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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Zechariah 9.

(2014)

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But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

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Zechariah 9.

Topics.

- The LORD is against, Hadrach, Damascus, Hamath, Tyre and Sidon.
- God will protect Israel as a guard.
- Jerusalem's King is coming on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
- Christ's blood cleanses both old and New Testament believers.
- God will protect Israel.
- The LORD bent Judah as his bow and made Ephraim its arrow.
- The LORD will appear over Israel and his arrow will go forth like lightning.
- Like the jewels of a crown Israel will shine on his land.

INTRODUCTION: the following introduction is quiet long, but it does help understand the the background of Zechariah, to skip the introduction scroll down to Zechariah chapter nine. As Haggai encouraged the returned Jewish exiles to rebuild the Temple, Zechariah encouraged them to repent and renew their covenant with God. Such spiritual renewal would be necessary for the people to be ready to worship God once the Temple was rebuilt (about 515 B.C.). Zechariah accused them of doing the very things their ancestors had done before the exile. He was concerned about social justice for widows, orphans, and foreigners. As the people endured opposition from the non-Jewish inhabitants of Judea, Zechariah reassured them of God's abiding comfort and care and that He would continue his covenant with Israel.

The Messianic hope was rekindled during Zechariah's ministry by the ordination of Joshua as priest and Zerubbabel as governor. From Zechariah chapter one through to the end there is a beautiful message of comfort and encouragement for the people of Israel during the era of Zechariah and for those who are rebuilding the temporal Temple of God, but as the visions progress through the chapters the focus slowly shifts from the era of Zechariah and transcends time to a future age where God is building an eternal Temple in the Lord Jesus Christ. The visions then progress to Jesus returning in glory and climax's in the final chapter with Christ reigning from Jerusalem as King over the entire earth and ends with the promise that the Lord would establish his rule over all the earth (Zechariah 14:9).

The historical background: twenty years after untied Israel returned from their seventy years in captivity to Babylon, the Temple was still a blackened ruin and the discouraged people did not see how it could be restored. At this critical moment God raised up the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to encourage the Jews to rebuild the Temple. The prophecies of the two men were delivered almost at the same time. Zechariah gives a series of eight symbolic night-visions, to encourage the Israelites to complete the Temple.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

The LORD is against, Hadrach, Damascus, Hamath, Tyre and Sidon.

Zechariah 9:1-2 ----- ¹The burden of the word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach and Damascus is its resting place. For the LORD has an eye on mankind and on all the tribes of Israel, ²and on Hamath also, which borders on it, Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.

Hadrach: is in the land of Damascus and borders on Israel's boundaries.

Damascus: was a major city in Samaria (Syria).

Hamath: was assigned to Naphtali, it is near the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Tyre: is a city on the shore of the Mediterranean, famous for maritime activities and trade.

Sidon: was a city that belonged to the land of Israel according to promise.

God is picture as watching over the land of Israel and keeping an eye on the nations surrounding Israel's borders and in their land. For more than four thousand years Damascus was the capital of one government after another, a prize for which nation after nation went to war, a city whose boast for centuries has been, "The world began at Damascus, and the world will end there."

The LORD is against Tyre.

Zechariah 9:3-4 ----- ³Tyre has built herself a rampart and heaped up silver like dust, and fine gold like the mud of the streets. ⁴But behold, the Lord will strip her of her possessions and strike down her power on the sea, and she shall be devoured by fire.

Tyre has prospered enormously, but God is about to bring them to ruin. It matters not how enormously powerful a nation maybe amongst the world when they come before God for judgment all their wealth and weapons of war will count for nothing.

The LORD is against, Ashkelon, Gaza and Ekron.

Zechariah 9:5 ----- ⁵Ashkelon shall see it, and be afraid; Gaza too, and shall writhe in anguish; Ekron also, because its hopes are confounded. The king shall perish from Gaza; Ashkelon shall be uninhabited.

Ashkelon: was one of the five chief cities of the Philistines located about 12 miles from Gaza along the sea-coast. It was taken by the tribe of Judah shortly after the death of Joshua, but was retaken by the Philistines and was in their hands through much of the Old Testament period.

