

Judeo-Christian Future Expectation from Zechariah. Full story.

Part 1

Zechariah 1 to 6

Zechariah.

Zechariah is one of the three prophets of after the exile. The other two are Haggai and Malachi. It will be no coincidence that these three prophets are the last three books of the Old Testament. Zechariah is the longest book of the twelve little prophets with 14 chapters and 211 verses. For us, Zechariah is interesting because of the strong relationship with the New Testament. Those who study the prophecies of Zechariah will encounter details from the life of Jesus Christ that are thus recorded 500 years before their fulfillment. Whoever reads Zacharia should be impressed by our God who holds the future in His hands and makes His promises come true to the point and the comma. Zechariah 9-14 is – according to the scholars – of all Old Testament books the most cited in the history of suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ. There's something more to that. We also read prophecies in Zechariah that are still awaiting fulfillment such as *the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ* at the end of time and *the new heaven and the new earth*. By the way, it's not just the Gospels that Zechariah is quoted in. Zechariah must have influenced the author of the book of Revelation also. Perhaps it is better to say that the words – which flowed from their pen – came from the same God. The LORD inspired the writers of the Old and New Testaments. So all the reason to commit ourselves to studying the book of Zechariah with the help of God's Spirit to better understand it.



The prophet Zechariah.

The prophet.

We know pretty much exactly what time Zechariah performed. It was in the time of the Persian king Darius. Zechariah 1:1 *In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, the son of Berechja, the son of Iddo, the prophet.* It must have been 520 BC that we hear from him for the first time. It is held that the prophet Zechariah comes from a priestly family. Zacharia and Iddo mentioned in the list of names in Nehemiah 12 must be the same persons as their namesakes in Zechariah 1:1. This list refers to priests and Levites who have taken advantage of the opportunity that King Kores offered them to go back to Israel. Nehemiah 12:12,16 *In the days of Jojakim the following priests were family heads: of Seraja that was Meraja; (..) of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Mesullam; Etc.* The scholars assume that the combination of Iddo with Zechariah is unique and therefore applies to our Zechariah. If this is true, Zechariah is

not only a priest, but he was also the head of his family. It is probably no coincidence that priestly service is an important element in Zechariah's prophecies. The high priest Joshua/Jesua of that time plays an important role in one of the visions. He gets beautiful new priest's clothes and is cleared of guilt by God. Zechariah thinks they should get him a new turban, too. That request will also be granted. It is a personal detail that confirms that Zechariah is of priestly house. Zechariah 3:5 *Then I said, Let them put a clean turban on his head. Then they put the pure turban on his head and put on his party clothes, while the Angel of the LORD stood by it.* The rebuilding of the temple is also not undiscussed. The reconstruction seems to be mainly the work of Zerubbabel. By the way, that's someone from David's royal family. He is instructed to build the temple. Zechariah 4:8,9 *The word of the LORD came to me: The hands of Zerubbabel have founded this house, his hands will complete it too. Then you will know that the Lord of the armed forces has sent me to you.* In 515 BC, the second temple must be completed. So that's where they built for about five years. While we keep in mind that Zechariah is a Levite and comes from a priestly family, he is above all the prophet to us. This could also follow from the saying that the Hebrew basic text shows. Zechariah 1:1 *In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah, the son of Berechja, the son of Iddo, the prophet.*

The prophet Zechariah.



The high priest Joshua.



Zerubbabel, the cityholder.



The book of Zechariah is of great significance for eschatology.

In addition to the book of Daniel, Ezekiel and Isaiah, the LORD also draws the lines in Zechariah to a fairly near, but also to the distant future. Numerous are in the book of Zechariah the references to the coming and the actions of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord is twice called the Sprout in Zechariah (Zechariah 3:8; 6:12), a title that is also due to Him in Isaiah and Jeremiah. Palm-Easters, the day *Jesus enters Jerusalem on a donkey*, but also *the thirty pieces of silver* that Judas are handed and the expression '*behold who they have pierced*', come straight from Zechariah. Zechariah's eschatology is comparable to Ezekiel's because Christ is a very much part of it. This is also beneficial in that sense because the first fulfillment of the prophecies by Christ strengthens the expectation of the ultimate full fulfillment. For this may be clear, there is not only an eye for the time when the Lord Jesus occurred, suffered and died and rose, but also *the end times* and *the new heaven and the new earth* are in the picture. The Church has learned to distinguish between 'the already' and 'the not yet'. It is not immediately assumed from the OTic eschatology that there would be such a large time span between the first and the second fulfillment. In Biblical eschatology everything is put together – in the sense of 'what comes first and what comes a little later' – but the idea that there would be a break somewhere now 2000 years can hardly be foreseen. This may also be a difficult issue for the Jewish community that did not accept Christ. With the coming of Christ, a number of steps have been taken by God on the path of the salvation of His people and of the world, but the final fulfillment is still out. The New Testament realizes that, by the way. For example, in the eschatology of the Lord Jesus, there is the realization

"that all nations must be reached with the Gospel first," before history ends at the end. Mark 13:10 *And the Gospel must first be preached to all nations.* After Christ's return, God will complete all things. During the Ascension of the Lord Jesus, the disciples are determined that He will return in a similar way to the clouds of heaven. Acts 1:9-11 *And after He said this, He was recorded as they saw it, and a cloud eluded Him from their eyes. And when they, as He left them, kept their eyes to the sky, behold, two men stood with them in white clothing, who also said, Galilean men, why are you looking up at the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken from you to heaven, will come back in the same way as you have seen Him go to heaven.* Some of the expressions in Zechariah – such as "the two anointed" and "see who they have pierced" – are in some ways fulfilled twice, namely at the time when the Lord Jesus is on earth but also after His second coming.

The Ascension of Jesus and the Second Coming of the Lord.



Kores is particularly sympathetic to the return of the Jews and the temple construction.

We first hear of the prophet Zechariah in 520 BC. It is Ezra, the scribe who incorporates the work and commitment of these two prophets (also Haggai) to the rebuilding of the temple in his book. Anyone who oversees the years and events will be surprised. What is the case? In 539 BC, the Jews in exile received permission from the Persian King Kores to return to Jerusalem. At that time, the 70 years of Babel's exile are over. God had indicated through Jeremiah that the exile would last 70 years. Daniel refers to this in his prayer for the return. Daniel 9:2 King Kores presents himself as a friend of the Jews. Not only does he give them permission to return to their country of origin, but he also wants them to rebuild the temple of their God. Ezra even reveals that he has provided a plan for the reconstruction of the temple – including the sizes and building materials. Ezra 6:3,4 *In king Kores' first year, King Kores gave an order: The house of God in Jerusalem, let that house be rebuilt in the place where sacrifices are made. Its foundations must remain the same, its height sixty el and its width sixty el, with three rows of carved stones and a row of new wood. The expenses will be paid from the king's house.* King Kores also gives the Jews the precious items that King Nebuchadnezzar had looted from the temple in Jerusalem and housed in the temple of the god of Babel. Ezra 1:7 *Also, King Kores had the objects removed from the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had removed from Jerusalem and placed in the house of his gods.* In abundance, he also urges his fellow citizens to give the returning Jews gold and silver on their journey: all at the service of and the superior honor and glory of the God of Israel, with whom Kores feels connected in a special way. Ezra 1:2-4 *So says Kores, the king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth have given the Lord, the God of heaven, to me, and He is it Who has instructed me to build a house for Him in Jerusalem, which lies in Judah. Whoever belongs to His People – God be with him – let him move to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and let him build the house of the Lord, the God of*

Israel; He is the God who lives in Jerusalem. And anyone who is left behind, from all the places where he resides as a stranger, let his fellow citizens help him with silver, with gold, with all kinds of possessions, and with cattle, in addition to the voluntary gift for the house of God, who lives in Jerusalem.

The reconstruction of the temple and Jerusalem went with a lot of bumps and bruises and took a lot of time.

Thanks to Ezra, we have a pretty good picture of what happened in post-exile Jerusalem. In itself, there was a smooth start. With the exiles, Joshua, the high priest, and Zerubbabel, the city holder, also came to Jerusalem. Zerubbabel came from David's family, but did not become king. Nevertheless, he was in charge politically, while Joshua became the high priest of what should be called 'the beginning of temple reconstruction'. What is the case? Soon after its return, an altar was erected in the square in front of the temple to be built in Jerusalem. With the altar before God, the foundation of the temple was also laid on the original site. We realize that the altar is an extraordinarily essential element in the service of sacrifice to God. It is known from the patriarchs that they built an altar everywhere they stayed. Genesis 12:7 *Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your posterity, I will give this land. Then he built an altar there for the LORD, who had appeared to him.* Even if it was still in terms of temple – only the foundation was there – except for the morning and evening sacrifice, the entire sacrificial ceremony was probably followed. They also celebrated the annual celebrations such as the Passover and the Grand Atonement Day. From the book of Ezra we can see that not long after the death of King Kores objections to temple reconstruction reached the Persian court. The peoples who were exiled to the North of Israel by Assur at the time, through their leaders, ensured that the temple construction in Jerusalem was shut down. Indeed, the governor of 'the Euphrates area' had indicated to Joshua and Zerubbabel that they were having difficulty rebuilding Jerusalem and wondered whether this was done with the agreement of the king. The reconstruction was halted depending the investigation of what would take place in Babel's archives. Because the temple building was stopped and the reconstruction of the city was not allowed, the Jews used the time to rebuild their own houses and farms. Did the returned exiles regretted that the construction of the temple had been shut down and was it indeed force majeure? The fact is that God resents his people for the temple construction to be stopped for about twenty years.

The rebuilding of the temple was halted.



King Kores 539, Darius 520 and Arthasasta 458 BC stand behind the reconstruction of the city and temple.

Encouraged by the prophets Zechariah and Haggai, the reconstruction of the temple begins again in 520 BC. Ezra 5:1,2 *The prophets Haggai, the prophet, and Zechariah, the son of Iddo, prophesied among the Jews who were in Judah and in Jerusalem; in the Name of the God of Israel, they prophesied against them. Then Zerubbabel, the son of Sealthiel, and Jesua, Jozadak's son, stood up and began to rebuild the house of God, who lives in Jerusalem.* When the representative of the province, a certain Tattenai, comes to object again, the temple building in Jerusalem continues until an answer has been given from the Persian king. Tattenai objected to the Persian monarch of that time. Ezra 4:12 *Let the king be aware that the Jews who have been moved away from you have come to Jerusalem with us and are rebuilding that rebellious and evil city. They complete the walls and restore the foundations.* From Darius, the Persian monarch who is in power at that time, the Jewish community receives a lot of sympathy. Especially when he manages to find the papers of Kores in an archive in one of the cities in Babel in which the positive decision of the Persian monarch regarding the return of the Jews and the reconstruction of Jerusalem and the temple can be read in black and white. Somewhat anticipating on his own time, Ezra here mentions the name of the Persian king who was in power in his days, King Arthasasta. The document that King Darius emerges from the archives has also authorized the reconstruction of the city with its walls and gates, something that is particularly relevant to Ezra and Nehemiah. We therefore do not look astonished when king Arthasasta does not bring obstacles on the road of Ezra; on the contrary, he supports him in all sorts of ways. However, this is not until 458 BC. It is 520 BC when King Darius binds the political leaders of below the Euphrates to the heart not to delay the construction of the temple in Jerusalem, but to do whatever it takes to resurrect the new house of God in full glory. Ezra 6:8-10 *I also command you what to do for the elders of these Jews to rebuild this house of God. From the king's property, from the tax on the other side of the Euphrates, the expenses to these men must be reimbursed carefully and without ceasing. And what is needed: young cattle, rams and lambs for the burnt offerings for the God of heaven, and wheat, salt, wine, and oil according to the instructions of the priests in Jerusalem; it must be given to them on a daily basis, so that there is no shortage of anything. Thus, they can offer pleasant sense of smell to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his sons.* The leaders of the northern provinces cooperate in the knowledge that otherwise – if they did not – their own homes would be demolished. In 515 BC, the temple in Jerusalem was reconsecrated. Although no particular revelations are known about it, we can jointly assume that the LORD has, according to His promise, re-moved into His home.

The second temple.



Ezra took care of the legislation and population registers and Nehemiah for the restoration of the walls.

High priest Joshua and the city holder Zerubbabel have done a lot of pioneering work. Although it had many feet in the earth, by the end of the fifth century there was again a temple and a temple service in Jerusalem. A number of residents had also rebuilt their own house. Nevertheless, it would take another 50 to 80 years before the walls and gates of Jerusalem would be restored. It's good that there's been someone like Ezra. He is a scribe. He too is of priestly background. He is in the service of the Persian king Arthasasta. We live in 458 BC. Which is a little over a century after the return of the Jews from the exile of Babel. Ezra held a high position at the Persian court and enjoyed the sympathy of King Arthasasta. When he asked to travel to his people and consider the situation in person, he was immediately granted permission. The king also gave all kinds of gifts of gold and silver to the delegation that travelled to Jerusalem not long after. Ezra went with a spiritual purpose to see if and how the laws of Moses – which he had great insight into – acted among the people. At the same time, the king instructed him to provide the Jewish people with suitable judges and a legal system for the legislation of Moses and that of the government. Ezra 7:25 *And you, Ezra, in accordance with the wisdom of your God, who has been given to you, appoint judges and justices who must speak for the whole people on the other side of the Euphrates, about all who know the laws of your God. And those who don't know them, you have to disclose them.* Also, from the fairly precise records of names of exiles that had come back in 539 BC (Ezra 2) and the exiles who came with Ezra in 458 BC (Ezra 8), it is clear that Ezra was committed in giving the people a civil service including population registers. And then the reconstruction of the walls of Jerusalem: This happened under the inspiring leadership of Nehemiah, the wine-expert at the court of Arthasasta. It came to his ears when his brother was visiting Persia. He told him that Jerusalem was still in ruins. Nehemiah 1:3 *They said to me, "The remaining ones left there from captivity in the region are in great misery and in disgrace." In the wall of Jerusalem, holes have been beaten and its gates burned with fire.* Nehemiah was given permission by the king to bring things in order in his father's city. Nehemiah took the lead herself. He let anyone who was somewhat skilled with cement and stones handle the spatula. When we see it right, the people worked on the wall of Jerusalem close to their own home. This also increased the awareness of relevance and importance. Nehemiah also made an inventory list of the names of the people who carried out the repairs. Nehemiah 3 *Against the restoration of the walls and gates came of course resistance from the Samaritans, who had been assigned the area that the northern tribes had left from Assur.* Efforts were made to frustrate the construction of Jerusalem's walls, but Jewish construction workers were unyielding. With the spatula in one hand and a sword in the other, day and night work was done to restore the walls and gates.

The Jewish people are back in the land of their God, but are they also back to the God of their country?



Zechariah's eight night visions.

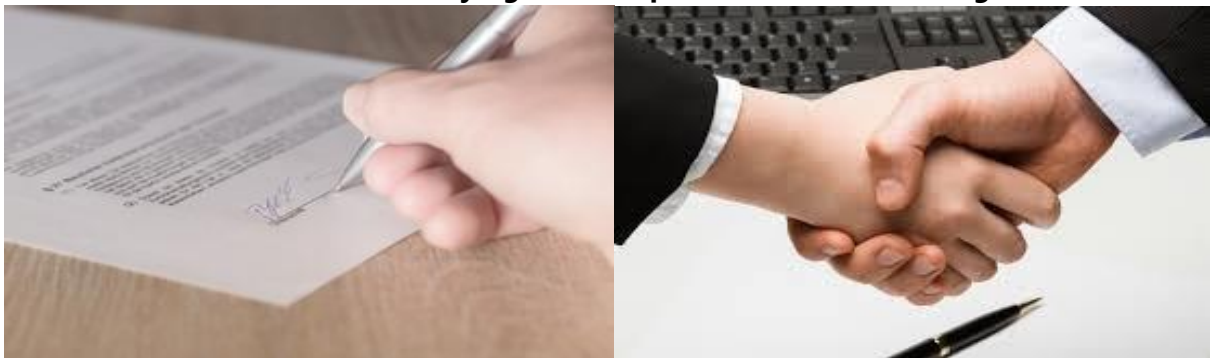
Zechariah's performance is known from the book of Ezra. He and Haggai were the ones who revived the rebuilding of the temple, which had been quiet for years. But fortunately, through his own book we also have a view of the prophecies of Zechariah. Zechariah is likely to receive eight visions in one night. We read them successively from Zechariah 1 to 6. The remarkable thing about these visions is that they act on direct history, which the Jewish exiles – back in Judah/Israel – experience firsthand from 539 BC. Between the lines, eschatological statements are made over a more distant period. God works that way more often. Also in the book of Isaiah, the period after the return from exile is in itself a picture of the provisional restoration that God gives, but at the same time also bearer of eschatological statements for example about *the suffering Servant of the LORD* by Whom God gives definitive restoration of the relationship of God with His people and vice versa. In Zechariah 1 to 6, for example, we also feel a temporary recovery as a carrier of the definitive favorable proportions. During the interpretation of the eight visions, we will also address the eschatological statements whose scope is greater. It all starts with a word in advance.

The word in advance.

Zechariah 1

Zechariah doesn't mince his breath. There are certainly Jews who have returned from exile, but it is so that you really notice a change in their hearts and way of life. Of course, those people do have something special, but it really has to be different than before the exile. Zechariah sensitively taps his Jewish people's fellow citizens on their fingers because of the behavior of their ancestors. He does it on behalf of God. Zechariah 1:4 *Do not be like your fathers, to whom the earlier prophets preached: So the Lord of the armed forces says, "Turn your evil ways and your evil deeds." But they did not listen and did not notice Me, says the LORD.* The LORD asks them personally 'whether He has also kept his Word 'YES or NO?'" God means not only "that He threatened their ancestors with exile if they did not repent," but that He had actually sent them into exile when it was clear that they were not listening. "You don't want to go through something like that anymore," God seems to say. The Jews are open to what Zechariah and the LORD say. They even come up with a guilty plea. Zechariah 1:6 *They said, "As the Lord of the forces ad intended to do with us, in accordance with our ways and our deeds, so he has done to us.* Well, the message has come across loud and clear: "Live according to God's commandments!"

They sign - so to speak - the confession of guilt.



The First Vision: The Man on the Red Horse.

Zechariah 1

Zechariah sees a Man on a red horse at night. There are other riders on red, brown and white horses. They have moved through the country and are reporting on their findings. For example, He tells "that God had dispatched the horsemen to ride through the land." The riders immediately tell us what their experience is. Zechariah 1:11 *We have passed through the land, and behold, all*

land is down and silent. The message is disappointing. It's about the temple construction. It has been quiet for years since 539 BC, and there doesn't seem to be much movement in it. It certainly lies with the people but still and initially with God. The question to God cannot be left out. Zechariah 1:12 *How long is it that you do not take care of Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, upon which you have been enchanted for seventy years?* God says that He has been held up by the pagan peoples – meant to be probably those of the lower Euphrates – and agrees to build His house in Jerusalem. Zechariah 1:17 *Preach further: So the Lord of the armed forces says: My cities will expand for good, the LORD will comfort Sion and still prefer Jerusalem.* This is great news, by the way. It is a historical affirmation that God not only again chooses Jerusalem, but also to live in the midst of His people Israel.

The Man (the Angel of the LORD) is presumably the Lord Jesus Christ.

