

Zech. 14:1 Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee.

Zech. 14:2 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

Again that phrase, "the day of the LORD." Most often that term is connected with the final years of wrath that will precede the second coming of the Lord Jesus; but that is not always the case. It does, however, always refer to judgment. In retrospect, the prophecy here seems to be referencing the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, which was an army of soldiers from many nations under the authority of the Empire. At that time the city was taken and many were sent into captivity, but not all. I am sure that history supports the looting and the raping of the women.

I do not discount the fact that there could still be future fulfillment of this prophecy after the Antichrist shows his true colors during the 70th week of Daniel.

Zech. 14:3 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

Zech. 14:4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which *is* before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

Our perception of the passage of time and God's perception of that same passage of time are far different. Scripture tells us that with God a thousand years are as but a day or a "watch in the night."

Psa. 90:4 For a thousand years in thy sight *are but* as yesterday when it is past, and *as* a watch in the night.

These verses, as is often the case with the prophets, seem to jump far forward in time to reference that actual time when Jesus will physically return as King of kings. Because of verse 4 and the words of the angels at Jesus' ascension...

Acts 1:11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

Acts 1:12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

...I had always assumed (according to how I had been taught) that Jesus' return to earth would result in "touch down" at the Mount of Olives. In my study of Isaiah, I searched for reconciliation of these sections of scripture and those describing Jesus as being clothed in a garment stained red and coming from Edom.

Rev. 19:13 And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood:

Is. 63:1 Who *is* this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this *that is* glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.

Is. 63:2 Wherefore *art thou* red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?

Is. 63:3 I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people *there was* none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.

During that study I came across Arnold Fruchtenbaum's article, "Campaign of Armageddon" at www.raptureready.com. He made much more sense in explaining that the Lord would begin at Bozrah/Edom if, as is believed by many, a remnant of Israel is being preserved there at Petra, and end up at the Mount of Olives for the final defeat of Antichrist and his armies. At some point the Mount will split, half moving north and half moving south, and form a valley running east to west between the Mediterranean and Dead Seas.

Zech. 14:5 And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

This verse is a bit confusing. I think my biggest problem is preconceived ideas again. Jesus is returning to deliver Israel and the body of believers. It is evidently going to be a process (beginning in Edom and ending in Jerusalem)—not an instant in time. Because of the comparison to the time of the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, I would assume that the split of the Mount of Olives is due to an earthquake—albeit divinely appointed for that time. A quick search on the web shows that there is a fault line that runs east to west through the Mount of Olives. The valley that is formed when the Mount splits will serve as an escape route for the people in that area to flee from the forces of the Antichrist.

All of a sudden the prophet begins to speak in first person at the end of the verse. I think he is overwhelmed at the message he is being given. He has a vision of YHWH, his God, coming with all the saints to deliver His people. I know it will be an awe-inspiring sight. I think it is important to note that the returning Messiah, Jesus, is identified as YHWH; this is another scriptural emphasis to the unity / oneness of Father and Son.

Zech. 14:6 And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark:

This verse gives me a picture of an overcast day or twilight. Ezekiel paints the same picture.

Ezek. 30:3 For the day *is* near, even the day of the LORD *is* near, a cloudy day; it shall be the time of the heathen.

I chose this scripture because it illustrates how "the day of the LORD" can reference a day as we know it or a period of time according to the Hebrew. There are other scriptures that describe it as a day of darkness, and I think that refers to the whole time of judgment. I think, however, that this verse is referencing in context the actual *day* of the Lord's return.

Zech. 14:7 But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.

Point is being made that this day will be unusual. It's a specific day that is already scheduled on YHWH's calendar of events for the future. It's a day that will know no night. Why would that be? Because of the presence of the "Light of the world," the Lord Jesus.

Zech. 14:8 And it shall be in that day, *that* living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be.

There seem to be many geographical changes to the area at this time. "Living waters" is a reference to fresh water, water that sustains life. According to the prophecy, water will flow from Jerusalem to both the Mediterranean and Dead Seas. I am sure the Mediterranean has been impacted by the second trumpet and bowl judgments and has become just as dead as the Dead Sea. The fact that emphasis is made on the continual flow of this water in summer and winter indicates to me that the climate will be temperate and conducive to the flow of the water.

Zech. 14:9 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.

This verse is another exclamation point to the unity/ oneness of Father and Son. The prophecy declares that YHWH will be King over ALL the earth; Jesus will be that King. No one will question that there is *one* YHWH, with *one* name. No one will be trying to make a distinction between Father and Son; He will be acknowledged as One.

Again this is a truth to which I can't begin to do justice. I can only accept it by faith, and I do. I've said many times that if I could understand all about God, He wouldn't be God. He is far beyond my understanding and is very clear about that truth.

Is. 55:8 For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

Is. 55:9 For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

The whole of Job 38-41 emphasizes this truth.

Zech. 14:10 All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and *from* the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses.

