



“A Present Challenge, A Future Hope” (Zechariah 9-11)

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Intro: I'd like for a moment to take us back to the opening verse of this prophetic book. Zechariah means “whom Jehovah remembers,” Berehiah means “Jehovah blesses,” and Iddo means “the appointed time.” Put them together and we have a clear message: “Jehovah remembers and blesses at the appointed time.” See Haggai 2:1-10. Haggai's ministry spurred Israel on in rebuilding the temple, something they had begun to do, then because of opposition, had stopped. Right after they resumed the work, Zechariah comes along and called the people to repentance. God knew that without genuine spiritual renewal, the physical rebuilding was useless. Also, Zechariah's ministry gave them a fresh vision of the future. God intended that this future vision would help them to not become weary in the present work he had called them to. Zechariah 6:9-13 is worth looking back at in light of this. Please note that the offices of priest and king were not allowed to be fulfilled by one individual under the OT law (note II Chron.26, Uzziah). So this prophecy looks forward to a new day, and a new covenant, fulfilled by one called “the Branch.” Refer to Zech.3:8. Also refer to Isaiah 11:1-10; Jer.23:5-6; 33:15-16 (Joseph and Pharaoh's dreams in two forms to indicate the certainty of what was prophesied). Zechariah was instructed to take the gold and silver and make one crown and set it on the head of Joshua the high priest. The crown signifies royalty, so this was symbolic and prophetic of a future day when “the Branch” would be crowned in this world as both priest and king. See Gen.14:18-20; Heb.7:1-8.

9:1-8 Chapter 8 concluded with a prophetic look at the future blessing that will take place when “the Branch” comes to rule and reign. Now, chapter nine prophecies both a historical and yet future destruction of Israel's enemies. Historically, the path here is the exact path that Alexander the Great took when he invaded and conquered ancient Israel. Note vv.2b-4: Tyre had withstood a five year siege by the Assyrians, and a thirteen year siege by the Babylonians. So it was impressive when Alexander came through with a much smaller army, and yet conquered these mighty strongholds. Initially Alex sent his navy against Tyre and lost. Afterward he said to his commander, “Whatever it takes to defeat Tyre, do it!” They mobilized thousands of slaves, took the rubble from the ruins of the old city and built a causeway out to the new city (a half mile long). After a siege of only seven months, Alexander the Great conquered Tyre.

Ezekiel 26:4 They will destroy the walls of Tyre and pull down her towers; I will scrape away her rubble and make her a bare rock. 5 Out in the sea she will become a place to spread fishnets, for I have spoken, declares the sovereign LORD.

Note 9:8 Obviously this prophecy has yet to be fulfilled, but it speaks of a future hope, as does our next verse.

9:9 Refer to Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10; Luke 19:28-38; John 12:12-15. It is from prophecies like this one that caused Israel in Jesus' first coming to expect and anticipate Jesus overthrowing the Roman government and beginning to reign triumphant. Zechariah expected this as well, which is obvious as we read the next verse. Zechariah had no clue would take place historically between verse 9 and verse 10. He did not see it, knew nothing about it, because God did not reveal it to ANY of the OT prophets. See Eph.3:2-9. We call this period of time "the church age." See also Daniel 9:25-27.

9:14-17 is prophetic of this future day when the Lord defends Israel against her enemies.

10:1 Zechariah and his readers and listeners are now thrust back to the present day. Another way to translate this verse would be simply this: In light of the storm clouds over us, pray for the rain of blessing.

10:4 Once again this looks forward to the future reign of Messiah...

11:4-8a Who are the three shepherds? There are more than 40 suggestions by scholars. It seems most likely that they represent the three types of Jewish leaders – prophet, priest, and king, all inadequate for God's divine purpose regarding his people.

This section speaks of God shepherding his people despite their sin, idolatry, sin and idolatry practiced even among the leaders of the people. This was exactly the spiritual climate during Jesus' first coming.

11:8b-9 The flock "detested" me. This is the only time this word is used in the OT, and it means to loathe to the point of nausea.

The end of verse 9 refers historically to times in Israel's history where the judgment brought on by their sin ended up causing people to actually eat one another in an attempt to survive. Once again this is also prophetic of a yet future day as well, which is very evident as we continue to read.

11:10-12 Thirty pieces of silver was the price of a slave that had been gored by an ox (Ex.21:32). In other words, it was a contemptible evaluation of worth.

11:13 What a fascinating and unique book I hold in my hand. What a marvelous book I have the privilege to preach, teach, and proclaim to the world. What an amazing book we all have the privilege of personally owning, reading, studying, and meditating upon. See Matthew 27:3-10. The potter was one of the lowest of the laboring class, which once again shows the contempt for “the Branch” by the people of Israel.

Dear friend, no other religion has a book like the one I hold in my hand!

11:14 Continuing internal conflict.

11:15-17 This speaks prophetically of the coming antichrist, who appears just prior to “the Branch” breaking through the clouds, destroying all the enemies of God’s saints, and beginning His never ending rule. I cannot wait for that day! We pick it up there next Wednesday.