When we read Zechariah 1 and 2, we see two angels. 1. "The Angel who spoke to me" and 2. "The Angel of the Lord." The latter is the same Person as 'The Man Between the Myrtles'. Not only because He is called "the Angel of the LORD, who stood among the myrtles," but also because He is clearly in charge. He also gives direct revelation from God to Zacharia in the sense that God speaks to him. Zechariah 1:14-17 When, in the third vision of Zechariah 2, there is "the Angel who spoke to me" and "another Angel," the Angel of the LORD seems excluded. "Looks like" because He must be the same Angel. 'The angel' is normally called 'ha-maleach' in Hebrew. However, when there is the Angel of the LORD, we read each time in the basic text Maleach YAHWE, so without the article ha. It is precisely the absence of the article that indicates that we are once again in Zechariah 2 dealing with the Angel of the LORD. The facts are consistent with that. The other Angel is higher in rank than "the Angel who spoke to me." He's in charge on behalf of God. He corrects the young man who wants to use the tape measure to measure the city wall of Jerusalem. He gives instructions to "the Angel who spoke to me." Zechariah 2:3,4 *And behold, the Angel who spoke to me came forward, and another angel came to him. And He said to him, "Walk fast, speak to that young man, and say, Jerusalem will not remain walled."* 'The other Angel' is thus the same Angel here as 'the Angel of the LORD' in Zechariah 1 because both are called Maleach YAHWE. Also in the book of Daniel and in Ezekiel there is talk of *the Man*. Daniel 10:5/12:6,7 and Ezekiel 40:3ev. Further research indicates that this is *the Son of Man*, with whom the Lord Jesus will later identify. The Man is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is involved not only – as in Daniel and Ezekiel – in the execution of God's plans, but also in direct revelation.

The Son of Man between the seven lamps.



God stands by His choice to reside in Jerusalem among His people.

God has re-chosen the city of Jerusalem to live among His people. The LORD had already indicated his choice of a particular place in the book Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy 12:5 *But to the place that the Lord, your God, will choose from all your tribes to establish His Name there, you must ask for and come there.* As history progresses, it becomes clear which place this is. It became Jerusalem. 2 Chronicles 3:1 *Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD, in Jerusalem, on Mount Moria, where the LORD had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had determined, on the threshing floor of Ornan, the Jebusite.* God stands by that choice even after the exile. Zechariah 1:17 *The LORD will still comfort Sion and still prefer Jerusalem.* That's special. Jerusalem is the eternal city of God. The city may have been destroyed in 586 BC with temple and palace, but over time God will reside there. This commitment is not explicitly repeated in the New Testament, but is the great assumption of the Biblical Expectation of the Future. For example, the Lord Jesus foresees the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 AD. Mark 13:1,2 *At the same time, the Lord sees history find its climax again in the Jerusalem of the future.* Markus 13:14 *After 2000 years, Jerusalem has been in the hands of Israel since 1967 AD as the eternal capital – including the temple square and the temple mount.* Lukas foresees a restoration of Jerusalem when the fullness of the nations has entered. Luke 21:24 *And Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.* The Apostle Paul is also under the assumption that the end time will take place in and around Jerusalem where he too assumes another temple. 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4 *Don't let anyone fool you in any way. For that day does not come, unless first the apostasy is come and the man of lawlessness, the man doomed to destruction, is revealed, the adversary, who also rises above all that is called God or revered as God, so that he sits as God in the temple of God and pretends to be God.* The testimony of Jesus and Paul is consistent with that of the Lord in the book of Revelation, where the temple is rebuilt and the sacrificial service is underway. Revelation 11:1,2 *And I was given a yardstick that resembled a staff. And the angel had come to stand there and said, "Rise up and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship in it." But leave out the outer forecourt of the temple and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will trample the holy city for forty-two months.* It will come as no surprise to anyone that on the new earth the New Jerusalem descends as the place where God will dwell among His people. Revelation 21:2,3 *And I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, descended from God from heaven, prepared as a bride made gracefully for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven say, Behold, the tent of God is with the people, and He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.*

The vision touches the present and the future.

The visions of the prophet Zechariah may be the subject of something remarkable. On the one hand, it touches the immediate future of Israel. The people will receive permission from the new King of Media/Persia, Kores to return to their own country and rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the temple. It affects them very directly in their popular existence. Zechariah 1:11 *And they answered the Angel of the LORD, standing among the myrtles, and said, "We have passed through the land, and behold, all land is down and silent."* The translator chooses the translation 'land', while in Hebrew there is the possible translation of *land* or *earth*. The translation with 'country' is appropriate. There is disappointment, because the Jewish people

seems to be waiting and passive, as far as temple construction is concerned. It is understandable, because from above, they were thwarted. The construction was shut down by the peoples. God wasn't happy about that. He promised to take action. The future expectation is not primarily focused on the distant, but the near future. Yet we cannot escape the impression that with this restoration of relations with His people and God's dwell among His people, a signal for the distant future is being sent. What is the case? The translation with the word 'earth' (as opposed to 'land') is legitimate, especially if we read 'all the earth'. The underlying idea may be that the riders 'cross the whole earth' to gather the people – the Jews in the scattering. The vision seems to describe the current situation and at the same time it transcends. The agreement with today is great. The Jewish people are back in the country of origin since 1948 AD. Jews from all corners of the earth return to their land. They have also regained possession of Jerusalem. However, the rebuilding of the temple is not yet possible because of the Islamic peoples who have placed their sanctuary on the temple square. It is possible that we can draw hopeful conclusions from the LORD's commitment to Zechariah for our time and the Jewish people. God is in our time moving the objections from the peoples aside so that the temple can be built. The message is also today that God will rebuild the temple and reside in their midst. He will punish the nations that corner His people. God has moved with mercy over His people of Israel.

Jerusalem and the temple and the whole earth.



The second vision: The four horns and the four craftsmen.

Zechariah 1

When Zechariah again opened his eyes, he saw four horns. He asked about its meaning. The horn is the bull's weapon of attack. It symbolizes world power and struggle. See Daniel 8 and the ram with the two horns (Media/Persia) and the goat (Greece) with the one horn. The Angel explained on behalf of God that they are "the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem." The first horn was defeated at that moment: The world power Babel is broken. The return of the Jews from Babel's exile is a first confirmation of this commitment from above. Slowly but surely, the Jews see the contours of liberation as Jerusalem is completely rebuilt with the temple of the LORD. The lord's service is set from 539 BC but takes on a deeper sheen when the temple is also finished in 515 BC. God enters His house according to His promise. When, under Ezra's leadership, the legal network and the population register and under the leadership of Nehemiah 60 – 80 years later the temple wall is restored, something of the former glory of Jerusalem becomes visible. The vision of God continues when Zechariah gets an eye for four blacksmiths. Craftsmen

are the people of 'the war industry' at the time. They make the swords and arrowheads and the large iron balls hurled over the wall via a throwing machine from outside the city. The four blacksmiths stand for victory over the four horns. God shows that those four blacksmiths stand for victory over the four peoples who have made Judah difficult times. It is not possible to think of peoples other than the four kingdoms we know in the book of Daniel. Daniel 2:36-40 *This is the dream. (..) You're that golden head. After you, another kingdom will rise, lower in value than yours. Then another, the third kingdom, of bronze, that will rule the whole earth. And the fourth kingdom will be strong as iron, for the iron shatters and crushes everything. Just as the iron crushes everything, so this kingdom shatters and crushes everything.* In fact, according to this information, it is about Babel, Media/Persia, the Greek Empire and the Roman Empire. With the four Realms, Zechariah's time is fast forward. Further up in Zechariah, events – expected during the Greek empire – are also described. Zechariah 9:13 *If I will have strained Me Judah, and I will have laid Ephraim on the bow, and I will have set up your sons, Sion, against your sons, Greece, and I will have made you as the sword of a hero.* God foresees that the Roman Empire will also distinguish itself in a negative sense to harm Jerusalem. In 70 AD, the Roman Titus will take Jerusalem and destroy it. In this sense, Persia's victory over Babel and the lenient policy of return and reconstruction under Kores is indicative of the things God sees ahead.

The return from the diaspora from all corners of the earth.



The third vision: The young man with the measuring cord.

Zechariah 2

Zechariah sees a man with a measuring cord in his hand. The measuring cord plays a not insignificant role in the visions that give an impression of the future Jerusalem and the temple. Also in Ezekiel 40 we find a Man with a measuring cord. This Man does measure the new temple. He won't be recalled. We therefore assume that the new temple of Ezekiel will really be on the new earth. The (young) man in Zechariah thinks he will measure the walls of the new Jerusalem in terms of length and width, but The Maleach YAHWE puts a stop to this.

The Old and the New Jerusalem.



Jerusalem of the future will not have a wall at all "because of the multitude of people and animals in its midst." That wall is not necessary either, because God will be a wall of fire around the city in the future. God lives in the middle of Jerusalem. At first glance, more is told about the New Jerusalem than about the restored Jerusalem of after 539 BC.

Jews from the four corners of heaven.

The place where the returning Jews come from also requires clarification. On the one hand, when there is the four-wind zones of heaven, we get the feeling that it is the global diaspora of Jews. Zechariah 2:6 *O, oh, then flee from the land of the north! If the LORD speaks, for I have scattered you across the four corners of heaven, the LORD speaks.* Babel ruled over what we call 'the Middle East' for a time. The Middle East was on all sides - NSEW - of what was then Israel. At the same time, when there is 'the land of the north' – there are concrete indications that the exiles of Babel are meant. Zacharia 2:7 *O, Sion! See to escape, you who live with the daughter of Babel!* Once again, we notice that the LORD speaks directly to Zechariah through the Angel of the LORD. God sent the Maleach JHWH. He moves His hand over Babel. Zechariah 2:9 *For, behold, I move my hand over them, and they will become their servants to loot. Then you will know that the Lord of the armed forces has sent me.* As a result, the servants of that country – the people of Media and Persia – turn against Babel. Babel had recruited people from all subjugated nations for his armies, but also had a place in the administration of the Babylonian empire. The leaders of Media/Persia take power in Babel at some point. It is known from history that it was initially a power grab without bloodshed. For the Jews, this change of power means a possibility to return home. Zechariah 2:8 *For so says the LORD of the forces: After He has promised glory, He has sent me to those pagan peoples who rob you, for whoever touches you touches His apple of the eye.* God would like the Jews to leave Babel. He commits to the promise that He will return to live in their midst, in Sion.



Whoever touches Israel touches God's apple of the eye.

God will accept the pagan peoples into His people.

The moment we think of the post-539 BC situation, God comes with an expectation that lifts the situation to the distant future. Not only will the Jews return to Israel from all corners of the world by the end of time, but the LORD will also include many pagan peoples in His people. Zechariah 2:11 *Many pagan peoples will be joined by the Lord on that day, and they will be me to a people, and I will dwell in your midst.* This is not about punishing the pagans; on the contrary, here we listen to the promise that God will save and make 'His people' not only from the people of Israel, but from all nations. Here a hint of the veil is lifted so that our thoughts focus on the coming of Christ. In the next chapter, with the promised coming of the Sprout, Christ's coming is pre-sorted. With the coming of the Lord Jesus, there is also a prospect of salvation from loss and guilt for the peoples.

The rejection of the Messiah by the Jewish people and the suffering and dying of the Lord Jesus in Zechariah assumed.

Remarkably, the suffering and dying of the Lord is assumed in Zechariah. With the words *"they will behold me that they have pierced"* (Zechariah 12) and *the 30 pieces of silver* (Zechariah 11) foretold the suffering of Christ. The believers of the Jewish people will later grieve much because of the initial rejection of Jesus Christ. Zechariah 12:10 *But over the house of David and over the inhabitants of Jerusalem I will pour out the Spirit of mercy and of the prayers. They will behold me, which they have pierced. They will mourn Him, as with the grieving complaint about an only child; and they will complain bitterly about Him, as one bitterly complains about a firstborn.* People who have accepted the Lord as their Savior and Lord are beginning to realize more and more what has happened between God and the people. It is said immediately after the Lord's death. John 19:37 *And another scripture says: They will see on Him that they have pierced.* The fact that Christ Jesus has victimized himself to save the world, is not only for people from Jewish backgrounds, but for all peoples cause for humility and mourning. Revelation 1:7 *Behold, He comes with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, including those who have pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn Him. Yes, amen.* The thirty pieces of silver refer to Judas and the reward he received for the betrayal of time and the place where one might pick up Jesus. Matthew 26:14,15 *Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the priests and said, "What do you want to give me if I surrender Him to you?" And they awarded him thirty pieces of silver.*

The cut in Jesus' side



The thirty pieces of silver of Judas.



In this manner, not only is the suffering of Christ in Zechariah predicted, but also the dismissive attitude of the Jewish people towards the God-sent Messiah, who comes to save God's people. We notice that with Zechariah, but also the Gospels, we seem to count on a broad rejection of the Messiah in advance. John 1:10,11 *He was in the world and the world was born by Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His, but the Hiss did not take him.* The Lord Jesus was also aware of the things to come, given his three announcements of suffering and dying and – remember – the resurrection. Mark 8:31 *And He began to teach them that the Son of Man should suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders and high priests and scribes and be killed and after three days of standing up.*



According to the New Testament, the rejection by the Jewish people – of Christ and the Gospel – is the reason for God to address the pagan peoples with the Gospel. The rejection of the Messiah makes Jews and gentiles equal in the sense that they all fall under the heading of 'wicked' and 'sinful'. Through the Atonement of sins, the Lord Jesus has become the Savior of the world and is giving justice and peace to all who believe whether someone is from Israel or from the nations. Romans 11:11 *I say: Have they tripped with the intention of falling? Not at all! By their fall, however, salvation has come to the Gentiles to envy them.* For someone like Paul, the Jewish community's rejection of Jesus was a signal to go to the nations with the Gospel. Acts 13:46,47 *But Paul and Barnabas said boldly: It was necessary that the Word of God be spoken to you first, but since you reject it and do not consider yourself worthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. So the Lord has commanded us: I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may be salvation to the extreme of the earth.*

ISRAEL THE PEOPLES ISRAEL

The Lord pointed out that the rejection by the Jewish people has consequences.

The Lord Jesus has pointed out that the widespread rejection by the Jewish people has consequences. He announces the destruction of Jerusalem, which happened in the year 70 AD under the Roman Titus. Luke 19:41-44 *And when He came close and saw the city, He wept over her. He said, "Oh, that on this your day, you would also recognize what is serving your peace! Now, however, it is hidden from your eyes. For there will be days when your enemies will set a wall around you, encircle you and corner you from all sides. And they will destroy you and crush your children in you. Nor will they leave a stone on the other stone in you, because you have not recognized the time when you were looked at.* Then for the Jewish people the diaspora dawns, which makes them spread worldwide. The changing of the guard has taken place. God, with the Gospel, addresses the nations. The period of the nations is therefore assumed in the prophecies of Zechariah. The Lord Jesus notes that all nations must be reached with the gospel before God returns to Israel. Mark 13:10 *And the Gospel must first be preached to all nations.*

The destruction of Jerusalem 70 AD.



The foundation of the State of Israel 1948 AD.



After that, another period is expected for the Jewish people. In Romans 11, Paul already opens the door to the restoration of relations between God and the Jewish people. At some point, the time of the nations will be over and God will return to His old people of Israel. Romans 11:25 *For I do not want, brethren, that you have no knowledge of this secret (lest you be wise in your own mind), that some hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has entered.* This science is shared by the Lord Jesus (Mark 13:14) and also the Apostle John (Revelation 7:1-8) and Luke (Luke 21:24). Not only does God promise to return to His people of Israel, but he will at that moment take away the partial hardening that lies over their hearts. Lately, it will be characterized by optimal openness to the Gospel, at least potentially. The people with Jewish backgrounds really – as everybody else – have to personally accept the Lord Jesus as their Savior and Lord and to live according to God's commandments, if they want to enter God's Kingdom. That last period of history started in 1948 AD.

Basically:

1. The rejection of the Lord Jesus by the Jewish people is presumed in Zechariah.
2. With that rejection, the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD and the diaspora is also fixed.
3. Here, too, God has been given the reason – at least for a time – to turn away from Israel and turn to the nations with the Gospel.
4. The temple destruction in 70 AD and the diaspora and the permission to return to its own country in 1948 AD and the reconstruction of city and temple is partly assumed in Zechariah.
5. The time of temple destruction in 586 BC. to temple restoration in 515 BC is reflected in the temple destruction of 70 AD and a beginning of restoration of the Jewish people in their own country from 1948 AD.
6. Maybe in these facts lies the stimulus of making the way free for rebuilding the temple in our days.
7. For the above facts, the LORD in Zechariah can also shed light a hint of the last part of history, the end time and the transition to the new heaven and the new earth.

Christ Jesus riding a donkey is the king.



Christ Jesus is the coming King.

Christ Jesus is the coming King – to which Zechariah refers to in 9:9,10 – who, riding a donkey,

not only enters Jerusalem, but is also, in a visual way with the donkey proclaiming peace for Israel and the people. The Lord means that beyond struggle and war, He will bring peace, i.e. by bringing justice through His innocent suffering and dying. The angel adds something else. Zechariah 2:11 *Then you will know that the Lord of the forces has sent me to you.* It is the Lord Jesus, who is involved in the revelation about the future, who will fulfill that revelation himself. At that moment, every believer will see that it is He who has been sent to Zechariah. Yet – despite the fact that the LORD briefly lifts the veil of 2,000 years of Christian church from the nations – the prophecy in Zechariah continues to address the chosen part of the natural people of Israel. It has already been said that God will include the believers of the peoples in His people. Zechariah 2:12 *The LORD will take ownership of Judah as His part in the holy land. He will still choose Jerusalem.* The election of Jerusalem therefore applies not only to the post-539 BC situation, but also to that of our time and that of the new earth. Also with the prophet Ezekiel, God will draw a future situation when He will reside in the temple among His people Israel on the new earth. Ezekiel 48 From that moment on, the temple is forever among the twelve tribes that are each assigned their place in the former territory of Israel north and south of the Holy Area in the Israel of the new earth. Ezekiel confirms this prophecy of Zechariah and vice versa. However, God will not only dwell in the midst of His old people Israel, but also in the midst of the peoples of this world if all the elect will dwell in the land of their original peoples and Israel in his own country. As such, the LORD presents Himself when He talks about "all flesh." Zechariah 2:13 *Be silent before the Lord, all flesh, for He has awakened from His holy dwelling.*

The twelve gems represent the twelve tribes and the twelve apostles of the Lamb.



The Fourth Vision: Joshua the High Priest.

Zechariah 3

The Jews who returned from exile had two leaders; a spiritual leader Joshua, the high priest and a political leader, Zerubbabel the town holder. Both play a positive role in the visions of God to Zechariah. Joshua is rehabilitated by the LORD in the priesthood. In the vision we notice that the Maleach JHWH is confronted with his opponent, Satan. Satan points to Joshua with a dismissive glance. The message is clear: 'Surely you don't want to use a high priest like Joshua!?' It is true, the clothes of the high priest – normally an outward token of inner cleanness – does not look good. In the face of Satan, the Maleach JHWH makes it clear that He has taken away the iniquity of the high priest, something that may be visible in the pure clothes in which he is dressed. Zechariah 3:4 *Then He took the floor and said to those who stood before His face: Take off the dirty clothes! Then He said to him, "Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will put on your party clothes."* The high priest also gets a new turban. It is a remarkable detail 1. Because

Zechariah asks for this and 2. because with the turban the Jewish people appear before God's Face. The returned Jews are understood in the cleansing of their high priest. With this new ordination, the high priest receives a promising command from God. God appoints Joshua as a high priest over His home, the temple in Jerusalem. Not without conditions, of course, but very honorable. Zechariah 3:7 *Thus the Lord of the forces says, If you go in My ways, and if you perform your duties on my behalf, you will also control My house, and also guard my forecourts, and I will give you dealings with those who stand here.* It is clear to everyone from this moment on that the LORD has supported the high priesthood of Joshua. According to Ezra, both prominent figures – Zerubbabel and Jesua (Joshua) – were motivated by the prophets Haggai and Zacharia to get started with temple construction. Ezra 5:1,2 *The prophets Haggai, the prophet, and Zacharia, the son of Iddo, prophesied among the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem; in the Name of the God of Israel, they prophesied against them. Then Zerubbabel, the son of Sealthiel, and Jesua, Jozadak's son, stood up and began to rebuild the house of God, who lives in Jerusalem. God's prophets, who supported them, were with them.*

Haggai speaks with Zerubbabel and Joshua about the rebuilding of the temple.



The priest-king Joshua.

