

Zechariah Chapter Fourteen

The final scene of Zechariah gloriously depicts the design to which history is moving (Revelation 11.15). The chapter must be interpreted literally. *Merrill: There is no reason to take this whole description in any but a literal way, unless one is prepared to deny a literal coming of Jehovah as well.* Some, like Martin Luther, approach this chapter figuratively. Ultimately, he made no sense of it and concluded: 'I surrender for I am not certain of what the prophet speaks.'

The City of the King [14.1-2]

v.1: Literally, 'the day is coming – the Lord's'. Man has had his day. This is a day *for* Jehovah; a day in which He will be vindicated and glorified. This chapter focuses on the immediate events surrounding the manifestation of Christ – referred to as the 'great and gloriously appearing day of the Lord' (JND, Acts 2.20). At this time Jerusalem will not only be surrounded by the world's armies (see notes on 12.2), but the Lord will suffer the city to be plundered. Such will be the self-assurance of the enemy, the spoil will be distributed within the very city itself. **v.2:** It will be a time of terrible suffering in Jerusalem – houses will be plundered, and women raped – with half the city's population taken captive and the 'remainder' left under enemy occupation. But all is under the sovereign and controlling hand of God. It is Jehovah Himself who has gathered together representatives of all nations for the final, great assize. Note. This gathering is also attributed to human and Satanic agency (Psalm 2.1-3; Revelation 16.13-16).

The Conquest of the King [14.3-5a, 12-15]

v.3: When all seems lost, then 'shall the Lord go forth' – a technical term describing a king going out to battle – as He did in times past (Exodus 14.13-14; Joshua 10.12-14). It is possible that Christ comes *first* to Bozrah (Petra) to deliver the remnant and tents of Judah (12.7). Read Micah 2.12; Isaiah 34.6; 63.1-3; Habakkuk 3.3. The fighting will finally end in the Valley of Jehoshaphat (immediately to the east of Jerusalem, Joel 3.12-13) before victoriously ascending the Mount of Olives. Alternatively, some believe Christ will descend directly to Olivet as suggested in Acts 1.11. However, this speaks of the *manner*, not necessarily the *place*, of His coming. **v.4:** In either case, the Lord Jesus will physically stand once again on the Mount of Olives. He was often found here in *prayer* (John 8.1) or to *teach* (Matthew 24.3; Mark 13.3), and it was here he agonised in anticipation of Calvary (Luke 22.39-44). The mountain is named in one other place in the OT when a rejected king David was crossing the brook Kidron followed by a weeping people (2 Samuel 15.30). Now king David's greater Son ascends the mount in triumph and glory (cp. Luke 19.37-38). The location of the mount is explicitly stated as 'before Jerusalem on the east'. This is not incidental. When the glory of the Lord *departed*, it stood upon the mountain on the east side of the temple, i.e. Olivet (Ezekiel 11.23). Ezekiel prophesied the same Shekinah glory would *return* from the east (Ezekiel 43.1-2) – no doubt in the personal return of Christ. Just as God divided the waters of the Red Sea to deliver His people, so the Lord Jesus will cleave the Mount of Olives. This will likely coincide with the greatest earthquake the world has ever known (Micah 1.3-4; Nahum 1.5; Revelation 16.18-20). The effect will be to 'break-open' the mount, part moving to the north and part to the south providing an east-west valley of escape from Jerusalem for the besieged remnant. **v.5a:** They shall flee to the 'valley of My mountains', i.e. of the Lord's making, even 'unto Azal' being the eastern end of the newly formed valley. Interestingly, Azal means 'to be joined to' or 'be at the side of'.



v.12: Chronologically, vv.12-15 follow v.3 and describe *four* instruments God will use to defeat Israel's enemies. *First*, a plague (Exodus 9.14) will 'smite' those who 'fought against Jerusalem' causing their flesh to melt away whilst still standing. Proud eyes with which they looked upon the vulnerability of Jerusalem will rot in their sockets and blasphemous tongues wherewith they cursed God will melt in their mouths. **v.13:** *Second*, the Lord will send a 'tumult' (confusion) amongst His enemies causing them to fight amongst themselves (cf. 1 Samuel 14.20; Judges 7.22). **v.14:** *Third*, the already liberated army of Judah will be divinely energised to fight (cf. 12.6, 8) resulting in the collection of great spoil (cf. 2 Chronicles 20.25). **v.15:** *Fourth*, the plague will immobilise the army by afflicting the animals of war.

The Coming of the King [14.5b-8]

v.5b: 'And Jehovah my God shall come' (JND) is the excited cry of the prophet. In contrast to His 'going out' to war, He now comes in the Person of Messiah – Zechariah's *personal* (my) God. When the Lord Jesus descends to the air for the church, He will be unaccompanied (1 Thessalonians 4.16). His manifestation is quite different! 'All the saints' (which

