

# Zechariah 12

^ Zechariah 12:1 -13:1

## Intro

Zechariah continues with another oracle - a vision or a burden

In the previous chapter we left Judah and Jerusalem desolated

The shepherd that God appointed has left the people and broke his covenant

And in the prophecy the people have been betrayed, destroyed and abandoned

Jonathan last week linked this prophecy with the events in AD70 when the temple was destroyed

And the Jewish people were scattered all over the world

The timing of this oracle is not easy to determine

There are a lot of "And on that day"

Perhaps indicating that we are now in an eschatological area

An end-times, when God will bring the final justice to the world

As Christians we immediately look at

## Revelations, with

God living among the people

A new heaven and a new earth

The final overthrow of evil and satan

As well as judgement on all who live and have lived

Did they follow Christ or not?

Perhaps it is this time that this Oracle is also referring to

But its focus is on Jerusalem and Judah

And how the other nations close to Israel

Did they bless the people of God or did they curse them?

In Chapter 12 there are two parts:

## Part 1: Victory of Jerusalem and Judah

The key message is that God will deliver the victory - not by human hand

We have an image of a weak Jerusalem and a weak Judah

But of the Almighty God

Vs 1 is a reminder of who God is

And who is speaking

In this oracle it is God speaking

The we see two pictures

^ v3

.Jerusalem will be a cup of reeling for

Jerusalem will be a cup of stumbling for  
the surrounding nations

The word used for cup also means threshold

**Other Hebrew words used for cup do not**

With this amended image we see people  
stumbling over the threshold

Jerusalem will be a stone that is too  
heavy to lift

The physicality of this picture fits nicely with  
the picture of the people falling over a  
threshold

The common theme is that Israel does  
not need to do anything

The other nations will attack

But break their back on the unmovable  
nature of Israel

But the nations will besiege both  
Jerusalem and Judah

## Then God Acts

First he undoes the best weapons of  
the Jerusalem's enemies: the horses  
and their riders

And he also looks after Judah

## The role of Judah

Seems to be a bit ambiguous

It is almost as if Judah does not see  
Jerusalem as important any more

But God will protect Judah too

At the end Judah will recognise what  
Jerusalem is

^ v5

Strength through God

Then Judah will step up and become  
the protector of Jerusalem

## Another set of images

a blazing pot on a wood pile

faming torch among corn sheaves

They destroy from the middle without  
being destroyed

Because of their nature

How God has changed them to be

## Judah first then Jerusalem

The victory rolls from the outside to the  
centre

So that Jerusalem will not take all the  
glory

As it belongs to all the people

But Jerusalem becomes almost  
God-like - like an angel

And God will destroy the nations  
that come to Israel

## Part 2: introspection

But after this, it will time for Judah  
and Jerusalem to take stock

They recognise the one who was  
sent was from God

Because of God's Spirit of compassion

Because of God's Spirit of compassion  
and supplication

## The one that they pierced

And of course for us that brings us to  
Jesus - who was pierced on the cross

△ John 19:37 and, as another scripture says, "They  
will look on the one they have pierced.

## And the people mourn

Men and Women apart

Royalty and Priests apart

Royalty: David and Nathan

Priests: Levi and the Shimeites

As if they now realise who Jesus  
was and that they did not accept  
him

as Messiah

as Son of God

And after the mourning God  
brings a fountain for cleansing and  
restoration

So that they many be cleansed from  
their sins and impurities

There is a good ending!

And it is God who establishes that

How do we live with this  
oracle today?

I must admit I have mixed feelings  
about the current situation in Israel

First of all I do recognise that Israel still today, or especially today, is still God's chosen people

This is what the Old and the New Testament Tells us

Christianity has not replaced Israel

As Paul says, we have been grafted in.

<sup>17</sup> If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, <sup>18</sup> do not consider yourself to be superior to those other branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you

^ Romans 11:17-18

And also

<sup>23</sup> And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. <sup>24</sup> After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree!

^ Romans 11:23-24

God is not done with his people!

And we **are** second class citizens in God's Kingdom!

God's Kingdom:

Does that mean that I or we should automatically agree with what Israel is doing?

No, as we do not see the teaching of Jesus in their current behaviour

That does not mean that I am anti-semitic

But I am a concerned brother

Having said that: Israel is in a real difficult situation

Hamas, Iran and other's nations and groups objective is to destroy Israel

They are like the people that stand against Israel in the prophecy

And how we would respond if a group in Wales were sending rockets, etc into the South East, because they want us to be gone?

Would we not react in the same way?

So I do have a lot of sympathy for Israel

Even if I mourn with the people in Gaza

At the moment Israel's enemies reel, as they have not been able to overcome Israel

And from the prophecy we also now that God will destroy all the nations who are against Israel

who are against Israel

## Never ending cycle?

We now have a ceasefire

But how long will it last?

When will Hamas/Iran and or others start again?

## Mourning for the one they have pierced

The key is in the second half of our reading

That God will give them to Spirit to recognise what they have done

And recognise that Jesus is the Messiah

Now there are a growing number of Messianic Jews in Israel

And although they are discouraged and ignored in Israel

They rather want you to be Buddhist than Christian

Understandable with the history of the Church being very antisemitic

There is still hope that all people of Israel will come to know Jesus

## Prayer

This is then what we can do: Pray



1. Against the enemies of Israel

2. For Israel to be blessed by God

3. For them to receive Jesus Christ as  
Lord and Saviour

Amen