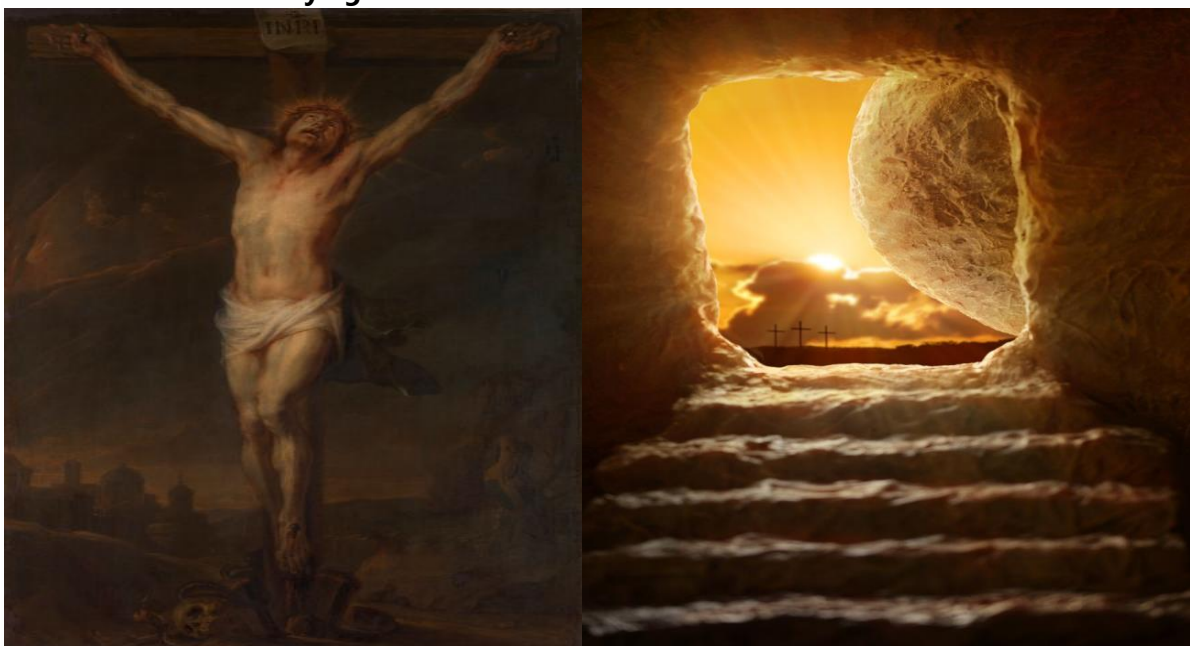
Just as the entire return from exile and the reconstruction of the city and temple is a sign of future salvation, the person of the high priest is also the depiction of the future high priest, the Lord Jesus Christ. Immediately after the inauguration of Joshua, the LORD God comes with the commitment of the Branch. Zechariah 3:8 *Listen, High Priest Joshua, you and your friends sitting before you – they are, after all, a miracle sign – for behold, I am going to make My Servant, the Branch, come.* The Branch – as an indication of the coming Messiah – is also given by God through the prophet Isaiah 4:2 and Jeremiah 23:5. It can't be a coincidence that the Branch is also in Isaiah a more high priestly person who cleanses of sins. Isaiah 4:2,3 *On that day, the MAN's Branch will be a glorious piece of jewelry, and the fruit of the earth to glory and listen to those in*

Israel who have escaped. Then it will happen that whoever is left in Sion, and who is left in Jerusalem, will be called holy, all who are written down in Jerusalem. In Jeremiah the Branch is a more royal person, bringing victory. Jeremiah 23:5 *Behold, there will come days, the LORD says, that I will raise a righteous Branch for David. He will rule as king and act wisely, He will do justice and justice on the earth.* It is the priest-king Melchizedek by whom the LORD has marked his intention early in the history of Israel. Genesis 14:18-24 In Psalm 110 and the Hebrew letter of the NT, the priest-king is drawn and confirmed. Psalm 110:4 *The LORD has sworn, and He will have no remorse for it: You are a Priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.* Hebrews 7. There is no denying that the kingship of God will be opened along the way of the priesthood – the sacrifice. The Lord Jesus meets with one word the combination of king and priest in the heart. Mark 10:45 *For the Son of man has not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His soul as a ransom for many.* This priest king will bring peace through justice. Then every citizen of His Kingdom can sit under his fig tree and vine.

The keystone of the temple indicates its completion.

The fourth and fifth vision belong together. Joshua will be the high priest, and Zerubbabel is the one who builds the temple. In the end, it's Zerubbabel who comes up with the keystone. Zechariah 4:7 *He will bear the keystone under loud cries: Mercy, mercy be upon him!* Both have a vision of the keystone of the temple, with the seven eyes. The keystone is the last stone with which the temple construction is closed. The keystone thus speaks of the completion of the temple. There are seven eyes on the keystone. They are "the seven eyes of the LORD that are drawn all over the earth." Zechariah 4:10 From Jerusalem, God is aware of all that is happening on earth. The LORD puts His personal signature on the keystone. Then follows a wondrous reference to the way in which the Lord-King the Lord Jesus Christ takes away the iniquity so to speak in one day. Zechariah 3:9 *I will take away the iniquity of this country in one day.* It is the day of Christ's conciliatory suffering and dying on the cross of Calvary. When we have to choose between Good Friday and Easter Monday, the choice may fall on the latter because then – with the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead – the crown was put on the work of salvation. 1 Corinthians 3:12-20.

Dying and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.



The fifth vision: The golden lampstand and the two olive trees. Zechariah 4.

Yet the night is not over. Zechariah is awakened again. He receives a new vision. The angel who spoke to him, asks him to describe what he sees. It is the seven-armed lampstand of the temple. Seven lights are lit on oil that appear to be supplied directly from the olive oil of the two olive trees that stand next to the temple. Zechariah can tell what he sees, but he doesn't understand. That's what he says. Then follows a word from the LORD to Zerubbabel, the builder of the temple. He's a scion of David's house. The political leader of that moment after the exile. Although he did not become king, but city holder he does count in the family register of David that ends in Christ. Matthew 1:12,16 *After the Babylonian exile, Jeconiah Sealtuel, Sealthiel begat Zerubbabel; (..) Jacob begat Joseph, the man of Mary, from whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.* God has a Word for Zerubbabel. He should not expect it from swords and chariots, but only from God's Spirit. The reconstruction of the temple is actually the best this man can do. Give God a place of residence in the midst of His people. The Angel of the LORD tells Zacharia that Zerubbabel will complete the temple construction and that this is also proof that God has spoken to Zechariah through this Angel (Maleach JHWH). Some people will downplay the specialness of the result achieved, but according to God there is no reason for it. It is very special what He accomplishes through these people, Joshua and Zerubbabel. The temple may not be quite what it was, but God and the Jews are happy with it. Zechariah 4:10 *For who despises the day of small things, while those seven are happy when they see the tin weight in the hand of Zerubbabel? Those seven are the eyes of the LORD, which draw all over the earth. The keystone of the temple on which the seven eyes can be seen appears to be made of tin.* The temple is built not only in the midst of God's people, but also in the midst of the peoples on earth. Through the seven eyes, God is aware of what is happening in all corners of the earth. It is about the worldwide presence of God, who lives in the temple in Jerusalem among the Jewish people.

The lampstand



Eye



Oil



The seven eyes stand before the Holy Spirit by whom God is present all over the earth.

Because the oil for the anointing and for the light on the lampstand consist of the same substance, both also represent the same symbol: Anointing = Spirit = light. The eyes and the number 7 are a different symbolism but of the same Spirit. Let's start with the combination of light and Spirit. We find that combination in the book of Revelation. Revelation 4:5 *And there were seven fiery torches burning before the throne. These are the seven Spirits of God.* Here, by the way, we also see the coherence of light and Spirit and the number seven, which is the number of fullness. The seven Spirits for God's throne are already seen in the book of Revelation. Revelation 1:4 *John to the seven churches that are in Asia: be upon you and peace, of Him Who is and Who is and Who comes, and of the seven Spirits, who are for His throne (..)*

In the midst of the throne stood a Lamb as slaughtered, with seven horns and seven eyes.



The combination of the seven eyes with the seven Spirits we encounter in Revelation 5:6: *And I saw, and see, in the midst of the throne and of the four animals, and among the elders stood a Lamb as a slaughter, with seven horns and seven eyes. These are the seven Spirits of God that have been broadcast all over the earth.* The eyes and the spirits stand for the same. Through the seven Spirits, God can be anywhere on earth. He sees everything. The seven Spirits are the seven eyes of God. Nothing escapes His gaze.

The two prophets of the end times.

Zechariah wonders what those two olive trees stand for? With their oil, they ensure that the seven-armed lampstand can spread light in the temple. They were on the left and right of the lampstand. According to the Angel who spoke to him, you should think of them as two people who play an important role besides God. Presumably God wants us to think of Joshua and Zerubbabel at that time. They are people who – given the appreciation expressed in the visions – are of great significance for the fulfillment of God's plans. Zechariah 4:14 *He said, "These are the two anointed ones that stand with the Lord of all the earth.* It literally says; two "sons of oil". Presumably these two persons also refer to the distant future. We must think of two anointed members of the LORD. We know that *the high priest* and *the king* and *the prophet* are among the anointed of the Lord. In fact, someone like David was anointed king, for example. It was a sign of a special gift from the Holy Spirit that these persons received in order to exercise their ministry properly. 1 Samuel 16:13 *Then Samuel took the oil horn and anointed him among his brothers. And the Spirit of the LORD became skillful of David from that day and from now on.* In the book of Revelation, this verse points to two people who are very similar to Moses and Elijah, who support the Christian Jews in Jerusalem during a period of great tribulation in the end times. Revelation 11:3,4 and 6 *And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, dressed in mourning clothes. They are the two olive trees and the two lampstands, which stand before the God of the earth. They have power to close the sky, so that no rain will fall in the days when they prophesy. And they have power over the waters to turn it into blood, and to hit the earth with all kinds of plagues, as often as they wish.* Remarkably, they are the same two prophets who also assisted the Lord Jesus in his Exodus – on His way to suffering and dying and resurrection in Jerusalem. Mark 9:2-4 *And after six days Jesus took Peter and James and John with him and brought them apart on a high mountain, only them; and He was changed shape before their eyes. And His clothes became shiny, very white, like snow, as white as no wool worker on earth can make them. And to them Elijah appeared with Moses, and they spoke to Jesus.*



Next to the lamp stand are two olive trees.

The sixth vision: The flying scroll.

Zechariah 5

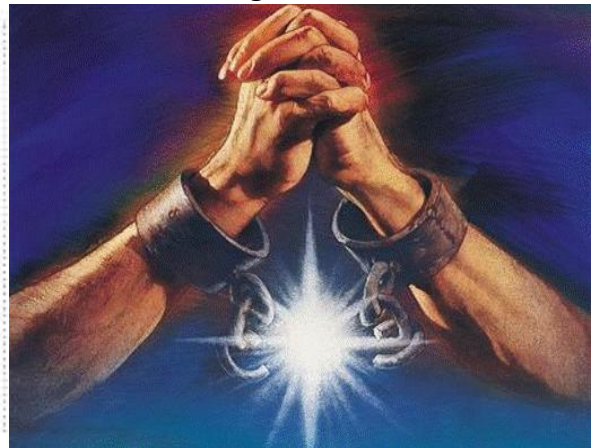
The scroll is probably as well known at that time as the pocket book with us. At that time, one wrote on a sheet of 'paper' of parchment or papyrus. They didn't fold the paper, they rolled it up. When used in the synagogue, 'the book' is rolled up in a beautiful tube decorated with gold or silver. The scroll Zechariah saw was completely rolled out and described on both sides. On the one hand, it was about theft and what would happen to a thief. On the other side it was written about perjury and how it would perish someone who was guilty of it. Zechariah 5:3 *Then He said to me, This is the curse that will go out all over the land. According to this curse, anyone who steals will be wiped out from here, and according to this curse, anyone who takes a false oath will be wiped out from here.* It had gone completely wrong – before the exile – at the point of the Torah. The people of Israel had gradually violated all the commandments anyone can think of. The actions of prophets such as Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel had not had the desired result. It went from bad to worse. In the future, the LORD does not want to see two cases, theft and perjury. One touches the 'mine' and the 'his', the other touches the legal system that cannot exist without reliable witnesses. For that reason, those people must swear by the name of God that they will speak the truth. Because people do these things in secret, God – who sees everything – will punish those people who make themselves guilty of perjury. Theft touches the relationship with people and perjury affects the relationship with God. Zechariah is shown a vision of a flying scroll of large dimensions. The book is ten by five meters. The scroll flies over the land and a devastating curse goes out to people who steal and take a false oath. Such a person's house will be physically demolished. It's going to be a destructed building.

The flying scroll.



God wants to tackle the hidden sin to preserve the people in obedience. In Zechariah 5, life is placed under the blessing and curse of God. In the time of Zechariah, God appointed two people, namely Joshua as the high priest and Zerubbabel as the town holder. These people are responsible for the ins and outs of the community in religious and social terms. Those two dignitaries will also monitor the observance of God's commandments religiously and ethically. There will always be things that evade their eye, especially things like perjury and theft. But God is still there. God will ensure that sin – including the hidden sins – is banished from His people. The LORD is going to do something about sin. The sinner is tackled and the blame is eradicated on earth. It is important that the hidden sins do not go unpunished. Otherwise, the people get the idea that everyone gets away with everything. When such a thought starts to control people, it doesn't take long or they take it less closely with good and evil. God wants to tackle the hidden sin to preserve the people in obedience.

The Lord Jesus has come to free us from the devil and death and guilt.



Sin and evil must be out of the world.

More had to be done with sin and evil. The suffering of the judgment of sin – namely the exile – helps to bring people into view the seriousness of the situation, but it does not prove sufficient. People must be armed against it, but God must also take away sin and evil through victory over evil, the atonement of sins, and the promise of the Holy Spirit. Also, once God have to finally reckon with sin and the wicked people and evil. These are the promises of the New Covenant. Jesus has come to free us from the guilt and the devil. Matthew 1:21 says that Jesus has *come "to redeem us from our sins,"* while 1 John 3:8 states that the Lord *has come "to break the works of the devil."* In the way the Lord in the Sermon on the Mount speaks of *the house on the rock or on the sand* – or rather the consequence of a righteous or sinful life – there is great agreement with the vision of the flying scroll. The consequence – for those who do not take the Sermon on the Mount seriously – has equally far-reaching measures: Their house will be destroyed. We see a house in front of us that is being demolished to the ground, but we can also think of someone's life, their marriage, their family being disrupted. Jesus tells this with the metaphor of 'the house on the rock or on the sand'. The Sermon on the Mount is also a kind of flying scroll. Once again, it is noticeable that the scroll flies over the land, a word that can just as easily be translated with the whole earth.

The whole country.



The whole earth



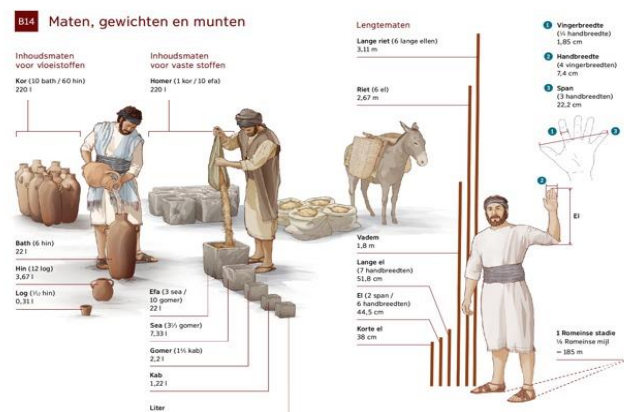
The Seventh Vision. The flour barrel.

Zacharia 5

Still the visions are not over. When the angel asks Zechariah what he sees, he observes an efa. An efa is actually a weight class. It is a large box that can be sealed, in which a fixed amount of grain – an efa – can be stored. For the feeling of Zechariah there is an efa, but God knows what is hidden in it, namely evil. This in itself is no surprise. When a people like Israel forget God – as in the time before exile – It slowly but surely becomes dark in the land. Evil then comes to live in the land. God wants to show that He is cleaning up evil and making the land of Israel a place of light and justice again. In the coffin it turns out to be lady wickedness. When this is detected, the lid is quickly closed again. Two females with wings of angels bring the coffin (back) to the land of Sinjar.



The efa.



Babel is the adversary of God and the believers.

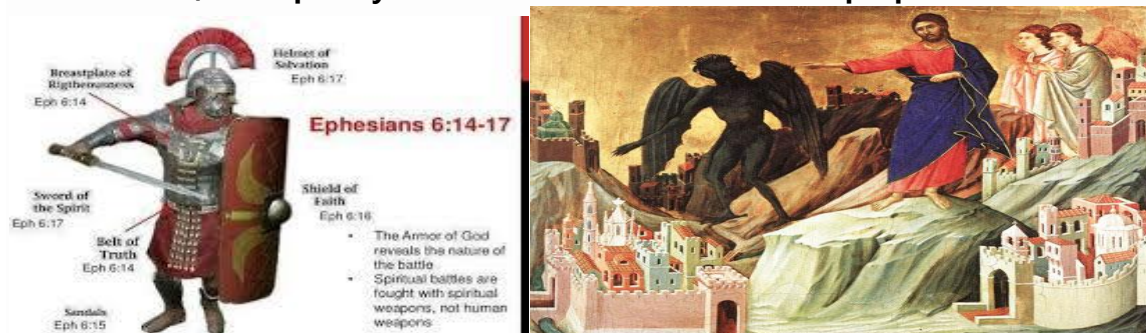
Sinjar is the land of Babel. Babel is the firm adversary of God. That played in ancient times with *the tower of Babel*. Genesis 11:1,2 *All the earth had one language and one more words. And it happened, as they moved east, that they found a plain in the land of Sinjar.* That's where they moved in. That was also the case in the time of the exile. Daniel 1:1,2 *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babel, came to Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim, the king of Judah, in his hand, and some of the objects of the house of God. He brought it to the land of Sinjar, to the house of his god. He brought the objects to his god's treasury. Babel will also choose a god-hostile attitude in the future. Revelation 18:1,2 *After that, I saw another angel descend from heaven. He had great power, and the earth was enlightened by his glory. And he cried out with a powerful voice: She has fallen, she has fallen, the great Babylon, and become a place of demons, a refuge from all kinds of unclean spirits, and a refuge from all kinds of unclean and repulsive birds.* That's where this woman is at home. In Sinjar,*

a house is being built for her. There she is hoisted on a pedestal. It is truly a relief when the source of evil is removed from Israel for an extended period of time, so that the negative influence of the power of darkness is absent.

Jesus conquers Satan.

Evil is a great source of infection for sin. It's not enough to deal with the sinner. If evil itself is not addressed it is mopping with the tap open. In terms of the Gospel, you see that the Lord Jesus has not only come to free God's people from sins. That is what the angel says – as we have already seen – to Joseph in Matthew 1:20,21. But the same Lord will also address and destroy the source of sin – the devil. That was the purpose of His coming. That's what John says in his Gospel. 1 John 3:8 *To this end, the Son of God has been revealed that He would break the works of the devil.* It is the NT Hebrew writer who tells how this worked. Hebrews 2:14,15 *Because now those children are of flesh and blood, He has also participated in this in order to nullify by death those who had power over death – that is the devil, and to redeem all those who were subjected to slavery throughout their lives by fear of death.* The NT Hebrew writer expresses himself explicitly about the Lord Jesus' victory over Satan. The Lord Himself also makes it clear that His action against the demons cannot be separated from the victory over the great boss of evil Beelzebub. Mark 3:22-27 *And the scribes who had come from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebub, and: By the leader of the demons, He ejects the demons." And He called them to Himself and said to them in parables, "How can Satan exorcise Satan?" (..) No one can enter the house of a strong man and rob his household goods, if he does not bind the strong first; And then he can rob his house.* None of us will be surprised now when Jesus says to his family – who want to take Him out of there because they fear he has lost his mind – "that his family is made up of people who do God's will." Mark 3:33-35 *And He answered them and said, "Behold, My mother, and my brethren; for whoever does the will of God, it is My brother and my sister and my mother.* The Lord Jesus removes evil to make room for following God. When the work of salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ is complete and He has put Himself on the right hand of God the Father, it is – at least as far as heaven is concerned – over and out with Satan. It's being evicted from heaven. Revelation 12:7-9 *Then war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels waged war against the dragon, the dragon and his angels also waged war. But they were not strong enough, and their place was no longer found in heaven. And the great dragon was cast down, namely the ancient serpent, which is called devil and Satan, which deceives the whole world. He is thrown down upon the earth and his angels were cast down with him.* The Resurrection and Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ is the beginning of the end for the power of evil. By the end of time, Satan is released once more on earth, but after a short time it is also completely over and out with him when God makes him disappear into hell with all the demons and people on his hand. Revelation 20.