The topography of Judah will change from one of hills to a plain; it would seem that Jerusalem, however, will be on a higher plain than the rest. After reading several translations, which all seem to be saying the same thing, I thought the NLT was more easily understood.

All the land from Geba, north of Judah, to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem, will become one vast plain. But Jerusalem will be raised up in its original place and will be inhabited all the way from the Benjamin Gate over to the site of the old gate, then to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses.

It's interesting to note that Jerusalem will occupy the same portion of land with which YHWH first identified His name.

Zech. 14:11 And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

With Messiah on the throne, Jerusalem will no longer have to fear an enemy. It will be the safest place to live on planet earth. Men will be able to raise their families there with nothing to fear. I can't help but think of the words of Isaiah.

Is. 11:6 The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

Is. 11:7 And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

Is. 11:8 And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

Is. 11:9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Is. 65:21 And they shall build houses, and inhabit *them*; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.

Is. 65:22 They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree *are* the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.

Is. 65:23 They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they *are* the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.

Is. 65:24 And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

Is. 65:25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust *shall be* the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

Zech. 14:12 And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

Zech. 14:13 And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* a great tumult from the LORD shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one on the hand of his neighbour, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbour.

These verses give more detail to the destruction of Jerusalem's (and therefore Israel's) enemies. Point is made that this destruction is decreed by YHWH. In today's world one can't help but make comparison to the effects of nuclear attack. If it is, I am convinced that it is taking place in lands other than Israel. The Hebrew for *plague* is broad in scope—from pestilence or disease to general slaughter or defeat. As has been previously prophesied and fulfilled or yet to be fulfilled, point is made that enemy forces will turn on one another. No matter the method employed, this destruction is from the hand of YHWH.

Zech. 14:14 And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold, and silver, and apparel, in great abundance.

It would seem that the people of Judah will participate in the battle at Jerusalem and will emerge from the war with an abundance of loot.

Zech. 14:15 And so shall be the plague of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the beasts that shall be in these tents, as this plague.

The plagues that are used to destroy the human enemy will also be used to destroy their modes of transportation. This scripture is specific in identifying the use of horse, mule, camel, ass, and other beasts. I have no problem accepting that to be the case considering the vulnerabilities of today's technical weaponry.

Zech. 14:16 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

This verse is clear regarding the existence of other nations during the Messiah's Kingdom. At its inception, I believe the root populations of these nations will be people of faith. Matthew 25 details a picture of those who are allowed to enter the Kingdom.

Matt. 25:31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

Matt. 25:32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats:

Matt. 25:33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

Matt. 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

Matt. 25:35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

Matt. 25:36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

Matt. 25:37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed *thee*? or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink?

Matt. 25:38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee*?

Matt. 25:39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

Matt. 25:40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

Matt. 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

Matt. 25:42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

Matt. 25:43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

Matt. 25:44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

Matt. 25:45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me.

Matt. 25:46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

It's obvious to me that those who would jeopardize their lives to minister to God's people during the reign of the Antichrist would only be those who have rejected his mark and turned in faith to the Messiah. I understand verse 46 to be saying that everyone who is allowed to enter the Kingdom are identified as righteous and as possessing eternal life. As these people begin to repopulate the earth, their children will still be born with a sin nature and will need to make their own decision about accepting Jesus as Lord. In other words, they can still choose to be disobedient, but not without consequence. Reminder—The Lord will be ruling with a rod of iron.

According to Zechariah's message, everyone on planet earth will be required to come to Jerusalem and celebrate the feast of tabernacles. That sounds like an impossible or unreasonable expectation; but if the Lord so decrees it, it will be doable and reasonable. He never changes; He would never ask us to do something that we are unable to do.

Zech. 14:17 And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of *all* the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.

Zech. 14:18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that *have* no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Zech. 14:19 This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

As I continue to think on these verses, maybe the expectation is only that the nations send official representatives. The Hebrew for *families* includes "a tribe or people." This would make more sense with the stated consequence for disobedience—rain will be withheld from their nation. Example is given concerning the people of Egypt. It sounds as though plague will naturally accompany the drought.

Again, point is made that this instruction is directed to the heathen, the Gentiles. Israel will be living in complete obedience to and fellowship with their Lord.

Zech. 14:20 In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD'S house shall be like the bowls before the altar.

Zech. 14:21 Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and seethe therein: and in that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.

I think the emphasis of this verse is regarding the truth of the last statement I made in reference to the previous verse. Jerusalem/Judah/Israel will be a land of righteous people living in obedience to and fellowship with their Lord. I think one can infer from the wording that all the instructions regarding the function of the millennial temple (as outlined in the last chapters of Ezekiel) will be scrupulously followed.

The Hebrew for the word *Canaanite* is a reference to peddlers or merchants. This stands out to me considering that was the one thing that angered the Lord Jesus to the point of a physical display of anger when He first came as our Savior. The Lord's house is meant to be a place of worship—not a place of trade or a place to make profit. I really believe that many churches today are treading on dangerous ground and inviting God's judgment by the ways they use facilities that are identified as "God's house."