Gaza: was one of the five chief cities of the Philistines allotted to Judah, but it was almost always under non-Israelite control. Modern Ghuzzeh is the metropolis of the Gaza Strip which is crowded with Arab refugees today.

Ekron: was the most northern of the five chief cities of the Philistines assigned to Judah. It is located on the boundary between Judah and Dan.

When Ashkelon, Gaza and Ekron see the fall and ruin of a city such as Tyre that appeared so enormously wealthy and absolutely secure because of their vast trade with multitudes of nations they will be in extreme anxiety, enormously confused and afraid that all the hopes they had for their own success will also fail. The lesson in the collapse of Tyre is that neither vast amounts of money or enormous success can protect a nation or an individual from the judgment of God.

The LORD is against, Ashdod, Philistia, Ekron and the Jebusites.

Zechariah 9:6-7 ----- ⁶a mixed people shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of Philistia. ⁷I will take away its blood from its mouth, and its abominations from between its teeth; it too shall be a remnant for our God; it shall be like a clan in Judah, and Ekron shall be like the Jebusites.

Ashdod: was one of the five chief cities of the Philistines, it was assigned to Judah, but they failed to dispossess the inhabitants, it was a center of Dagon worship (the fish-god).

Philistia: the people are called Philistines (today they are the Palestinians) they had five cities, Ashod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. The Philistines worshiped the Semitic gods Dagon, Astarte and Baalzebub and were a major contender against the Hebrews for possession of Palestine.

The five chief cities of the Philistines were: -

1. Ashdod.
2. Gaza.
3. Ashkelon.
4. Gath.
5. Ekron.

Jebusites: lived at the site of Jerusalem (which was called Jebus), and were not dislodged until David sent Joab and his men into the city. David then bought a site for the Temple there. God will bring to ruin Ashdod, Philistia and Ekron because these nations have caused Israel anguish distress, anxiety and trouble by oppressing them and marching against them.

God will Protect Israel as a Guard.

Zechariah 9:8 ----- ⁸Then I (the LORD) will encamp at my house (Jerusalem and the Temple) as a guard, so that none shall march to and fro; no oppressor shall again march over them, for now I see with my own eyes.

Now I see with my own eyes: refers back to the LORD'S eye on mankind and on all the tribes of Israel (Zech. 9:1-2). The LORD has an eye on mankind refers to all the above nations, Hadrach, Damascus, Hamath, Tyre, Sidon, Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, Ashdod, Gath and Philistia.

Jerusalem's King is coming on a Colt, the Foal of a Donkey.

Zechariah 9:9 ----- ⁹Rejoice 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.

Zechariah words, "Israel's King is coming with salvation mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey," is absolutely amazing. At the time of Zechariah this most likely applied to Zerubbabel and Judah's preceding king. Joshua was the appointed high priest while Zerubbabel was heir to the throne of Judah and is listed in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ. After Israel's seventy year captivity Cyrus appointed Zerubbabel head of the Jews to complete the Temple. Four years later Zerubbabel's work was done and a great celebration was held at the dedication of the new Temple and a time of golden age of peace and safety for Israel followed.

But the amazing prophetic words of Zechariah supersede his time and his era. During the Old Testament no king would ride on such a lowly animal as a donkey, it would be totally beneath them to be seen on such an animal. They would have the most majestic horse in the land prepared for them. Yet Zechariah hundreds of years before the event prophesies that Israel's King will appear mounted on a donkey. How specific is that no wonder the people of Israel cried out, "Hosanna our King," when Jesus rode into Jerusalem humbling sitting on a donkey. These fabulous prophetic words of Zechariah transcend the mind of the Bible reader hundreds of years though time to a little village where Jesus is found telling his Disciples to: -

- Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. (Matt. 21:2).
- The disciples brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. (Matt. 21:7).
- The crowds took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!" (John 12:13) (Matt 21:9) (Mark 11:9-10).

Zechariah's prophetic words, "Israel's King is coming with salvation," not only echoes Israel's ultimate King the Lord Jesus Christ coming a donkey with salvation for Israel, but also echoes the Lord Jesus Christ coming with salvation for the entire world as expressed in the following words of Jesus.