The sinfulness, the depravity itself is also discarded from God's people.



The Eighth Vision: Four chariots and horses.

Zechariah 6

The horses with their chariots symbolize war and struggle and victory on God's side. The horse and the chariot are the modern tank in the wars of that time. It's God's struggle. The horses come from God. From it – from the exit of the sky – the copper mountains speak. This is confirmed by our Bible part and what is said of the four winds. Zechariah 6:4 *To which the Angel replied and said to me, These are the four winds of heaven, which are moving out from the place where they have stood before the Lord of all the earth.* The horses and chariots are fighting the battle of God on earth. They are the weapons in God's hand with which He defeats the nations that stood up to Him, especially the peoples of the North. God ends the exile of 70 years of Babylon and gives His people the possibility of returning to Jerusalem and rebuilding the temple. Zechariah 6:6 *That the black horses have, go out to the land of the north; the white horses pull out, chase them, and the spotted trek out to the land of the south.* The black horses head north and the white ones pull out of them. This is confirmed in verse 8 of our chapter. "What does the LORD want to say with this?" The black horse exercises God's judgment and brings hunger and death. The white horse brings the good news of cleanliness and victory and blessing. Not only does Babel run hard against God's judgment – when their reign ends after 70 years – but for the Jewish people, the promise of return comes true after those 70 years. The LORD not only ends an unwanted state of power, but he also creates a new hopeful situation for the Jewish exiles in Babel. "His Spirit dwells in the land of the North," Zacharia 6:8 notes from the vision.

The first wagon had red the second black the third white, the fourth strong, spotted horses.



Direct fulfillment as an image of later fulfillment.

What we have seen more often in the visions God gives to Zechariah is a direct fulfillment of God's promises, simultaneously providing a picture of long-term fulfillment. It is clear from the context that God is primarily targeting the North. God wants to punish Babel (black horses) and free Israel (white horses) in the sense that they receive the possibility of return and may rebuild the temple and the city of Jerusalem. This premonition is fulfilled before Zechariah's eyes. He lives precisely in the time when people of Jewish origin return from exile. Zechariah is himself a Jewish exile who has 'gone home'. At the same time, this first fulfillment is a picture of future fulfillment. You probably notice that from the vision, too. The horses are eager to pull out all over the earth and they actually do. Kol ha'arets (Hebrew) = *the whole country or the whole earth*. When we should summarize the nations that are judged by God at the end of time under one name, we do

not wrong the Bible when we say *Babylon*. Babylon is the denominator under which the LORD brings all evil among men together. Revelation 18:1-3 *After that, I saw another angel descend from heaven. He had great power, and the earth was enlightened by his glory. And he cried out with a powerful voice: She has fallen, she has fallen, the great Babylon, and become a place of demons, a refuge from all kinds of unclean spirits, and a refuge from all kinds of unclean and repulsive birds. For of the wine of the wrath of her fore, all nations have been drinking, and the kings of the earth have practiced forage with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the power of her profligate life.* After the final and eternal judgment of the non-believers – symbolized as the fall of Babylon – comes the victory and blessing for the believers of Israel and the nations in Revelation 21:1-4 and 22 *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed. And the sea was gone. And I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, descended from God from heaven, prepared like a bride made gracefully for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven say, Behold, the tent of God is with the people, and He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe all tears from their eyes, and death will no longer be there; there will also be no mourning, regret or trouble. Because the first things have passed.* First comes the acid of judgment over God's enemies, then the sweetness of victory for all God's friends.

The end of Babel.



The new Jerusalem.



Encore.

This – the help of the Jewish exiles from the home front – is what we can also observe immediately in the sequel of Zacharia 6, when we read about exiles who come with gifts for the temple. From Babel, three Jewish exiles have come with rich gifts. In any case, there is a nice amount of gold and silver. Zechariah must take the gold and silver from them. The exiles are called by name, but we do not know them. Zechariah 6:9,10 *The word of the LORD came to me: Take from the exiles, of Cheldai, Tobia, and Jedaja, gifts. And you must come on that day and enter the house of Josiah, the son of Zefanja, where those men from Babel have come.* They are 'ordinary' Jews who have built an existence in Babel. They have not come to settle in Judah and Jerusalem, but they are warmly committed to the LORD and their people. They have collected gold and silver from friends and family for charity: the rebuilding of the temple. Zechariah must take from God the gold and silver that the exiles have collected for the temple and have it made a crown. The crown is intended for the high priest Joshua. In itself, this is a remarkable action that perhaps also raised questions. They had come all the way from Babel with gold and silver for the temple, and

now it was destined for a crown. They must have been convinced that Zechariah was a prophet of the LORD. The fact that that crown was intended for the high priest is close to the destination they themselves envisioned. Zechariah 6:11 *Take silver and gold and make crowns, and put them on the head of the high priest Joshua, the son of Jozadak.* In that sense, it was very honorable. God in heaven had an eye for the gold and silver in favor of the temple. God used it to show something that was essential to God's people. That's very honorable. Honor that is later shown – when the golden crown is kept in the temple as a grateful memory – also to the three men. It's possible the men had questions about it, too. "What's a high priest to do with a crown?" If there is anyone – for whom you would expect the crown – it is Zerubbabel. He descended from King David. He may not have become king, but he made it a city holder. It remains remarkable that Zechariah Joshua had to crown the high priest. Normally, the high priest does not have a crown but a turban on it. In Zacharia 3:5 Zacharia NB had asked herself 'the high priest should also put on a turban!' The request was granted. This does indicate that Zechariah must have been aware himself, that a high priest does not normally wear a crown.

Priest and King.



The Branch.

After Zechariah had put the high priest on the crown, he had to give him a certain message on behalf of God. Zechariah 6:11,12 *Take silver and gold and make crowns, and put it on the head of the high priest Joshua, the son of Jozadak, and say to him: So says the LORD of the forces: Behold, a Man – His name is Branch – will rise from His place, and He will build the temple of the LORD.* This message is about 'the scion or the branch from the carved trunk of Isai'.

A Man, His Name is Branch will rise from His place. He will build the temple of the Lord.



We get the image in such a way that God – during the reign of the last king from the house of David – literally and figuratively cut the (tribal) tree of David's house. With a big blow the tree with

the exile fell to the ground in 586 BC. The royal tribe of the David Dynasty broke off. But out of the carved trunk, a twig would get along at a good time. The old family tree of David's house would re-emerge and produce a king. We also come across this branch with other prophets – such as Isaiah and Jeremiah and therefore also with Zechariah.

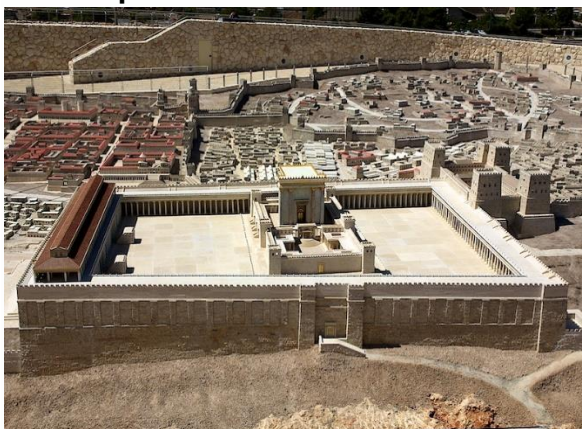
The Branch from the carved trunk of David.

Isaiah 4:2	On that day, the LORD's Branch will be a glorious piece of jewelry, and the fruit of the earth to glory and listen to those in Israel who have escaped.
Jeremiah 23:5	See, there will come days, the LORD says, that I will raise a righteous Branch for David. He will rule as king and act wisely, He will do justice and justice on the earth.
Jeremiah 33:15	In those days and in that time, I will make a Branch of justice stand up for David. He will do justice and justice on earth.
Zechariah 3:8	Listen, High Priest Joshua, you and your friends sitting in front of you – they are, after all, a miracle sign – because behold, I am going to make My Servant, the Branch, come. For behold, as for the stone I have laid for Joshua, On that one stone will be seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave it, speaks the Lord of the armed forces. I will take away the iniquity of this country one day.
Zechariah 6:12	And say to him, "So the LORD of the forces says, Behold, a Man – His name is Branch – will rise from His place, and He will build the temple of the LORD.

Jesus the priest-king.

The Lord Jesus does indeed look like Zerubbabel. One of the things that the Lord Jesus brings up is that He is going to build a new temple. John 2:19 *Jesus answered and said to them, "Tear down this temple, and in three days I will resurrect it."* The Jewish community is quite shocked by these statements by the Lord. They have a restored temple, with which they are quite content. You can say what you want from the King Herod – and there's a lot to be said about him – but he has restored the temple very nicely. When the Lord Jesus talks about breaking down the temple, they scare themselves. When Jesus then says that He can rebuild the temple in three days, their mouths fall open. "What do you say; Three days? Half a century has been built over the temple and are you going to do it in three days?"

The Temple of Herod.



Jesus, the Lamb of God.



But Jesus did not mention the temple of stone and wood, but He meant His body. Jesus is the high priest who – with His death and resurrection – sacrifices His own life to bring about reconciliation for the people of God and realizes God's indwelling in all believers. John 2:19-22

Jesus answered and said to them, "Tear down this temple, and in three days I will resurrect it." The Jews would say, "Forty-six years has been built on this temple, and you will resurrect it in three days?" But He spoke of the temple of His body. When He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them, and they believed the Scripture and the word Jesus had spoken. Jesus is the temple and the high priest and the sacrifice. I'm sure you've seen it already: Jesus builds the temple through sacrifice. Jesus builds the temple through the sacrifice (Joshua the sacrificial one and Zerubbabel the temple builder). It is Jesus who receives the kingship along the path of the priesthood.

The believers form a temple in which God dwells through His Spirit.

The temple built by Jesus has a special foundation and is built with special stones. It's a spiritual building, but that doesn't mean it's weaker than a building erected with big stones. It's not weaker, it's stronger. The stone temple and sacrificial service was set by God himself as a foreshadowing of the one Who would come; Jesus Christ, He is the reality of it. We read in NT Hebrews 8:1,2 *The essential now of the things we speak of is this: We have such a High Priest, One Who has put himself on the right hand of the Majesty's throne in the heavens. He is a Servant in the sanctuary and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord has founded and not a man.* It is about our Lord Jesus Christ who, through the sacrifice of His life, has prepared reconciliation for sinners once and for all. In other words, the foundation of the temple is the work of salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the bearer of God's church. 1 Corinthians 3:10,11 *In accordance with the grace of God given to me, I have laid the foundation as a wise master builder, and another has built upon it. However, everyone should watch over how he builds on it. For no one can lay a foundation other than what has been laid, that is Jesus Christ.* Faith in Him – the dead and resurrected Lord – not only brings the believers into a reconciled relationship with God that allows us to live with God, but the other way around: The Lord comes through the Holy Spirit live in the heart of every believer. In fact, people of faith are themselves temples of the Holy Spirit of God. 1 Corinthians 6:19 *Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in you and which you have received from God, and that you are not your own?* The Apostle Peter also works with concepts from the same metaphor, when he calls us as believers to "let us use as living stones for the construction of God's temple." 1 Peter 2:4,5 *and come to Him as to a living stone, which has been rejected by the people, but chosen by God and precious, then you yourself, as living stones, are built into a spiritual house, to a holy priesthood, to make spiritual sacrifices, which Are godly by Jesus Christ.*

God lives in us.



The temple built by Israel and the peoples.

It is this cooperation in the construction of the temple that in the future – looked like Zechariah – will be put into practice by all Christians of all languages and peoples worldwide through our Lord Jesus Christ. Zechariah 6:15 *One will come from afar and build the temple of the LORD.* The later confirmation of these words also points to the person of Zechariah as a prophet, but at the same time of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is involved in this revelation to Zechariah. Zechariah 6:15 *Then you will know that the Lord of the forces has sent me to you.* The person of Joshua and Zerubbabel are – because of this Word of the LORD – a direct affirmation for the prophetic service of Zechariah. But the future fulfillment of this prophecy – in the Person of Jesus Christ, who built the temple through His dying and resurrection and forms the temple with all believers – is a particular underlining of the fact that He is the Person God meant. Zechariah 6:15 *This will happen if you listen attentively to the voice of the LORD, your God. God will dwell in a temple on the new earth. Obedience comes first.*

The LORD concludes with these words.

Zechariah 6:15 *This will happen if you listen attentively to the voice of the LORD, your God.* With this, God does not make His plan of salvation dependent on the obedience of the people. In that case, it wouldn't look good for us. However, with this final sentence, the LORD makes it clear that obedience is part of the deal. Not only faith, but also obedience is required, although both are among the promises of the Gospel, which God wants to put into our lives through the atonement through the blood and the renewal by the Spirit of Christ.



God lives on the new earth in a temple of stone and by His Spirit in all men.

For the realization of many people, Christ replaced the physical temple – with priests and sacrifices and God's presence in a beautiful stone temple in Jerusalem – with His sacrifice. That is because the Lord identifies with the temple. John 2. Also, "the believer and the Christian church as the temple of the Holy Spirit" point in the same direction, though you do wonder in that case where the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father live? Do they live in the people on the new earth? The Father and the Son are represented by the Holy Spirit. One can rightly say, "Christ in me." But only in that sense. God, the Father and the Son have their existence outside the believers. But there's something else. For the feeling of many people of faith, Revelation 21 has the last word. John saw no temple on the new earth. Revelation 21:22 *I saw no temple in her, for the Lord, the almighty God, is her temple, and the Lamb.* Yet on the new earth there will be a temple of stone in which God dwells among His people Israel, among the nations. In the book of Ezekiel 40-48, the LORD devotes no less than 9 chapters to it: the new temple on the new earth. Who says that we – with today's knowledge – know that that temple is the metaphor of Christ, forgets that the eschatology of Ezekiel presupposes the coming of Christ (= the Shepherd in Ezekiel 34), including the Atonement of Sins and the Holy Spirit in Ezekiel 36. Revelation 21 is strongly written down by metaphor. Jerusalem is the bride. Christ is the Temple. Christ is the sun. Wouldn't there be a sun

shining on the new earth? Be clear; The most important thing that can be said about the new earth is the NAME of God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and the righteousness that the LORD personally bestows upon every believer through the death and resurrection of His Son in atonement and renewal by His Holy Spirit. However, God lives in the new temple of stone in the heart of His people Israel and the new world, while priests serve Him with sacrifices and songs and prayers together with all men.

Judeo-Christian Future Expectation from Zechariah. Full story

Part 2

Zechariah 7 and 8.

The delegation from Bethel.

The Since 539 BC the Jewish exiles from Babel have returned is the country of origin. They are included by Ezra in a list of villages and towns. It is noticeable that these are not only Judeans, but also villages and towns in the former north Israel. Bethel is a town in the former North Israel. It is surprising that – after twenty years – the inhabitants of Bethel go to Jerusalem to ask 'what to do with fasting and whether it was still necessary?' What is the case? When the Time of The Kings arrived, Israel was one people with one palace and one temple. That was David and Solomon's time. But after Solomon, God broke the empire in two pieces. It was a punishment for King Solomon who married foreign women and built temples for their gods. King Jeroboam became king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel in the 9th century BC. He probably deliberately chose Bethel to create a sanctuary for northern Israel. After all, the patriarch of Israel, Jacob, had had a special experience of faith here. In the sanctuary, Jeroboam placed a golden calf about which he proclaimed – just like Aaron before in the desert – 'that this was the God who had led them out of Egypt.' 1 Kings 12:28,29 Jeroboam had done so on purpose – a shrine of its own in Bethel and Dan – to prevent the people of the North from continuing to go to Jerusalem. He was afraid he'd lose them. This action is called 'the sin of Jeroboam' in the book Kings. King Jeroboam violated the second commandment with the golden calf. It became the beginning of the waist of faith, which led the LORD to finally exile the North In 720 BC. In this sense, everyone in Jerusalem will have been surprised that – after the exile – a group from Bethel arrives in Jerusalem "with a question for the prophets and priests in the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem'. It was not only a recognition of the temple of the LORD and the spiritual guidance that God had attached to His home in Jerusalem by the priests and prophets; It was also an admission of guilt and a show of repentance. In short: It looked like something had changed among the inhabitants of northern Israel and that in a positive sense.

Bethel on the map and in reality.



The Jews of Bethel want to please the LORD, but can they?

The Jews of Bethel came to try – it says – 'to try to favor the Face of the LORD'. Anyone who reads this understands the intention. One comes from Bethel to Jerusalem. They've totally abandoned the idea of a temple in Bethel. They go straight to the house of the LORD in Jerusalem. It must do something to God. This is a completely different attitude than it was before the exile. That may be true, but their question betrays between the lines also annoyance and recriminations. Of course, it's a real question, but they can't disguise the fact that they're tired of the time of fasting.

Zechariah 7:3 They said to the priests who were in the house of the Lord of the armies, and to the prophets: Should I continue to grieve in the fifth month and continue to isolate myself, as I have done for so many years now? Apparently, a tradition has grown that during the fifth month one or more days must be grieved and seceded because of the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile. It may be that the priests and prophets in Jerusalem decide differently, but they hope only one thing: "The end of this tradition." They don't really like to look back any longer, but they want to move forward. They want to look to the future. The Hebrew text shows that these two things are in line with each other: Begging for a favor and coming up with that question. There is – in connection with this question – good news and bad news on God's part. Zechariah did not ask – as far as we know – 'What do you want to hear first?' But first he gives *the bad news* in Zacharia 7. In Zacharia 8 follows *the good news*. The LORD is very critical to this question in Zacharia 7. For the LORD, the question from Bethel feels like an allegation. God wonders aloud if they were fasting for Him or were they doing this for themselves? Surely they do food and drink for themselves?! In short: This question is not a good signal for the LORD. Zechariah 7:5,6 *Say to the entire people of the land and to the priests: When you have spent these seventy years of fasting and mourning in the fifth and seventh months, have you really fasted for Me? Or if you ate and if you drank, it wasn't you who ate and wasn't it you who drank?* The first reaction is in strong contrast to the enthusiastic and hopeful message of Zechariah 8. God would have said this. Although different in tone, both chapters deal with the same question of fasting. This does not seem to be the only way to fast in response to the temple destruction.

Fasting or having a feast.



Past and future.

It does something to the LORD when He lets His thoughts go on Israel and Judah from before the exile. "Sin," thinks the LORD God. They have called that sad time upon themselves with their blunt disobedience. Indeed sin! How is it that they are so ungrateful? What kind of people are we? How is it possible that we treat our God like this? We're really degenerate. Not only is it very wrong, but it's also primal. God has perceived the people of before the exile as one lump of resistance. *Zechariah 7:11,12 But they refused to heed it, they put their shoulder against it and put their ears in*

order not to listen. They made their hearts as diamonds, so as not to have to listen to the law and the words that the Lord of the armies had sent through His Spirit, through the service of the former prophets. This has caused great resentment among the LORD of the armed forces. Three metaphors the LORD uses to clarify what He means.

Three metaphora.

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| 1. Turning with the shoulder. | The people of Israel turned with their shoulder. They refused to wear the yoke of the law. Just as an animal that refuses to pull the plough turns its head away, so they turned the yoke away. |
| 2. They shut their ears. | Like children can do when they're being teased by their little brother or sister. They show they don't want to hear what someone says. |
| 3. Made their hearts like a diamond. | In Ezekiel 11:19, a stone's heart is spoken of. As if that wasn't hard enough, Israel made his heart impenetrable as a diamond. |

Throw off the yoke of the law.