includes angelic and human beings, cf. Deuteronomy 33.2-3; 2 Thessalonians 1.7; Matthew 25.31) of every age will accompany Christ (cf. Jude 14; Colossians 3.4; Revelation 19.14; 20.4). **v.6:** This verse is very difficult to translate but seems to describe great disturbances in the heavenly constellations. *NET: On that day there will be no light—the sources of light in the heavens will congeal.* The normal sources of light will ‘thicken’ to the point that they cannot shine (cf. Isaiah 13.9-10; 24.23; Joel 3.14-16; Matthew 24.29). **v.7:** It won’t be *day*, neither will it be *night* (for the *sun* has been darkened, and the *moon* shall not give her light), but it will still be light! The resplendent light of the glory of the Lord will shine forth as the sun (Isaiah 60.19). The physical will answer to the spiritual in that the long, dark period of estrangement from God has ended and the Sun of Righteousness has arisen with healing in His wings (Malachi 4.2). This is ‘one day’ – a *unique* day – literally, ‘day one’ or ‘one single (continuous) day’ known only to the Lord. The mention of ‘day one’ is reminiscent of the first day of creation – a day on which there was light, but no sun or moon (Genesis 1.3). Thus, there is the suggestion of glorious re-creation. **v.8:** After the temple has been rebuilt in Jerusalem, ‘living waters’ (describing the *movement* of the stream as well as the life it brings) shall flow out from its threshold as an irresistible flood (Psalm 46.4; Joel 3.18; Ezekiel 47.1-12). Jerusalem will become a watershed, lifted high above surrounding land. From here the river will split in two; half flowing to the ‘former sea’ (i.e. Dead Sea) and half flowing to the ‘hinder sea’ (i.e. Mediterranean). Whilst the water is literal, it also suggests Jerusalem will be the centre and source of divine spiritual blessing flowing to all nations (cp. Genesis 2.10).

The Crowning of the King [14.9-11]

v.9: Jehovah, in the Person of the Messiah, will reign over ‘all the earth’ (Psalm 72.8-11). Other kings will rule their own lands (Isaiah 52.15) but there is one King of kings and Lord of lords who rules over all. There shall be ‘one Lord’ – suggesting uniqueness and exclusivity. He shall be recognised and acknowledged as the ‘God of the whole earth’ (Isaiah 54.5). His ‘name’ will be the only object of reverence, praise and worship. **v.10:** There will be great *geographic* and *topographic* changes prior to the kingdom. The land from *Geba* (six miles north of Jerusalem) to *Rimmon* (35 miles south-west of Jerusalem) shall become a plain (*arabah*), i.e. a deep, rift valley. Thus Jerusalem will sit conspicuously as a ‘solitaire diamond on a ring’ (MacArthur) atop the highest mountain in the world (Isaiah 2.2; Micah 4.1). The whole city will be peacefully inhabited from *north* (Benjamin Gate) to *south* (king’s winepresses) and from *west* (Corner Gate) to *east* (First Gate). **v.11:** There will be permanent peace and conscious security.

The Character of the Kingdom [14.16-21]

v.16: The tribulation will be a period of great loss of life – well over *half* of the world’s population will perish (Revelation 6.8; 9.18; Matthew 24.22). Those that are ‘left of all the nations’ are survivors of the tribulation and equate to the ‘sheep’ (Matthew 25.33-34) and ‘great multitude’ (Revelation 7.9). Every nation will send a delegation to Jerusalem to worship Christ and express their submission to His kingship (cf. Isaiah 60.4-14). The feast of Tabernacles is one of *three* feasts celebrated in the millennium (Ezekiel 45.21). Being in the seventh month, the feast marks the completion of God’s purposes for Israel and mankind and commemorates His provision of the harvest and the time He dwelt with Israel in the wilderness. The millennium is the fulfilment of the feast! The harvest is brought in (Matthew 24.31) and Christ tabernacles with His people (Revelation 7.15). **v.17:** Sadly, an undercurrent of sin and rebellion will exist in the kingdom, though subdued, and some will feign obedience (Isaiah 32.1; Psalm 18.44 margin). Thus, some will not go up to Jerusalem to worship and will be punished by drought (possibly for the whole year). These ‘families’ will not acknowledge God’s good hand of blessing in providing their needs. **v.18:** The ‘family of Egypt’ is a representative example of such rebellion, possibly because the feast recalls Israel’s historical deliverance *from* Egypt, or their proud dependence on the Nile rather than rain. Thus, if drought does not affect them, the ‘plague’ will (cf. Exodus 12.13). **v.19:** There will thus be ‘punishment’ (literally ‘sin’) by death, i.e. the plague is the aftermath and effect of sin (rebellion).

v.20: Finally, the whole *external* character of life – as exhibited in the streets of a city – shall bear the impress of holiness unto the Lord, as well as *religious*, *private* and *domestic* life (Keil). Jerusalem and Judah are as one vast sanctuary in which everything is holy. The ‘bells of the horses’ (a ritually unclean animal) were metal plates hanging from the necks of horses and camels as tinkling ornaments. Even these shall be inscribed with ‘Holiness to the Lord’ as the High Priest’s turban of old (Exodus 28.36). What was once common and unclean is now as holy as the High Priest. In *religious* life, the cooking ‘pots’ used for the boiling of sacrificial flesh (of which the common people and priests could partake) were regarded as less holy than the ‘bowls before the altar’ into which the blood of sacrifices was caught and dispensed. But in this day, both will be equally holy. **v.21:** Even *domestic* cooking pots will be used to boil sacrificial meat. Thus, the *home* will be as holy as the *house* of the Lord. There will be nothing *secular* in Jerusalem and Judah – all will be *sacred*. *MacArthur: Take everything in our society that isn’t sacred and subtract it and you’ve got the Kingdom. What would they advertise in the paper? What would you do for entertainment? How many programs would be on TV?* Canaanites are representative in Scripture of all that is morally reprehensible (including idolatry) and even became proverbial for a degenerate person. ‘Canaanite’ also means ‘merchant’ and may suggest the removal of every dishonest trader in the temple precincts (John 2.16). The temple shall truly be a ‘house of prayer for all people’ (Isaiah 56.7).