- For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever (Jew or Gentile) believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16).

How brilliant is God, there is no way Zechariah could comprehend or fully understand the majestic message that was contained within the words he spoke, even the apostles who walked with Christ for three years never fully comprehended God's plan of eternal salvation until after the death and resurrection of Christ and he appeared to them in his eternal glorified body.

Though Christ did not appear during the Old Testament age, the faithful were still saved by faith in him, because they by faith looked: -

Toward the promised seed of the woman spoken of in Genesis.

- I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. (Genesis 3:15).

Toward the promised seed of Abraham.

- I will multiply your (Abrahams) seed as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. (Gen. 26:4).
- Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ. (Gal. 3:16).

Toward the prophet Moses said was to come like him.

- The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers it is to him you shall listen (Deut. 18:15).
- Moses said, "The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you." (Acts 3:22) (Acts 7:37).

Toward the promised seed of David.

- I will establish your (King David's) seed forever, and build your throne for all generations. (Psalm 89:4)
- The LORD swore to David a sure oath from which he will not turn back: "One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne. (Psalm 132:11).
- Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. (Jer. 23:5).
- The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. (Matthew 1:1).

The faithful of all generation of the Old Testament looked by faith to the Messiah and Christ Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Hosea, Micah, Zechariah, Malachi said was to come and the Messiah and Christ the Old Testament Scriptures reveal. Naturally there are many more Old Testament Scriptures concerning Israel's promised Messiah (see Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53).

The Lord Jesus himself said, "I have come to do your will, O God, as it is written of me in the scroll of the book (Heb. 10:7) (the scroll of the book refers to the Old Testament writings). Jesus said to the Jews, "You search the Scriptures (Old Testament) because they think that in them they have eternal life; but it is they that bear witness about me. (John 5:39).

It is very clear that the religious rulers of Israel should have recognised their Messiah when he came especially since he studied the Old Testament scrolls and he was performing supernatural miracles that could only be done by a man who God's power was flowing through in such a majestic and awesome manner.

NOTE: these most celebrated and famous prophecies that the faithful prophets of old spoke thousands of years before Christ appeared stunningly show that the Bible is the inspired word of God for the following three reasons: -

1. Who from their own mind could ever imagine that God's own Son the promised Messiah, the Christ and Saviour of the world would ever have to suffer such a humiliating brutal, bloody and cruel death?
2. Who could imagine from their own mind that a man born of a woman would be raised from the dead to eternal life and everlasting glory? Certainly generations of old believed in life after death, but it was in the form of a conscious spirit being, not a human raised from the grave to immortality and eternal life.
3. Many Old Testament Scriptures give exact details of Christ's birth, his life and his suffering long before he appeared.

Christ's Blood cleanses both Old and New Testament Believers.

Though Old Testament Israel offered animal sacrifices to God they were not saved by them, they were a type and shadow of Christ the Lamb of God without blemish the Saviour to come and it is his blood that cleanses them. This is because the power of Christ's cleansing blood flows back to the foundation of the earth so that the faithful of the Old and New Testament are saved by the same Saviour and the same Redeemer. In the book of Revelations it is written: -

- All that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev. 13:8).

And Peter wrote: -

- You were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot foreordained before the foundation of the world and manifest in these last times for you. (1 Peter 1:18-20).

These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that Jesus was not only the central focus of God's eternal mind and of His eternal plans and purposes for mankind's salvation and for eternity, but also the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

The cleansing power of Jesus blood shed on the cross of Calvary doesn't just cover and cleanse only those who have come to the Lord after his death and resurrection, but flows all the way back to the foundations of the earth to Adam and Eve like a spiritual invisible river cleansing all the faithful of the Old Testament from the fall of Adam onward who by faith looked to the appearing of the promised Messiah the Christ.

The faithful of the Old Testament were saved by their faith that the blood of their sin sacrifices (shadows of Christ) covered their sin and by their faith in the promised seed of the woman spoken of in (Genesis 3:15), in the prophet Moses said was to come like him, in God's promise to Abraham that from his seed a deliver would come and by their faith in the promised seed of David the Messiah and Saviour.