Tuck the ears.



A heart hard as diamond.



Zechariah 7 and 8 form a special chapter in the book of Zechariah.

Zechariah is a prophet. Through Zechariah God gives clues to the near and distant future. Not only *the coming and suffering and dying of the Lord Jesus* – which takes place at least 500 years later – is brought into focus, but also *the Second Coming and the new earth*. One will wonder whether a memory of the Torah and a call for obedience to God do occupy a legitimate place. The answer is YES. In Zechariah 7, God determines His people in the past and in Zechariah 8 for the future. God is testing His people. The LORD wants certainty about Israel's disposition. How do you view the past? Do people take responsibility or not? What does it do to Bethel's representatives when God throws the disobedience of the ancestors before their feet? Zechariah 1. Do we acknowledge the mistakes of the past? Does one have any sense of repentance? Does God see a new way of life in relation towards God and to the neighbor? We do not hear a response, but we do see that Bethel's representatives are being spoken to about their past. Such a part fits very well into a Biblical Future Expectation. In the later eschatology's, attention is also paid to the law of God and the responsibility of the believers. For example, when we read the book of Revelation, in addition to faith in Jesus, the obedience to God's commandments is invariably demanded. Revelation 14:12 *Here we see the persistence of the Saints. Here come publicly that heeds the commandments of God and the faith in Jesus.* Compare Revelation 12:17. Even when describing life on the new earth, we are still being warned of sins. Revelation 21:27 *All that is impure, will not come, nor will anyone engage in horrors and lies, but only those who are written in the book of the lamb's life.* In 2 Thessalonians 2, the Apostle Paul calls *the man doomed*

to destruction and the man of lawlessness. That is about the opposite of what Christ expects of His followers. In His eschatology – for example in Mark 13 – the Lord Jesus pays attention to the faith by warning of the false Christs, but He also urges vigilance and fidelity. Mark 13:33 *Note: watch and pray, for you do not know when the time is.* Those who, in the end times, detract from the obedience to God's commandments and responsibility, are at odds with God's intent. Those who always mention faith together with obedience in the end times are wise. God's response is particularly encouraging for the exiles. God changes the days of fasting into holidays. But even when the LORD does this, there is an appeal to His people to uphold peace and truth. Zechariah 8:18,19 *The word of the Lord of the forces came to me: So says the Lord of the forces: Fasting in the fourth, fasting in the fifth, fasting in the seventh and fasting in the tenth month, will become for the house of Judah to joy, to joy, and to joyful holidays. Then love the truth and peace!*



Through the depths.

For those who have been given the Word of God and faith, the destruction of the city and temple must have been an almost traumatic experience. But in His Word, the LORD has foretold all these events. This applies not only to the ineligibility of exile – in the case of structural disobedience – but also to the promised return after 70 years of Babel. You notice – even though the returned exiles must have been people of faith – how much the faith and expectation of these people has been tested. Yet it is the faith in God's Word and promises that must make a difference to the past. Not only does faith and perseverance and courage come into play in restoring the temple, but the new obedience that God expects of them also requires a great deal of faith. "Faith is proof of the things you don't see." Nicely said by the Hebrew writer 11:1 but do it. When the collapse of the city and temple is seen with his own eyes – with God's people and the LORD falling apart – it is a great challenge to believe in reconstruction of the temple. And then have the courage to get your stuff back together and go back to the country of origin. With a small group, a new life is built up in a devastated country and the temple restoration ask for courage and perseverance. The period of recovery lasted until Ezra and Nehemiah for about 100 years.

The road into in exile.



The return from exile.



Believers must have it from their faith and of the reliability of God's Words.

This may be the first time, but certainly not the last time the believers must have it all from their faith and the reliability of God's Words. So for example in the condemnation and crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. Even then – in the judgment that the Lord had taken on His shoulders for the whole world – there was perhaps the impression that God's mission had completely failed. The Emmaus-goers express the disappointment. Luke 24:21 *And we hoped that it was He who would deliver Israel. But all in all, today is the third day since these things happened.* Only for them, who had withheld the Words of the Lord Jesus and held the words of the Lord reliable, have become a holiday with the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. At that moment, the faith – albeit for a short time – changed in something visible.

Cross and resurrection.



The bitter end and the radiant new beginning.

Similarly, the end time – the last 3.5 years before the end of this world – will be a time when the evil one is given free reign and the believers have only the Bible and faith. It will not be easy to live almost without confirmation from God's side and to rely solely on faith. But the ferocity of the end will turn into the glory of fulfillment when Christ comes upon the clouds and frees the believers. Then we will see face to face. People of faith will realize that they are going up to the hill of life, not only personally but also historically, through the valley of death.

End and new beginnings.



Israel after 1948.

Since 1948, the people of Israel have also shared in the LORD's commitment – after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD – that He will turn to His people again. Luke 21:24 *And they will fall by the sharpness of the sword and be carried away in captivity among all gentiles. And Jerusalem will be trampled by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.* A promise has also been fulfilled for the Jews, but life is at times difficult and the opposition and threat of the peoples great.

The goal is and remains – the new – Jerusalem in its material and spiritual meaning.

Even though the road goes over high altitudes and through considerable deep valleys the LORD remains focused on the goal: the reconstruction of Jerusalem. In the end, that city is ready at the end of time. The new Jerusalem is coming from above. It's the bride of Christ. Revelation 21:2 *And I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, descended from God from heaven, prepared as a bride made gracefully for her husband.* It is clear that at the end of time the goal has been achieved: The new Jerusalem. The return of the Jews from exile and the reconstruction of the city and temple and the restoration of life under God's grace is a – albeit imperfect – depiction of the future city. Zechariah 8 begins with the promise of rebuilding the temple and pledging the return of the LORD. Zechariah 8:3 *So says the LORD: I have returned to Sion and I will live in the middle of Jerusalem.* It must have sounded like music to the Jews. The LORD returns. Those who have seen the LORD leave the temple and the city with the eyes of Ezekiel will cherish this promise from God. God returns to His city and His home. A new time is dawning. Jerusalem is getting a few new names. Zechariah 8:3 *Jerusalem will be called "city of truth," the lord's mountain of the armed forces "the holy mountain."* It is clear that the LORD will not be guided by the beautiful photographs that can later be taken of Jerusalem in the rising sun. It is not the historic buildings or places that the LORD's thoughts are about. It's the people. Jerusalem is – initially – the metaphor for God's people. Jerusalem is the metaphor for God's people who live in law and love and faithfulness with God and with each other. For that purpose, God ploughs through the entire history. The LORD wants Jews and non-Jews to gather a people in true justice and holiness. That goal has been achieved by the LORD in the Person of Jesus Christ. When we read terms like 'city of truth' and 'the Holy Mountain', it is not about stones or peaks, but about God Himself and people who live faithfully and holy lives in relation to God and to each other.

The new Jerusalem in stones and people.



A remnant.

God uses the term *remain* or *rest* for the faithful part of the Jewish people. Up to three times this designation passes in Zechariah 8:6,11,12. It is the returned exiles that adorn God with this name. Although they belong to the chosen ones, the hard life also takes its toll on them. Faith is hard and needs to recover. But the rebuilding of the temple and the reconstruction of Jerusalem helps. Yet it may be the words of God – spoken by the prophets – that are fueling the faith of God's people. Zechariah 8:9 *Seize courage, you who in these days have heard these words from the mouths of the prophets who were there on the day when the house of the Lord of the armies was founded to rebuild the temple.* There is also an encouragement of God's blessing on their homes and lands and animals. The commitment of God Who re-assigns them to the land as an inheritance strengthens the solidarity of people and country and the LORD. Zechariah 8:12 *I will make the remnant of this people take all this in hereditary possession.* There will also be a huge

boost from members of the Jewish people who give up their lives in Babel and return to their own country. The sentence in Zechariah 8:21 '*I will also go*' speaks volumes in this regard. "Good example does follow," says the saying. Finally, we see here that God is not only looking for the people of Judah but also from north Israel. The delegation from Bethel already spoke of the return of Jewish people from Judah and Israel, but God's commitment underlines His covenant with all His people.

A rest returns.



The nations also turn to God.

It was God a thorn in the side that the exile of His people could count on scornful reactions from the environment. It is true that the LORD promised His people a country of their own. God has given Israel the land under great signs and miracles in the Exodus from Egypt. It commanded great respect from the surrounding peoples. The exile, on the other hand, generated many negative reactions. It was not an advertisement for God that the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the South, Judah were successfully transported to Assur and Babel. The people blamed the LORD with their disobedience, forcing God to take disciplinary action. 70 years of exile did no good to the reputation of the God of Israel. The respect of the peoples turned into ridicule. Then everything changed. The neighbor peoples who had also been exiled or driven out did not return. We don't hear from Edom and Moab and Ammon anymore, to name a few. But with Israel, the LORD picked up the wire again. There was a past, but then God went back to work on the future and realized His commitment to the restoration of land and people and city and temple. Zechariah 8:13 *It will happen, as you, house of Judah and house of Israel, have been a curse among the pagan peoples, so I will redeem you and you will become a blessing. Don't be afraid, grab courage.* The return of the Jewish community from exile has to do with the sympathy but also with the respect that God has enforced in the history of the peoples, as for example in Babel and Media/Persia. In Daniel's book, it becomes clear that God has spoken to the greats of the earth through Daniel. The things Daniel of God showed and marks brought a king like Nebuchadnezzar to the recognition of the God of Daniel. The history of the Jewish people goes with great ups and downs but still leaves a positive impression. When a Prussian monarch was asked about a proof of Gods existence, he replied, "The Jewish people." The fact that this people still exists and is now living on its own soil again with Jerusalem as the eternal capital in its possession, is a testimony to all nations and all so-called gods. The history of the Jewish people may be one in which we notice God's anger and His affection, the ultimate result shows God's faithfulness and also the fulfillment of His plan to reach a people who live in law and mercy with God and with each other. That does not miss its positive effect as testimony to the nations.

Non-Jews are also turning to Jerusalem.

In their wake, the Jewish exiles apparently also take non-Jews. They feel addressed. The reason seems to lie in a form of religiously orphans. The fact is that with the rise and fall of the great empires in the Middle East, the gods of Assur and Babel and Media/Persia and the Roman Empire face the same fate. Once the power of the empire had been worked out, the role of the god of Babel was also played out. Who remembers them, Bel and Zeus, Jupiter and what they're all called? Driven by a true desire for the living God, many people in the world community will turn to the Jewish people because they have heard that God is with them. Zechariah 8:22,23 *Then many nations and powerful nations will come, to seek the Lord of the armed forces in Jerusalem and to favor the face of the Lord. Thus the LORD of the armed forces says: In those days it will happen that ten men from all languages of the pagan peoples, grasp, yes, the point of the cloak of a Jewish man they will seize, and say: We go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*

Israel becomes friends with some important Arab/Islamic countries.



Judeo-Christian Future Expectation from Zacharia. The whole story. Part 3 Zechariah 9, 10 and 11

Prophecy.

With Zechariah 9 we have started with a new part of the book Zechariah. In Hebrew it says above: 'Mass' which means as much as *burden, command, God's speech*, but can also be translated with the word *prophecy*. Zechariah 12 has the same inscription 'mass' and thus presumably begins with the last part of the book Zechariah. Just as the LORD with the first part of Zechariah focuses our eye on the situation of that moment in Jerusalem and at the same time indicates the future, so the faithful reader of Zechariah 9 consciously or unconsciously seeks out history to see what time is being referred to. We are encouraged to think of a future fulfillment because there is a prophecy in it, which we know at least at a glance where and when it will be fulfilled, namely Zechariah 9:9-10 *Rejoice very much, daughter of Sion! Cheer, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King will come to you, righteous, and He is a Savior, poor, and riding on a donkey, on a donkey foal, the young of a donkey. (..)*

The Greek empire.

The LORD mentions – remarkably – the name of *the Greeks*. Zechariah 9:13 *If I have strained Me Judah, and I will have laid Ephraim on the bow, and I will have set up your sons, Sion, against your*

sons, Greece, and I will have made you as the sword of a hero. "The Greeks," they may be a key that can help to open the Biblical expectation of Zechariah 9. What is the case? Zechariah lives between 540 and 480 BC. His prophecies touch the return of the exiles from Babel and the reconstruction of the temple and the city of Jerusalem. It begins with King Kores/Cyrus, the Press marking the transition from the great empire of Babel to the Medial/Persian Empire. It is King Cyrus who gives the Jewish exiles permission to return to their land and supports them in the rebuilding of city and temple. But how do we explain the reference to the Greeks? The Greeks will not become a world power until the 3rd century BC. That's right. But in the time of Zechariah there was also a clash between the Persians and the Greeks. There were – to be precise – two battles at that time: The Battle of Marathon in 490 BC and the Battle of Salamis in 480 BC. The Persians could not expand their territory of power, and the Greeks stayed where they were – Greece and the coast of present-day Turkey – and experienced the heyday of Greek culture. The reference to the Greeks seems to apply to the takeover of the Medial/Persian Empire by the Greeks under the leadership of Alexander the Great at the battle of Issus in 333 BC. The thoughts go involuntarily in this direction because we know from the history books that Alexander the Great made a campaign after the conquest of Asia through the area where the peoples and cities mentioned in Zechariah 9:1-8 are located such as Tyrus and Sidon and the Philistine cities and Jerusalem and Damascus. The Greek field-lord Parmenius Hadad conquered Damascus.

The city of Tyrus (aerial and drawing)



Alexander the Great was on his way to the subjugation of Egypt, but in the meantime the peoples who were between the North and the South of his empire were underfoot. He was the first to go to Phoenicia, which was the main trading cities of Tyrus and Sidon. Sidon surrendered, Tyrus didn't. It is known from history that Alexander the Great – to conquer Tyrus – has built a dike to the city that felt invincible. The city of Tyrus was build on an island in the sea.

Tyrus was conquered by Alexander the Great.

For Alexander, no sea went too high. When he reached the city of Tyrus via the dike after seven months, he set her on fire. Zechariah 9:3,4 *Tyrus has built a fortress wall for himself, accumulated silver as dust, and carved gold like sly on the street. Behold, the Lord will take possession of it, He will defeat his fortress in the sea, it itself will be consumed by fire.* At the moment, the historic city is on land because – because of the dike – the space between land and island has gradually been silted up. We also know that Alexander the Great then moved further south and conquered the Philistine towns, while he completely settled with Gath who resisted. It will not be a coincidence that Gaza is not mentioned as the fifth Philistine king city, because by the time of Assyria that city had already been equalized to the ground. Jerusalem is better off in the time of Alexander the Great. Presumably because they – like Samaria – realize in time that they have no chance and submit to the new ruler. In the 3rd century BC, the Jewish country moved from one empire of Media/Persia to another, the Greek empire, as a vassal.

The Greek empire takes over the power of the Medial/Persian Empire.

Greek rule began at the battle of Issus in 333 BC. Alexander the Great then briefly rolled up the ruler of that moment – Media/Persia. Shortly thereafter – after 12 years – Alexander the Great died. The Greek Empire fell into four pieces from which two powers eventually developed, both of which sought hegemony in the Middle East. The Seleucids, with Damascus in Syria as the center and the Ptolemaean from Egypt. For the Jewish people, the skirmishes between these powers – which took place over a long period of time – had a nasty side effect. Every time – whether they came from Egypt or Syria – the armies roamed the Jewish country. In the text you feel that this is a problem, a lot of trouble. It must have felt like a great relief, this promise from God that at some point it would end with that constant movement of enemy troops. Zechariah 9:8 *I will array around My house like a guard, because of the army that moves back and forth, so that no oppressor pulls up against them anymore. After all, I have seen it with my own eyes!* There was a lot of suffering because the prince of the Seleucids or Ptolemaic – whoever was the leader at that time – also wanted to impose his power on the Jewish people. They caused a lot of unrest and fear among the population.

The Greek god Zeus.



Antiochus Epiphanes IV.



Antiochus Epiphanes IV carries out a direct attack on the faith of Israel.

At one point it were the Seleucids – led by Antiochus Epiphanes IV – that became dominant in the Middle East for a long time. He also made his power feel to the Jewish population and put a Greek stamp on the language and culture and even the religion of the Jewish community. He went so far as to pollute the temple at one point and placed the a statue of the god of the Greeks, Zeus on the temple square in Jerusalem complete with altar. His intentions were not unclear. Antiochus not only wanted to transform Jewish culture into Hellenic, but to replace the source of Judaism – their faith – with the religion of the Greeks. He had already forbidden to have a Torah in the house and to circumcise boys and celebrate the Sabbath. The statue of Zeus in the temple of the LORD marked the end of temple service. The temple was contaminated and was closed. From 167 – 164 BC, this condition, which is referred to in the book of Daniel, lasted by the term: the devastating abomination. With the word abomination, the Bible refers to an idol and the meaning of devastating must be sought in the savage of the desert = desolation. In short: Because of the idol of Zeus, the temple of the LORD, the God of Israel in Jerusalem, was 3.5 years closed.

Jewish response to religious persecution.

What was the reaction of the Jewish people's to the hostilities they experienced from Antiochus Epiphanes IV during the Greek empire? There are many apostates but also people who remain true to their faith. It can be read in Daniel 11:30-32 *There will be ships of the Kittians coming against him and he will frighten. He will return and show his angry face against the holy covenant, and he will carry out his own will. He will, as he returns, watch those who leave the holy covenant.*

Then powerful arms will come out of him. They will desecrate the sanctuary and the fortress and take away the recurring sacrifice and draw up the devastating abomination. And those who act wickedly against the covenant, he will cry through flattery. The people, however, those who know their God, they will seize, and they will carry out their will. In that respect, there is good news and bad news. The bad news is that many Jews are making a deal with Antiochus Epiphanes IV. They choose eggs for their money and make a pact with him. Of course, the monarch also shows very well – by favoring apostates and at the same time ruthlessly dealing with people who remain faithful to their religion – how the flag stands. In the books of the Maccabees, the whole history is described quite accurately. 1 Maccabees 1:11-15 *At that time, a group of apostates in Israel began to stir who no longer wanted to follow the law, and they gained many adherents. They said, "Come, let us make a treaty with the peoples around us, because from the moment we have separated from them, much misery has happened to us." Their words were greeted with agreement, and some in the people declared their willingness to go to the king. He gave them permission to introduce foreign laws and customs. In Jerusalem, for example, they built a gym as was customary with the pagan peoples and allowed themselves to be made a foreskin again. They kept themselves far from the sacred covenant, mingled with the Gentiles, and surrendered to evil practices.* But there's also some good news to report. The good news is that there are also many Jews who don't want to step aside. They continue to read and practice the Torah and circumcise their sons despite the trail of violence and death that passes through the towns and villages. Many give their lives for their faith. They are supported by people who later in the book of Daniel are given the name of the wise men or the wise. Daniel 11:33 *The wise (Hebrew maskelim) among the people will teach many.* So there will be passive resistance in a way, but there will also be active resistance.

Israel is caught between those in powers; the Seleucids and the Ptolemy.



The Maccabees.

