your daily worship and holiness?