The faithful of the New Testament are saved by their faith in looking back to the bloodstained cross of Calvary and by looking forward to the glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ. This shines a glorious spotlight on the truth that whether a man or woman is of the Old or New Testament we are all saved by the same cleansing power, the same cleansing blood and the same deliver and Saviour. This is because God in his eternal mind planned and purposed before time began that His

Son the Lord Jesus Christ would be the Saviour of all mankind for all eternity. Truly, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. (Heb. 9:22).

God will Protect Israel.

Zechariah 9:10-11 ----- ¹⁰I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim (Israel) and the war horse from Jerusalem (Judah); and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he (the coming King) shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth. ¹¹As for you also, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.

The waterless pit: refers to spiritual dryness.

I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem means: the LORD will not allow war to come to Jerusalem or the land of Israel. These words did apply locally to the era of Zechariah and Haggai. When the Temple was completed a time of peace and safety did follow for the people of Israel, but it is also an amazing echo of the Lord Jesus Christ (the ultimate coming King) when he returns in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign.

The dead in Christ (Old and New Testament) and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

For further information see titles: -

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).

- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The LORD bent Judah as His Bow and made Ephraim its Arrow.

Zechariah 9:12-13 ---- ¹²return to your stronghold O prisoners of hope today I declare that I will restore to you double. ¹³for 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.

The LORD tells Israel and Judah to return to Jerusalem (their stronghold) and He will multiply their blessings. The three expressions, Judah as my bow, Ephraim its arrow and I will wield you like a warrior's sword means God will make Israel and Judah skilled and mighty warriors, in this case against Greece who was troubling Israel at this time.

The LORD will Appear over Israel and his Arrow will go Forth like Lightning.

Zechariah 9:14-15 ---- ¹⁴then the Lord will appear over them and his arrow will go forth like lightning; the LORD God will sound the trumpet and will march forth in the whirlwinds of the south ¹⁵the Lord of hosts will protect them (Israel) and they shall devour, and tread down the sling stones, (of Greece) and they shall drink and roar as if with drunk with wine, and be full like a bowl, drenched like the corners of the altar.

The LORD will appear over them: means God will be with Israel in every way.

His arrow will go forth like lightning: refers to the sons of Zion God raised up to go out as the armies of Zion.

Will go forth like lightning: carries the idea that the armies of Israel will have a powerful and quick victory over their enemies.

God will sound the trumpet: means that God will be with Israel's armies when they go out to march against their enemies and in control of the battle.

God will march forth in the whirlwinds of the south: means God will be with the armies of Israel as they battle amongst the armies of Greece.

They shall drink and roar as if with drunk with wine, and be full like a bowl: carries the idea of Israel greatly celebrating when they have triumphed over the armies of Greece and have won a great victory.

They shall be drenched like the corners of the altar: the altar was a place the people offered their animal sacrifices to God upon. An altar drenched in blood carries two ideas firstly, the people have been bringing many sacrifices which is an outward sign of great rejoicing and that they are passionately devoted to the LORD and have a right heart attitude toward Him. Secondly, an altar flooded in blood can be seen as a symbol that their enemy will be slaughtered on the battle field.

Like the Jewels of a Crown Israel will shine on His Land.

Zechariah 9:16-17 ---- ¹⁶on 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. ¹⁷for how great is his goodness, and how great his beauty! Grain shall make the young men flourish, and new wine the young women.

On that day, refers to the day of Israel's victory over their enemy. On that victorious day God will not only save them as his people but also make them like shining jewels of a crown on His land. They will sing of God's goodness and praise His glory. The land will flourish with crops, fruit and livestock and the men will prosper in all that they do. Added to this their young woman will bear healthy offspring. God manifesting his great goodness and His great beauty, by saving and making Israel His people and blessing them with abundant prosperity in His land so that they shine like the jewels of a crown is not limited or bound to this time era. These prophetic words of Zechariah echo a future time when the LORD: -

- Pours out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be great, the priests, the wives and all the families will mourn by themselves. (Zech. 12:10-14).

Zechariahs prophecy that Israel will have great victory over their enemy and that God will save them and make them like shining jewels of a crown on His land echoes the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to gather to himself the faithful global church made up of both Jews and Gentiles.

End