The Jewish community would revolt under the leadership of the Maccabees' family. These are prominent Jews who are invited by the foreign monarch to lead by example and to go along with the Greek way of thinking and doing. It wouldn't be bad for them, on the contrary they would prosper by doing so. But Mattatias, the father of the family reacts differently than expected. 1 Maccabees 1:19-22 *But Mattatias answered in a loud voice: "Even if all nations in the king's realm obey him, even if everyone becomes unfaithful to the religion of his ancestors by following the king's*

orders, I, my sons and my relatives will remain faithful to the covenant of our ancestors. God forbid we deny the law and the rules. We will not obey the king's commandment, nor will we deviate from our religion by a thumbs-up." The Maccabees seize the weapons and manage to expel Antiochus Epiphanes IV after 3.5 years from Jerusalem and the Jewish country. The monarch seeks a safe haven in Damascus, but he dies that same year. Daniel 11:45 *And he will set up the tents of his palace between the seas, at the mountain of the holy Jewel. Then he will come to his end, and have no helper.* One of the first things the Jews recover afterwards is the temple service. That moment is celebrated in the Jewish community with the re-ordination of the temple. Every year the Jews commemorate this history with the Hanukkah Festival. What we see in this history is the willingness of many believers to give their lives for faith. Many Jews are killed because they want to continue to profess and practice their faith according to their own conviction. This willingness is an elementary part of what is under the heading of *the devastating abomination*. With an image of the god Zeus – complete with altar – one wants to push the God of Israel from his place and replace it with another god. The waste of faith is an inseparable part of the same history. But then with the Maccabees follows the active resistance and rebellion before Israel's faith and against this reign and the final victory over the enemy of God and His people. The dedication of the temple in Jerusalem and the restoration of the service to God are the closing part of this history.

The Maccabees.



The concrete fulfillment.

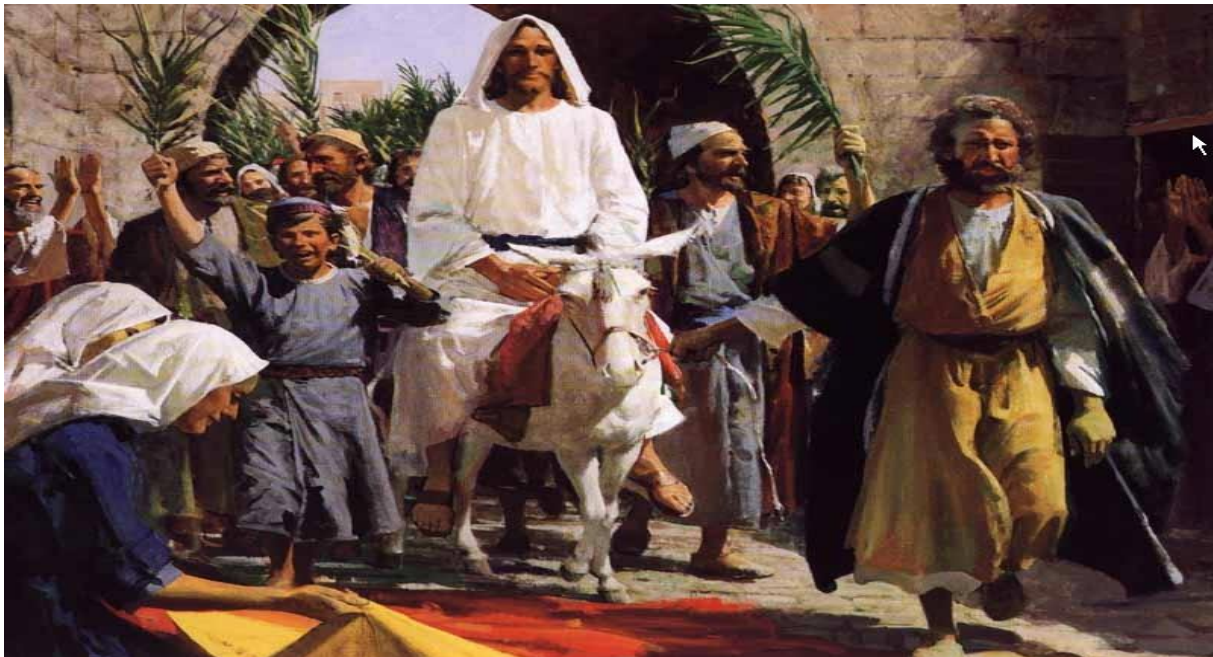
Who would have thought that the Maccabees could defeat Antiochus Epiphanes IV with the help of God? Antiochus was one of the world-leaders of that time. The choice of the Maccabees is remarkable. One stands for the faith of Israel and does not want to step back. There are many more faithful Jews who are willing to give their lives for their faith. Many of them will have to pay for their faith with death. Their resistance is passive. The remarkable thing about the Maccabees is their active resistance. They seize the weapons and motivate their people to fight the Syrian monarch who wants to take away not only their country and culture, but also their faith. The LORD supports the resistance and with divine and human forces they force Antiochus Epiphanes IV into the retreat. There seems to be a struggle on earth combined with a battle in heaven. Earlier in Daniel we became aware that there is more than the struggle on earth alone. In heaven, too, God encounters resistance. We notice that in the prayer of Daniel as the Lord is held back by – what he calls – the prince of Persia. Daniel 10:12,13 Some of that physical struggle on earth and

spiritual struggle in heaven we taste in the text of Zechariah 9:13,14 *If I have strained Me Judah, and I will have laid Ephraim upon the bow, and I will have set up your sons, Sion, against your sons, Greece, and I will have made you as the sword of a hero. The LORD will appear above them: like lightning, His arrow will come out. The Lord LORD will blow on the trumpet, and He will rise in southern storms.* God, it appears, is behind the struggle that is finally decided on earth and leads the Maccabees to victory. So there are many things that show that the history of the Maccabees in Greek times is the fulfillment of this prophecy of Zechariah. The Lord Jesus cites the characteristic notion of *devastating abomination* in His eschatology, for example in Mark 13:14. For the lord's feeling, such a situation as under Antiochus will occur again in *the end times*. The final fulfillment of Zacharia 9 will therefore take place in *the end times* which will once again take place on Jewish territory and around the temple in Jerusalem.

The Lord Jesus is the promised King.

The Lord Jesus is of royal blood. God has made sure that his father Joseph – who adopted him as a child – comes from David's house. Matthew 1:6,16 *Isai begat David, the king; David, the king, begat Solomon with her who was the wife of Uria; Jacob begat Joseph, the man of Mary, from whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.* When the blind man in Jericho calls the Lord with the title 'son of David', Jesus responds immediately. Matthew 9:27 Sometimes the interpretation is a choice of the explainer, but when the Lord – just before entering Jerusalem – sends a few disciples out to fetch a donkey with her young and then sits on it, it is the Lord Himself who, with this prophecy acts; He draws the prophecy from Zacharia upon Himself.

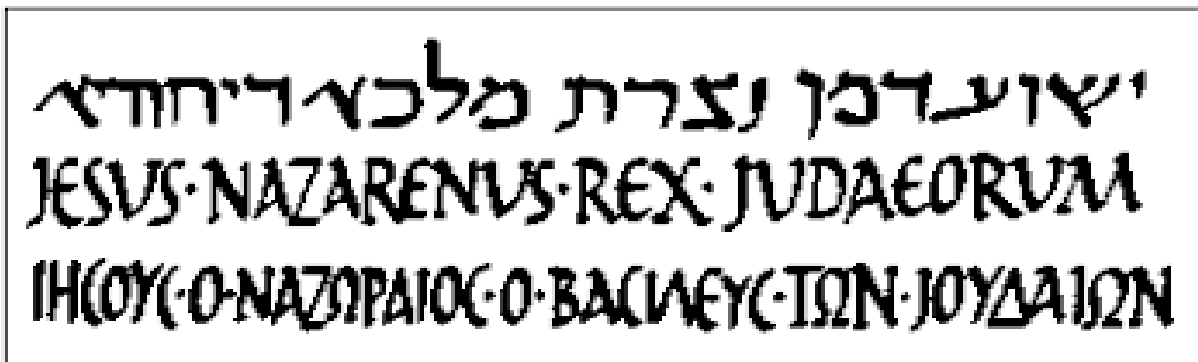
The entrance to Jerusalem.



Matthew 21:1-9 *And when they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethfagé by the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent out two disciples and said to them, "Enter the village before you, and you shall immediately find a donkey that is tied up, and a foal with her; Untie them and bring them to Me. And if anyone says anything to you, you must say that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away. All this has been done so that what has been spoken by the Prophet will be fulfilled, when he said, "Say to the daughter of Sion: Behold, your King comes to you, meekly and seated on a donkey and a foal that is a young of a yoke-wearing donkey." And the disciples went and did as*

Jesus had commanded them; they brought the donkey and the foal, and they put their clothes on it, and put Him there. And most of the crowd spread out their clothes on the road and others chopped branches off the trees and spread them out on the road. The front-runner crowd shouted, "Hosanna, the Son of David!" Blessed He Who comes in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna, in the highest heavens! When He entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil and people said, "Who is That?" The crowd said, "That's Jesus, the Prophet from Nazareth in Galilee." Later that week, the leaders of the Sanhedrin condemned the Lord with the death penalty for blasphemy. This happened because Jesus identified himself with the Son God. It was clear that the Jewish community was not allowed to carry out the verdict on its own. Only the Romans were allowed to carry out death penalty. For that reason, they also needed an indictment that would make Jesus dangerous in the eyes of the Romans. To Pilate, it was said "that Jesus said 'He is the king of the Jews.'" They may have regretted it later. A conversation between Jesus and Pilate about his kingship emerged. John 18:33-39 *Pilate then went back into the courthouse, called Jesus and said to Him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "My Kingdom is out of this world." If My Kingdom were of this world, My servants would have fought so that I would not be handed over to the Jews, but now My Kingdom is not from here. Pilate then said to Him, "So you are a king, right?" Jesus replied, "You say I am a King." This is what I was born to do, and for this I came into the world: to testify for the truth. Everyone who is out of the truth, listens to My voice.* It is clear that the crown of thorns and the purple cloak are used by the soldiers to ridicule the person who posed as king. But Pilate had gained respect for Jesus. It was he who nailed the sign 'Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews' above Jesus' head on the cross. And that in three languages: Hebrew, Greek and Latin. The Pharisees protested, "Jesus is not the king of the Jews, but says He is." They wanted a custom text, but they didn't get it. The same words remained, of which INRI (Iesus Nazaraeus Rex Iudaeorum) is the well-known abbreviation. John 19:21

INRI in three languages above the crucified Christ.



Jesus became king with peace and justice as a way and purpose.

The word *peace* seems to refer to the realm of justice and peace created by the Lord, but will also describe the way He did so. A donkey may have been used by kings as a 'golden carriage' in ancient times, but here the donkey seems to be used as the opposite of a horse, which symbolizes struggle and war. Zechariah 9:9,10 *Rejoice very much, daughter of Sion! Cheer, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King will come to you, righteously, and He is a Savior, poor, and riding on a donkey, on a donkey foal, the young of a donkey. I will take the chariots from Ephraim, and the horses from Jerusalem. The battle bow will be removed. He will proclaim peace to the pagans. His dominion will be from sea to sea, from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth.* Yet the donkey itself is not a symbol of peaceful intentions. It is a vehicle that accentuates the majesty of the king. In earlier times, dignitaries – such as Moses (Exodus 4:20) and Balaam (Numeri 22:21) as well as

King David (1 Kings 1:33) – were carried by donkeys. Nor is it the case that the Lord Jesus won the war without a fight. What was the case? The Lord's adversary was Satan. He was a risky adversary because, as a hostage taker, he had humanity in his grasp. It was important for the Lord to defeat Satan, but to spare the hostages. In fact, it was Jesus' goal to free the hostages. If the hostages had been freed from Satan, He could completely destroy Satan. Satan is the power behind the dark powers. If Christ defeated him, He would defeat the evil genius behind all war and violence. In a sense, this is a spiritual struggle. In a sense, for Christ the Son of God has truly become human. The battle takes place on earth and ultimately costs Him His life. By losing, the Lord has won. By blaming the sacrifice of His life, He has freed sinners and wicked people from the mortal grip of the evil. God has crowned His innocent suffering and dying with resurrection and kingship.

The battle between Jesus and Satan.



Satan has worked - against his own will - for the redemption of the world.

The way in which the Lord – in cooperation with the Heavenly Father – came to his goal with this struggle is very similar to the way the Greeks took a city through the Trojan horse. They made a large wooden horse and left it unmanned outside the city – for the sake of it. The inhabitants of Troy brought the horse in victoriously not knowing that in the horse dozens of soldiers were hidden. So they brought the enemy inside the gate that the city took from within. Similarly, Satan was tempted to have Jesus God's Son killed. Satan did so on the assumption that his main adversary would be defeated. What he didn't know is that he was cooperating in his own demise in that way. It was true that Satan held humanity in his grip with the weapons of sin and death. Because God had said that man would die eternal death by sinning, we were at the mercy of Satan when we were seduced into sin by him. Genesis 3 But by innocently taking upon himself the punishment of humanity – death – the Lord took away the cause of death for all those who believe and was able to pull us away from the deadly grip of Satan. Hebrews 2:14,15 *Because now those children are of flesh and blood, He has also participated in this in order to nullify by death those who had power over death – that is the devil, and to redeem all those who were subjected to slavery throughout their lives by fear of death.* Against his own purpose, the evil one has thus become an associate of the redemption of the world. The devil didn't realize it was going to be like this, otherwise he certainly wouldn't have been involved. 1 Corinthians 2:7,8 *However, we speak the wisdom of God, as a mystery; a wisdom that was hidden and which God before all centuries predestined to be our glory; a wisdom that no one of the leaders of this world has known. After all, if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.* By losing, the Lord Jesus has emerged as the winner. By letting defeat Himself, He has conquered Satan. The way through which justice and peace became reality for all people, is drawn. Zechariah 9:9 *Rejoice,*

daughter of Sion! Cheer, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King will come to you, righteous, and He is a Savior, poor, and riding on a donkey. But it is not only the way through which, the goal achieved is characterized by the same values and norms of justice and peace. The kingdom of God has thus become an realm of justice and peace. Zechariah 9:10 Those two words – justice and peace – are, as it were, the two sides of the same coin. Without peace, no justice and vice versa. James 3:18 *And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.* The LORD is enthusiastic when he thinks of the new community created through the work of salvation of the King of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.



The sacrifice of Christ for Jew and heathen.

God has a secret weapon, His Son. Through the incarnation of Jesus and His innocent suffering and dying on the cross of Calvary, God in some way carries Himself the consequence of sin – namely death – and takes the blame through Jesus' innocent suffering. So God is righteous even if He declares you and me righteous, who believe in the Lord Jesus. Romans 3:23-26 *For all have sinned and are missing the glory of God, and are not justified by His grace, by salvation in Christ Jesus. God has openly designated Him as a means of reconciliation, through faith in His blood. This was to prove His righteousness for ignoring the sins that had occurred before under the tolerance of God. He did this to prove His righteousness now in this day and age, so that He Himself is just and justifies the one who is out of faith in Jesus.* In this way, the Lord knocked the weapons of guilt and death out of the hands of Satan and the hostages were freed. Through *the first Adam* sin has entered the world. By Christ, *the second Adam* the blame is worked out of the world. It is completely logical and honest between God and the people. Romans 5:12-20 The Apostle Paul makes it clear in the Roman letter that the Jew is as well reliant on Christ as the non-Jew. Also in the Galatian letter – in the case of a conflict with Peter who continues to feel the difference with the non-Jew believer – Paul continues to stress that Jews and the heathens both need Christ's sacrifice and that – with all the differences that remain possible – makes them equal. Galatians 2:15.16 *We, who are by nature Jews, and not sinners from the Gentiles, know that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. And we too have come to believe in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified from the faith of Christ and not work out of the law. After all, by working out of the law not a flesh is justified.* Our king, the Lord Jesus, has defeated Satan by dying for us as a human being on the cross on Calvary. In the Gospels, the Lord Jesus tells openly about His struggle with and victory over Satan. Mark 3:27 *No one can enter the house of a strong*

man and rob his household goods, if he does not bind the strong first; And then he can rob his house. The Messianic king has defeated Satan by overcoming guilt and death for the people. In Zechariah it is expressed that the action of the king on the donkey opens perspective for the peoples. Christ has taken the sting out of battle. His peace will be proclaimed to the people of the heathen. Zechariah 9:10. *I will take the chariots from Ephraim, and the horses from Jerusalem. The battle bow will be removed. He will proclaim peace to the pagans. His dominion will be from sea to sea, from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth.*

From swords to plowshares.



Philistine, Tyrus and Nubia were all born here.

Until the coming of the Lord Jesus, the world was marked by guilt and death and evil. Not only for the pagans, but also for the Jew. It is true, God had – by the election of the Jewish people – established an island of hope on this earth where He ruled with law and justice. But by breaking the Old Covenant and the rebellion against God, the Jewish people need the redemption of guilt and death as much as all other peoples. For example, no one can escape the idea how much Satan had gained a grip on the Jewish community during the time of Jesus' stay on earth. In addition to the redemption of all other diseases and weaknesses, the liberation of demons is Jesus' daily occupation. In that respect, there is no difference between Jew and pagan. Now that He has come, the Lord Jesus has liberated the world from domination by evil. Every man can become a part of the Kingdom of God through faith. It is no coincidence that the spread of this good news – entirely in accordance with the prophecies of Zechariah – is also being visited by the land of the Philistines and Damascus. From the Philistines and the Syrians, people are added to God's people. After the conversion of the eunuch from Ethiopia, Philip turns up in a Philistine city. Acts 8:40 After his conversion, Paul proclaims the Gospel in Damascus. Acts 9:19 *And when he had taken food, he strengthened. And Saul spent a few days with the disciples in Damascus.* Even in Tyrus, Christians live in Paul's time. Acts 21:3,4 *And after we had entered Cyprus and left it behind, we sailed to Syria and arrived in Tyrus, because that is where the ship had to unload its cargo. And after we found disciples there, we stayed there for seven days. They told Paul, through the Spirit, that he should not go to Jerusalem.* Zechariah's prophecy is fulfilled by the redemption work of the Lord Jesus for people from all nations and languages, but it does feel extraordinary when we hear from both Philistines and people of Damascus and Tyrus that they are enlisted in the people of God. We see a fulfillment of Zechariah 9:7 *Also, it will remain before our God. He will be like a leader in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusiet.* Psalm 87 adds his wisdom too. The Jewish community

before Christ has tasted and sung the rapprochement of people from the nations as a special sign of God's grace.

Psalm 87

- 1 His foundation rests on the holy mountains.
- 2 The LORD loves the gates of Sion above all the dwellings of Jacob.
- 3 Very delicious things are spoken of you, city of God! Sela
- 4 I mention Rahab and Babel among whom know Me; See, the Philistine and the Tyrian, with the Cushite: they were born there.
- 5 Of Sion is said: Man for man is born in it. The Supreme Self makes her stand.
- 6 The LORD counts them when He writes down the nations, Sela
- 7 Singers as well as those who dance in roe, sing: All my sources are in you!

Just as the gathering of people from all kinds of nations brings joy – provided that the rule of peace and justice is maintained – so it is a great joy when people from all kinds of peoples are absorbed into God's people through the righteousness and peace of the Lord. Peter also made a song about this. 1 Peter 2:9,10 But you are a chosen family, a royal priesthood, a holy people, a people that God made His property; so that you might proclaim the virtues of Him who has called you from the darkness to His wondrous light, you, who were not before a people, but are now God's people; you, who were not, have now been taken in care.



Ashkelon.

The prophet must speak to people in person again.

It is no exception that the LORD is dissatisfied with the shepherds. That was the LORD in the time of Jeremiah. There are special chapters in that book (Jeremiah 21-25) in which the shepherds – the kings and the prophets and priests – are criticized. God also shows Himself to be extremely dissatisfied in His words spoken by the prophet Ezekiel, who is mainly among the exiles. All Ezekiel 34 is NB dedicated to those shepherds. It is remarkable that Zechariah also has to put the shepherds under the criticism. We have seen it differently in the time of Zechariah. We have seen shepherds – like Ezra and Nehemiah – who deserve kudos. They took the people firmly where they needed it. There are also very nice testimonies – which do not reach us by chance through Zechariah – about the high priest Joshua and the city holder Zerubbabel – who have done a good job precisely in terms of leadership. But in the future things this will go horribly wrong. It should make us all the more aware that we should not just go after people. There are many leaders, but not all leaders take you where you should be. The big question – before the end time Zechariah seems to be referring to – is whether we can trust the leadership? In our case, the church leaders.

One of the things that is immediately apparent in Zechariah 10 is this: church leaders do not give at home in the end times. They're there, but they're not doing what they're supposed to do. The spiritual connection of a well-run community is lost in the end times. That's a huge blow in the face of God and the believers. In any case, God can make Himself enormously angry at the so-called leaders. Zechariah 10:3 *Against the shepherds My wrath is ignited, and the bucks punish Me.* The fact that God also has a word for the bucks may give insight in the problem. If there is no good guidance – for example in a class – then students emerge who take over the leadership (the bucks). So it seems that there is a lack of leadership. The shepherds don't dare to take on anyone. They let everything run their course. There are people who take advantage of that. The shepherds will be so unpleasant to the LORD that God is actually putting them aside and taking matters into their own hands. God stops delegating. He no longer allows Himself to be represented on earth, but pulls the guidance back to Himself and takes the reins himself. You notice the moment Zechariah acts as a prophet. He is the mouth of God. God passes the leaders and the community. In the future, the LORD Himself speaks directly to the people through the Prophet. He personally presents every person with the choice. Zechariah 1:1 *Ask the LORD for rain at the time of the late rain.* The prophet must address people on *their personal responsibility*. "You make the difference," Zechariah says. You can personally go to God in prayer. Even if this is not encouraged by the leaders of the people. Even if the others don't. Even though there are many people around you who are looking for household gods and fortune tellers. You can do this; 'You can pray to God.' That personal responsibility and that personal choice for faith in God, that will also be one of the core brands of the end times. Every man can pray to God.

Zechariah 10:3 *Furious I am on the shepherds and the bucks I will find.*



Zechariah 10 is about the end-time.

This is one of the things that can be experienced as shocking; that the leaders of God's people fail ugly in the end times. Someone's going to ask if it's so certain that Zacharia 10 is about the end time. There are at least two things that point in that direction. *The horses* point to Greek times. Zechariah 10:3,5 *Against the shepherds My wrath is ignited, and the bucks I punish. Yes, the LORD of the armed forces will look to His flock, the house of Judah. He will make them as His wonderful horse in battle. They will be like heroes who trample the enemies in the s mud of the street in battle. Yes, they will fight, for the LORD will be with them. They will shame the riders.* The prophet calls the enemy of God's people the horse riders. He thinks of the Greeks with whom the horses and riders did indeed play a leading role. From Daniel's eschatology, it becomes clear that the 3.5 years of oppression of the faith of Israel by Antiochus Epiphanes IV was the provisional end times. The concept of "devastating abomination" that stands for the image of Zeus – which the Syrian

monarch founded in the Temple of Jerusalem – is cited by the Lord Jesus in His eschatology and projected on the future – the final end times. Mark 13:14

Alexander the Great on horseback.



It is probably still the same battle that was going on in Zechariah 9:10 *I will take away the chariots from Ephraim, and the horses from Jerusalem. The battle bow will be removed.* In Zechariah 9, the Greeks are named who, from 330 BC will be the world leader in the Middle East. It is mainly about the period in the second century BC. The time when Antiochus Epiphanes IV will focus its arrows on Jerusalem and attack God's people not only on his fortress in Jerusalem, but also on his faith. It is about the fight against the Greeks in 167 BC, which will be won by the Jewish people. Zechariah 9:13 *If I will have strained Me Judah, and I will have laid Ephraim on the bow, and I will have set up your sons, Sion, against your sons, Greece, and I will have made you as the sword of a hero.* Also in Zechariah 9 the contradiction between the powers one relies on, plays: On horses or does one rely on the LORD? Zechariah 10:5 *They will be like heroes who trample the enemies in the mud of the street in battle. Yes, they will fight, for the LORD will be with them. They will shame the riders.* That is why the second clue comes from this – that it is this time – and that is 'that God will transform the sheep into horses.' Zechariah 10:3 *He will make them "like His wonderful horse in battle."* When the LORD speaks of horses, He uses the symbol of battle and war namely the horse. After Zechariah, there is in fact only one time when for God's people the battle with horses and chariot and weapons led to victory, and that is in the confrontation with the Greek prince Antiochus Epiphanes IV or the end-time as drawn by Daniel 11. They are the Maccabees – a Jewish family – who are revolting. They take up arms and fight the Greek and push the armies of Antiochus Epiphanes IV back beyond the borders. They are the sheep that have been turned into horses by God. Individual Jews take the lead. God here says that the people of Israel will resist and fight against the Greeks and overcome it. Zechariah 10:4 *From this people comes the cornerstone, the tent pin and the bow of war, from this people come all the victors.* This is something that is also mentioned in Zechariah 9 about the same war.

The cornerstone.



The tent pin.



The battle bow.



Help from above.

As indicated above, the reference with the Greeks, i.e. the victory over Antiochus Epiphanes IV in 164 BC, is the fulfillment of this heavenly commitment. Who would have expected the people of Israel to be so resilient in the person Judas the Maccabee, someone from the people. The Maccabees are *the cornerstone* and *the tent pin* and *the battle bow* that – on behalf of God – have brought victory with a tenacious and combativeness. The Maccabees – nicknamed the hammer (= Maccabi) – ruled from 164 BC to 63 BC with the name the Hasmonees. In 63 BC, the Romans took control of the Middle East. The people of Israel, too, became again a subjugated people. The Maccabees belonged to a priestly family that was not afraid of the great Syrian monarch, but rebelled. An uprising that culled with a resounding victory over the Syrian monarch, who died days later. Zechariah 10:6 *I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will redeem the house of Joseph. I will bring them back, for I have taken care of them. They will be as if I had not disowned them. After all, I am the LORD, their God: I will interrogate them!* It is the intransigence of this family that led the resistance that was apparently widely supported by the Jewish people. The victory of the Jews over the Greeks is truly unthought. No one would have thought this possible. Perhaps more important than the social and military aspects is the fact that God sided with His people and gives victory. It is clear that the Jewish people will have to go through another devastating war later. It is the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple and the beginning of the large diaspora in the year 70 AD. The seven-armed candlestick is carried triumphantly – see image on the Arch of Triumph – through the streets of Rome.

The seven-armed lampstand carried in triumph by Rome as a spoils on Jerusalem in 70 AD.



Once again Israel will go into diaspora. This will extend to 1948 AD. In that year they received a commitment from the League of Nations to establish the State of Israel in the country of origin. Many Jews choose to return – from all corners of the world – to the land God gave them.

God will help His people Israel in the return and reunification.

The Jewish community must know that they have no future – no return and no reunification – outside of the work of salvation of the Messiah Jesus. But the church may remember something. The Church may remember that God's loyalty to His old people is great to Israel and it may take a long time, but God's promises to Israel will sooner or later be fulfilled. It is God's allegiance to the Jewish people that, towards the end of history, we see a return of Jews to the country of origin

and a reunification of Jews from Ephraim and Judah. Zechariah 10:9 *I will metastasize them among the nations, and they will think of Me in far-flung regions, they will live with their children, and return.* It will be a time when the great powers of yesterday such as Assur and Egypt – the countries that have long dominated the people of Israel – will have to let the Jews go. Zechariah 10:10 *I will bring them back from the land of Egypt, and I will bring them from Assyria together. I will bring them to the land of Gilead and Lebanon, but that will not be enough for them. There will be so many Jews returning that there is almost no place for them.* The territories Zechariah mentions here – the Lebanon and Gilead – are areas that do not currently belong to the State of Israel. But even if those areas were to be included, the area would be too small to accommodate the number of Jews in the future. It's a luxury problem in a way. That will be resolved. The return will sometimes be very similar to the passage through the Red Sea. The sea stands in the Bible for the hostile world of nations. Daniel 7:1 and Revelation 13:1 But the LORD will conquer the waves of that sea. No one will be able to stop His people from their intention to return to their country of origin. Zechariah 10:11,12 *He will go through the sea of trouble, and He will strike the waves of the sea, all the depths of the Nile will dry up. Then the pride of Assyria will be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt will go away. I will strengthen them in the Lord, and in His name they will walk, the Lord speaks.* It's not the powers of yesterday that make up the service. The great realms, who can boast of their weapons and armies, will stand up to the people who seek and find their strength by His God.

God will whistle them to Him.



The New Testament expects the return of God to the Jewish community and vice versa.

Hopefully it will become clear to the Jewish community that they need the Messiah Jesus to experience the future that God tells them in Zechariah 10. It is valuable for the Church to understand that God will always be faithful to His old people of Israel. It may be that the LORD has inserted an interlude in time. That was/is when He with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ went into the wide world to gather children from all nations and nations and languages. The believers of the nations are part of the new community that shares in the salvation that God bestows in the Lord Jesus Christ. Perhaps here's how we can look at history.

Israel There has been a period for the Jewish people; From 2000 BC to the year zero, the birth of Christ Jesus.

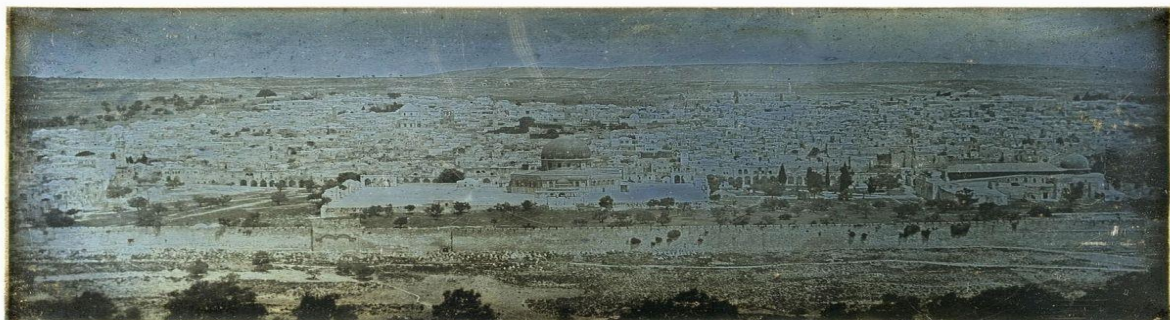
The Peoples And there has been a period for the peoples, the Gentiles; From the year 70 to 1948 AD.

Israel

Then there will be a relatively short period in which the LORD returns to His old people of Israel. The Jews return to the Jewish land towards the end of time and are reunited as people of God. With them, time and history will be closed.

Jewish people will open their hearts to the Gospel.**Jerusalem is apostate in the end times.**

It also becomes clear from the sequel that Jerusalem is the end-time location, where the enmity against God and the believers contracts. Revelation 11:8 *And their dead bodies will lie on the street of the great city, spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was also crucified.* Many will be unpleasantly surprised when they see that the Jerusalem of the end-times is compared to Sodom. That is far from beneficial. However, it corresponds to the situation as the LORD foretold. There will not be such a great spiritual climate in Jerusalem in the end-times. It wasn't in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes IV either. There is a waste of faith and the leaders of the people are also failing. The majority of people choose to go along with the world. The spirit of the time will have more followers than the Spirit of God. That's annoying to hear, but not surprising because foretold also in Zechariah 10. In addition to the negative tendencies, there are certainly positive things to note in the end-times, but they will occur much more personally with – what we might call – individual Messiah-confessing Jews. Also, in Jerusalem – faced with the punishments of the end-times – many will see conversion. Revelation 11:13,14 Two prophetic figures – people who are very similar to Moses and Elijah – will encourage the Messiah-confessing believers who keep God's commandments in their faith. In addition to attacks on the faith and the God of Israel, there will also be a large enemy army moving around the city. In the end the whole world is turning against Israel and against God. Eventually, the LORD will intervene from above. Zechariah 10:12 / *will strengthen them in the Lord, and in His name they will walk, the Lord speaks.*

The history of Jerusalem.

Then the Kingdom of God dawns, the new heaven and the new earth. The ancient people (the 12 tribes) and the new people of God (the 12 apostles) are part of the new Jerusalem. Revelation 21:12-14 *She had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and at those gates twelve angels. There were also names written on it, namely of the twelve tribes of the Israelites. Three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations bearing the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

The shepherd or the mercenary?

Zechariah is instructed to become a shepherd. Shepherd of a special herd. It is slaughter-sheep that he must graze. Zechariah 11:7 *So I grazed the cattle for slaughter that belonged to the cattle handlers.* It sounds a bit cynical from God's mouth and that's how it's meant to be, because God is not in favor of this situation at all. Not for humans, but also not for animals. The sellers are the cattle traders. They don't know these sheep. That's what shepherds are for. And the shepherd is not an owner. He is a mercenary and actually not very interested in these animals. They're not his animals. Further on, he only has them for a short time, because they're there for slaughter. No one attaches themselves to these sheep. No one feels anything for them. Zechariah 11:5 *Their buyers kill them but do not feel guilty; their salesmen say, "Praise the LORD that I have become rich; and their shepherds do not spare them.* And it's this very sort of sheep Zechariah has to graze. He must become a shepherd of God from a flock of sheep intended for slaughter. Zechariah 11:4 *So says the LORD, my God: Graze those slaughter sheep.* Zechariah as a mercenary. It's a so-called prophetic act. Zacharia takes the place of God as a mercenary. In fact, it is God Himself – or so we will see later, God's Son – who will graze the sheep in the future.

Slaughter sheep from the cattle trader.



God becomes a shepherd mercenary.

It is noticeable that the Prophet thus represents the LORD in His relationship with the people. You don't expect that right away. The LORD is the good Shepherd after all. That's right, but there are limits to God's patience and love. There comes a moment in the history of His people when they kick the LORD's heart. God can take a beating, but they shouldn't make it to crazy. If that does happen, the LORD is no longer interested in how the herd – read the Jewish people – is doing. At some point, the LORD no longer cares about how they are doing. They're just going to get along. The relationship of God with His people Israel then gets the traits of the shepherd of a flock of slaughter sheep. He is not involved in the sheep at all. Now let's get out of the metaphor to the historical situation of that moment. Normally, God provides justice and mercy in Israel. But the

people – especially those in charge of the Jewish people – seem to care little or nothing more about God. The shepherds – i.e. the spiritual and political leaders – are primarily interested in their own interests. In fact, they do not care what God approves or what the LORD rejects. They have their own agenda. They do what gets to them in the head. God is going to get involved personally. When God Himself acts as a Shepherd, He collides with the other leaders. When God has set aside the leaders, it turns out that the common people are not much better. They turn their backs on God and go their own way. They don't need the LORD. At that moment – you might say – the LORD changes from shepherd to mercenary. God surrenders people to each other. 'L'ennemi c'est l'autre', says the French philosopher Sartre. The enemy, that's the other person. And God? Does God not intervene? "Let them commit, says God. They don't want anything else. Let them know what that feels like." Zechariah 11:6 *For sure, I will no longer spare the inhabitants of the land, says the LORD. See, I hand over the people, each in the hand of his neighbor and in the hand of his king. They will destroy this land, and I will not save them from their hands.*

Expectation and fulfillment.

For the Bible reader, Zechariah 11 is a cold shower. Especially if you're not prepared. Who expected this? The LORD is particularly optimistic in the previous chapter. God was so sympathetic to His old people yesterday, so to speak. What happened? The final chapters of Zechariah show different phases of the history of God with His people. Sometimes the relationship is warm and it clears the air. Something of hope and expectation becomes palpable. As with Zechariah 10:12 *I will strengthen them in the Lord, and in His name they will walk, the Lord speaks.* God in Zechariah 10 attracts the fate of Israel and comes with blessing and victory. Another time, as in Zechariah 11, the relationship seems to be quite cool. God takes a step away from His people. He just lets them boil in their own water. Zechariah 11, by the way, is not the last thing God says about His people. In Zechariah 12, the flag is very different. That is the good news – this is not the last word – but the bad news is that in the future there will apparently be a phase in which God's relationship with His people will cool down severely. You will wonder when this situation has occurred? At what time does the LORD refer in Zechariah 11? We know a time when the Lord was with His people as a Shepherd. Are we aware of a time when the Lord clashed with the leaders of all kinds of groups among the Jewish people and the relationship cools considerably. Yes, that time is not unknown to us. It is the time when our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, was on earth.

Thirty pieces of silver.



The 30 pieces of silver.

An important motif – which makes us think of the time when our Lord Jesus Christ was on earth –

is the sketch of the cool relationship in Zechariah 11. But the most important indication – which refers to the time Jesus spent on earth – is Zechariah 11:12,13 *For I had said to them, If it is good in your eyes, give me My reward; If not, leave it behind. Then they weighed my wages: thirty pieces of silver. But the LORD said to Me, "Throw that to the potter – a nice price to which I am valued by them! Then I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord for the potter.* In the Greek Translation of Zechariah there is a smelter, but the Hebrew basic text simply has the potter, as can be seen from the translation. The situation that arises in relation to the Lord Jesus is as follows. Judas – one of the twelve disciples – became disappointed in the Lord Jesus. He was sensitive to Satan's temptation to betray Jesus. When Judas asked the Jewish leaders how much money they had left, they gave him 30 pieces of silver. Matthew 26:14-16 *Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the high priests and said, What do you want to give me if I surrender Him to you? And they awarded him thirty pieces of silver. And from then on he sought a suitable opportunity to hand him over. From that moment on, he sought a favorable opportunity to extradite him.* Thirty pieces of silver, that seems like a lot. It's not nothing either. But if this is the value on which one estimates Jesus, it is a profound insult. Thirty pieces of silver in the old testament time is the price to be paid if a farmer has killed a slave. The price for a slave, so we must also understand the so-called princely wage, which the LORD talks to Zechariah about. It's probably meant to be cynical.

Potter's land for the clay.



Throwing the coins into the temple.

The history of the thirty pieces of silver gets another tail. After the Lord Jesus is captured, Judas repents. He goes back to the Jewish leaders and wants to give the money back. He was sorry. He wished he could turn the whole thing back, but of course this didn't work. Business once done, one can't make undone. The Jewish leaders wouldn't take the money. They said, "Find out!" Matthew 27:3,4 *When Judas, who had extradited him, saw that Jesus had been sentenced to death, he repented. He returned the thirty pieces of silver to the high priests and elders, and said, "I have committed a sin by delivering an innocent one." But they said, "What is that to us? See for yourself!" Then Judas threw the silver pieces of anger into the temple.* The Jewish leaders were so good at picking up the money. Because they thought it was blood money – because of Judas' suicide – they didn't want to use it for the temple. They bought a piece of land with it that 'coincidentally' belonged to a potter. That piece of land was made a cemetery for foreigners. We read this in Matthew 27:7,8 *And after he threw the silver pieces into the temple, he left. He went and hung himself. The high priests took the silver pieces and said, "It is not permissible to put them in the*

sacrificial box, because it is blood money." Matthew is familiar throughout history. According to Matthew, this story comes from Jeremiah. Matthew 27:9,10 *When is fulfilled what has been spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: And they have taken the thirty pieces of silver, the value of the estimated, which they had estimated from the Israelites, and they have given it to the potter's field, as the Lord has commanded me.* Is it a problem that Matthew thinks it's from Jeremiah? No, it is a – perhaps understandable – mistake, because in Jeremiah we meet the potter several times. But this word comes from Zechariah 11. We shouldn't be uncertain too much here. Ancient manuscripts of the Matthew Gospel have been found that do not have the reference to Jeremiah. That's interesting. Such a reference is not omitted. In science, the rule of 'the lectio difficilior' (= the more difficult reading) The most obvious explanation is that a writer of his own accord has added the reference to Jeremiah, but annoyingly it is incorrect.

The thirty pieces of silver in the temple.

The thirty pieces of silver and the throwing of those coins in the temple and the potter are the most basic connection between the prophecy of Zechariah 11 and the fulfillment in history of God's Son Jesus Christ. Anyone who lets the whole prophecy in Zechariah 11 penetrate will believe that there is actually only one history where this piece fits and that is in the 0 to 30 AD. The Lord Jesus constantly clashes with the spiritual leaders of the Jewish people. What we hear on behalf of the LORD is how it ends. Zechariah 11:4-6 *So says the LORD, my God: Graze those slaughter sheep. Their buyers kill them but do not feel guilty; their salesmen say, "They praise the LORD that I have become rich; and their shepherds do not spare them. Surely, I will no longer spare the inhabitants of the land, says the LORD. See, I hand over the people, each in the hand of his neighbor and in the hand of his king. They will destroy this land, and I will not save them from their hands. In fact, this is what we're talking about.*

Judas' repentance.



The Remorse of Judas by Edward Armitage

The staff of loveliness and unity.

Indeed, we cannot deny that this is the end of the story. But there was something about it. We don't hear that – remarkably enough – directly from God's mouth, but we'll see that as soon as the prophet Zechariah starts to put the words of God into practice. Then we also understand better where in this situation the anger of God comes from. It is unanswered love that awakens

the wrath of the LORD. The LORD has invested so much in the people of Israel. He also had their salvation in mind this time and not their downfall. He had their unity in mind, not the shards in which the existence of the population would later fall apart. God came to His people with a heart full of love and great expectations. With His love, He would save His people, and He would bring about a new unity. You'll notice that when Zechariah comes into practice what God told him to do. Zechariah 11:7 *That is why I grazed the sheep of slaughter, because they are wretched sheep. I took two sticks for myself – one I called LOVELINESS, the other TOGETHERNESS – and I grazed those sheep.* This is new to us, these two bars of kindness and unity. The shepherd has a stick and a staff as Psalm 23:4 mentions: *Though I also went through a valley full of shadow of death, I would fear no harm, for You are with me; Your stick and your staff, they comfort me.* The shepherd is apparently the one who provides safety along the way. The stick and the staff will help. The shepherd is the one the herd relies on. He leads them through the darkness of night to the light. Stick and staff or two bars – if you like – are called by Zacharia LOVELINESS and TOGETHERNESS. With that, he grazed the herd. Here you can see that it was God's intention to do His people good. But they turned down God's outstretched hand. They didn't have anything to do with the LORD. The leaders were dismissive of the Lord Jesus' actions, but the people were no better. Zechariah 11:8 *I exterminated three shepherds within one month, because My soul could no longer bear them, and also their souls disliked Me.* The Lord Jesus is – if we may say so – very disappointed in His people. He came with the intention to do the people good and bring them together. But the Lord has experienced firsthand what the John's Gospel has been playing from the beginning. John 1:11 *He came to His, but His people did not accept him.* Perhaps that is also why Zechariah initially omits the staff of LOVELINESS and TOGETHERNESS from the revelation, because they did not stand a chance afterwards. Yet it is so important to us that Zechariah announces the full revelation. It grabs you when you see with how much affection God approached His people Israel. It is nothing short of shocking to see how incomprehensible their rejection was.

The shepherd's staff.



The Lord Jesus came to the Jewish people with the outstretched hand of God.

In the Gospel of John, there is an entire chapter devoted to the shepherdship of the Lord Jesus. Jesus is not unclear about it. The Lord says, *"I am the good shepherd."* John 10 He is that Shepherd who wanted to graze the flock of God's people with the two bars of LOVELINESS and

TOGETHERNESS. From different angles, the Lord shows that He is the good Shepherd from the beginning of his appearance on earth among His fellow people to the bitter end of the death on the cross. It is the story of cross and resurrection that overcomes the Lord and that He accomplishes for us, the sheep of His meadow. John 10:11-15 *I am the good Shepherd; The good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. But the mercenary, and who is not a shepherd who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and abandons the sheep and flees; and the wolf grabs them and drives the sheep apart. And the mercenary flees because he's a mercenary and doesn't care about the sheep. I am the good Shepherd, and I know the Mines, and I am known by the Mines, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; And I give my life for the sheep.*

Jesus is the good Shepherd.



The Lord Jesus came to His own people with good intentions. This lasted until His death. He really came for the Jewish community. To give an example, The Lord Jesus spoke to the people who came to Him from all areas of the Jewish country. Matthew 4:25 *And great crowds followed Him, from Galilee and Dekapolis, from Jerusalem and Judea, and from across the Jordan River.* He affirmed His Word with miracles that He was allowed to do by God. Everything was about the full recovery of Israel. In the synagogue of Nazareth where He grew up, the Lord quotes the word from Isaiah. Luke 4:16-19 *And He came to Nazareth, where He was raised, and went to the synagogue by His custom on the day of the Sabbath, and He rose to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was given to Him, and when He opened the book, He found the place where it was written: The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed me; He has sent Me to proclaim the Gospel to the poor, to heal those who are broken in hearts, to preach to prisoners release, and to blind eyesight, to send fallen people away in freedom, to preach the year of the Lord's good.* This is where the reading of Jesus from the book of Isaiah stops. From those words in Isaiah, the Lord chooses only the positive. In these words, Jesus experiences His calling from God. The Lord also moved to the north and south borders of the territories where the Jews lived. Those who did not belong to the Jewish people were not helped in principle by Jesus. Mark 7:26,27 *This woman now was a Greek, from Syro-Phoenicia; and she asked Him to exorcise the demon from her daughter. But Jesus said to her, "Let the children be satiated first, for it is not proper to take the bread of the children and throw it to the dogs."* Later, the Lord helps her, but she is the exception that confirms the rule. At that time, the Lord was only there for the Jewish community. All who turned to Jesus from the Jewish people were healed. Matthew 9:35 *And Jesus went around in all the cities and*

villages and taught in their synagogues, and he preached the Gospel of the Kingdom and healed every disease and ailment among the people. It is difficult to see anything else than the staff of the LOVELINESS with which the good Shepherd Jesus met His people. But what about the staff of the TOGETHERNESS? Let's put it this way; The Jewish people could have received their unity in the good Shepherd. The mass rejection of the Lord Jesus leading to the public liquidation of the Lord brought with it all sorts of things, but certainly also that unity in Christ was too far to be found. John 6:66 *From then on, many of His disciples withdrew and did not go with Him.* The Lord indicates it also when He is grieving for Jerusalem. He had wanted to bring them together under His care. Matthew 23:37 *Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill and throw stones the prophets who have been sent to you! How many times have I wanted to gather your children together, in the way that one gathers her chicks under her wings; but you didn't want to!* The LOVELINESS with which the Lord Jesus met His people and the TOGETHERNESS was far to be found. It was not served. Jesus didn't get a foot in the house. The Jewish people turned him down hard. Jesus has maintained His love for the ancient people of God to the bitter end. He prayed, "*Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.*" Luke 23:34 They thus had their own leaders. As far as spiritual guidance is concerned, the people were divided into all kinds of groups, such as the High Priests and the Pharisees and the Scribes and the Sadducees.

The LOVELINESS with which the Lord Jesus met His people and the TOGETHERNESS.



The Jewish shepherds or leaders.

It is an undeniable fact that the Lord Jesus clashed with the Jewish leaders. The so-called shepherds of the time were the Pharisees, the scribes, the Sadducees, the High priests and the Herodians. Occasionally, there is an exception. For example, the Lord has appreciation for the scribe who brings up something sensible about love for God and the neighbor's first and second commandments. Mark 12:32-34 *And the scribe said to Him, "Right, Master, You have truthfully said that God is one, and there is no other than Him." And to love Him with all the heart and with all the mind and with all the soul and with all the strength, and to love the neighbor as himself, is more than all the burnt offerings and victims. And when Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the Kingdom of God." And no one dared ask Him anything more.* Finally, one of the scribes who agreed with the Lord. John is also told – between the lines – that there were leaders who were a hidden follower of Jesus. John 12:42,43 *And yet many of the leaders believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not profess it, lest they be thrown out of the synagogue. For they loved the honor of the people more than the honor of God.* Although we have sympathy for these people – because of their openness to the Lord Jesus – they do not really come off well. Shouldn't they have put the honor of God higher than that of men? Sure. It makes it clear once again how much the choice for the Lord Jesus can cost us; our status, our

good name, our place in the synagogue or the church. Furthermore, we know a certain Nicodemus who also recognized that Jesus was more than just someone with a special opinion. John 3:1,2 *And there was a man from the Pharisees; his name was Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. This one came to Jesus at night and said to Him, Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher, for no one can do these signs that You do, if God is not with him.* The Lord Jesus was particularly critical of this man. Still, it didn't frighten him. This Nicodemus – who was part of the Jewish Council that condemned Jesus – did not agree with this decision. He helped with the Lord's funeral and came in with precious ointment. That cost him a lot of money, but he did not care for money. In this way, he brought Jesus the last honor that He thought Jesus fully deserved. John 19:39 *And Nicodemus (who had first come to Jesus at night) also came and brought with him a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.* Despite the fact that there were exceptions, the rule was that the leaders of Israel clashed with the Lord Jesus. They disagreed a lot with each other. But they were so bitten on the Lord that they were bound together in a common hatred. Jesus sums it up briefly in the three agony announcements. Mark 8:31 *And He began to teach them that the Son of Man had to suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders and High priests and scribes and be killed and after three days would stand up.* Compare Mark 9:31, 10:33,34 That may have been the main culprits – the high priest and the scribes and the elders – with the Herodians and the Sadducees, the relationship was not much better.

Pilate and political power.



High priest Caiaphas and the spiritual power.



The Sanhedrin.

The Sanhedrin was the Jewish Supreme Court that ruled in religious and civil cases and was the highest authority (recognized by the Romans) in Judea. The chairman of the Jewish council was the high priest. In the time of the Lord Jesus, it was Caiaphas. The other members of the Council were composed out of important movements such as the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The scribes mentioned in the Bible as such were often the spokesmen of the Pharisees or one of the other groups. They were the theologians of the group. They had an important position because both the Pharisees and the Sadducees all relied on the Tenach, the Jewish Bible. We know from the Bible some members of the Sanhedrin from the time of Jesus: Caiaphas, but also Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea and Gamaliel. It was Joseph of Arimathea who had asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. John 19:38 *He wanted to give Jesus an orderly burial for which he even made his own grave available. Gamaliel – who Paul had been taught – was later asked 'what to do with the Movement of Christians?' His advice was to let it run its course, arguing, "If it is not God's, it will bleed to death itself. If God is behind it, they wouldn't be able to do anything about it. Acts 5:38,39 *And now I tell you: Keep yourself far from these people and let them go, for if this intention**

or work comes from men, it will be broken down, but if it comes from God, you cannot tear it down, lest you perhaps also fight against God.

The Pharisees.

The hardest clash is the Lord Jesus with the Pharisees. This may be because He was closest to them. He does not warn his followers for nothing about the way of thinking of the Pharisees. It's contagious, so to speak. Jesus sees it as yeast with which a whole lump of dough can be raised. As a Christian, you only need a little Pharisee to be fully penetrated. Mark 8:15 *And He commanded them and said, Watch out, beware of the pharaohs' sour dough and Herod's sourdough.* No one understands exactly what the Lord means by this, and at the same time everyone has a hunch. There is apparently a real danger that we will exchange a life through the Spirit and the blood of Christ for something we do ourselves. Something that looks like it, but it just isn't. The spoilage of the best is the worst. Jesus thinks they're hypocritical. The fact that the Lord has made us feel that for us "a Pharisee" and "a hypocrite" are about the same. The Lord doesn't think their theology is so crazy. The Lord goes so far as to say that He thinks you should do what they say. Matthew 5:20 *For I tell you: If your righteousness is no more abundant than that of the scribes and the Pharisees, you will certainly not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.* So what He objects to is not the theory, but the practice of faith. They do have very crazy things. That's how they play God against the people, to name an example. An example: In the time of Jesus, the children have a duty of care for the parents. There is no old men's money and no pension from the State. The children are the pension. But what do different Pharisees do? They say – of the money that their followers should actually give to their parents – that it is 'korban'. They deduct it all to God. It doesn't really matter to those people themselves, because they're going to lose that money anyway. But it is particularly disturbing to the Lord Jesus that they do not give it to their parents, but only think of their religious duties. Jesus equates love to the neighbor to the love for God. The Pharisees saw love for God as something far more important. The Lord was very critical of that. Mark 7:9-13 *And He said to them, You set aside God's commandment in a beautiful way to keep you to your lore! For Moses said, "Honor your father and your mother; and: Whoever curses father or mother, he must surely die; but you say, "If someone says to his father or his mother, it is korban (i.e.: a gift) that you could have given me, he is fine." And you no longer allow him to do anything for his father or his mother, and so you make God's Word powerless by your surrender that you have surrendered; and many such things you do.*

The Pharisees.



The Lord was particularly critical of the Pharisees' leaders: the scribes. He thought these people seeking honor, money-hungry and sanctimonious. Mark 12:38-40 *And He said to them in His teaching: Beware of the scribes, who are fond of walking around in long robes, at greetings at the markets, in the front places in the synagogues, and in the places of worship during meals. They devour the widows' homes, and for the appearance they pray for a long time. They will receive a harsher judgment.*

The destruction of city and temple in 70 AD.

There's an aspect we see a little less brightly. It is about Zechariah 11:8 *I exterminated three shepherds within one month, because My soul could no longer bear them, and also their soul had an aversion to Me.* So specific – with the number three – is not the revelation of the New Testament. The most obvious is that Jesus clashed with different groups. They weren't even 'agreed to disagree, agreeing that you disagree.' It was more like, "Want the real shepherd stand up." Jesus is the good Shepherd. He claimed the place that came to Him from God, but the other so-called shepherds did not accept it. They wouldn't be pushed out of place. It was Him or them. And then it became 'Him'. When the people also went along with it and did not recognize the Lord Jesus, the Lord left them to their leaders and thus to their own devices. For that is the way it is: Zechariah 11:9 *Then I said, I will not graze you again. Let die what dies, let be exterminated what threatens to be eradicated, and let those who remain devour each other's flesh.* That's pretty much the way it went. The kindness of God and the unity of the Jewish people was far to be sought after Jesus' stay on earth. The leaders were fighting with each other. The authority of certain leaders evaporated, the unity was gone. The Jewish war soon culled with the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple in the year 70 AD.

The destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD.



The last part of Zechariah 11 seems to apply to this. Those who pay close attention have noticed that Zechariah has to dress up not once, but twice as a mercenary shepherd. Zechariah 11:15-17 *The LORD said to me, Take once again the equipment of a foolish shepherd. For behold, I will raise a shepherd in the land: to what threatens to be exterminated, he will not look for the young animals, which is broken, he will not heal, what is still standing, he will not take care of it, but he will eat the flesh of the fatty animals, and he will rip off their hooves. Woe bettor of nothing, who abandons the flock! The sword will strike his arm and his right eye. His arm will stiffen completely, his right eye will become completely dull.* This is a different story. This time, the prophet Zechariah does not propose the Lord Jesus who meets the people with *loveliness and unity*, and only when He and

the Gospel were freely rejected and rejected en masse, the people surrendered to their own whirs. This time it is just the evil shepherds to which the people are surrendered, to the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the Zealots and the Sicarii and the High Priests etc. In fact, these people at that time are more concerned with themselves than with the well-being of the people of God. They are people who are glued to the plush, who are only too happy to secure their own position. In the end, the rejection of Jesus as Messiah leads to the destruction of the second temple in the year 70 AD. It is a judgment of God about a people who refused to take on His outstretched hand.

Judeo-Christian Future Expectation from Zechariah. Full story.

Part 4

Zechariah 12,13 and 14

Israel and/or Judah.

In the previous chapters we saw next to the name Judah that of Israel. We found it very understandable then, because – Israel may have originally been the name for the whole people – after the rupture of the empire, it became the name of the ten tribes in the North. The exile of the North (722 BC) was already about two centuries behind Zechariah. Before anyone thinks that the LORD has forgotten most of His people, the name Israel in Zechariah – but also among other prophets – is emphatically linked to the future of the people of God.

The Jewish people are the people of Israel.



Similarly in the saluting of Zechariah 12:1 *The prophecy, the word of the LORD over Israel.* Yet – as it sometimes goes – we start talking about the Jewish people. The tribe Judah (= Jew) has – and perhaps understandable – come to the surface. In fact, it is Judah and Jerusalem that are central to the prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Also in Zechariah is Jerusalem which is being rebuilt complete with the temple of the LORD. In Zechariah 12, it is Judah before and after. That name Judah appears at least 6 times in our chapter, while we no longer hear the name Israel – after verse 1. Even now we know the Jewish people, although – because of the State of Israel – the name Israel is quite back. Someone pointed out "that this may all be true, but the twelve tribes of Israel have not disappeared after all." From the registers of Ezra 3 we know indeed that not only the inhabitants of Judah's villages and towns, but also those of the North (= Israel) came back. Think of the Bethel delegation of Zachariah 7 and 8. The New Testament confirms this information. For example, Luke knows from the female prophet Anna that she is from Aser. Luke 2:36 Someone like Paul knows of himself – from the well-preserved family tradition – that he is a Benjaminite. Philippians 3:5 *Circumcised on the eighth day, from the people of Israel, from the tribe Benjamin, a Hebrew from the Hebrews, as far as the law is concerned a Pharisee.* Joseph, the man

of Mary, even knew that he was not only from Judah Bethlehem, but also descended from the royal family of David. Just assume that every right-minded Jew knows what tribe he's coming from. So the twelve tribes are there, but the collective term for the whole people has become after the exile 'the Jewish people', and that name has held up throughout the history. It's not different. Zechariah 12 shows both one – Israel – and the other, namely that the whole people are actually named after the Tribe Of Judah/Jew. Zechariah 12 begins with the word: *Burden*. One does not know well what to do with the Hebrew word which is also translated with the term *prophecy* or verdict. In fact, after this word has been used, the word of the Lord about Israel is neatly told what God has in mind. This same difficult word is at the beginning of Zechariah 9. We assume that Zacharia 9-11 is a whole, while Zechariah 12-14 is also a unity. The chapters Zacharia 12, 13 and 14 belong together.

Israel and Judah.

In the book of Zechariah we see that God fully involves the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Not only are we aware – with the delegation from Bethel in Jerusalem – that the returned exiles are not only made up of Judeans but also exiles from the northern towns and villages. We could have already made this up from the list of names of returned exiles registered in Ezra by village or town. So did Bethel. Ezra 2:28 *The men of Bethel and Ai: two hundred and twenty-three; Not only among the deputies of Bethel in Jerusalem, but also further on.* God emphasizes the unity of the restored people of God. Zechariah 10:6 *I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will redeem the house of Joseph. I will bring them back, for I have taken care of them. They will be as if I had not disowned them. After all, I am the LORD, their God: I will listen to them!* When we are determined by Judah this time, we must ask ourselves what the purpose of the LORD is? It could be that God makes the royal family of David more part of the Tribe of Judah and vice versa; that the members of the Judah tribe – who live around Jerusalem – become more connected to the royal family. If God wants to bring out certain people and honor them, it seems to be the 'ordinary' members of The Judah tribe. Zechariah 12:7 *And the LORD will deliver the tents of Judah first, so that the honor of the house of David and the honor of the inhabitants of Jerusalem are no greater than that of Judah.* What is a king without an army? The rehabilitation of the ordinary people of Judah.

Mountains surround Jerusalem.

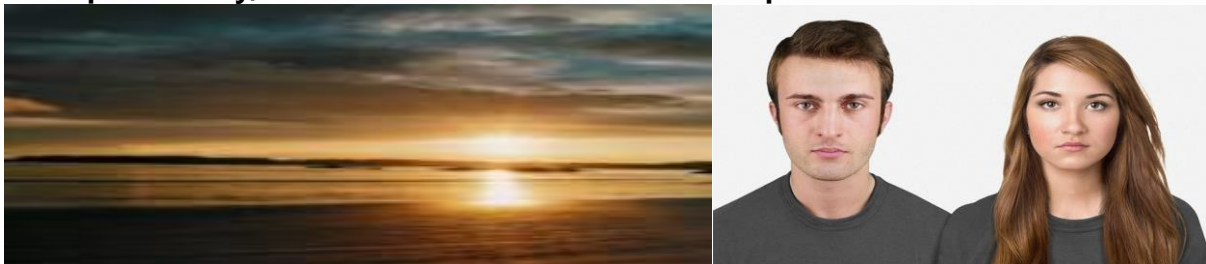


The Savior is the Creator.

At the beginning of Zechariah 12, the LORD issues his business card. Zechariah 12:1 *The LORD*

speaks, which spans the sky, foundations the earth and forms the spirit of man within. In fact, we need to be a little more precise. When you let the whole of Zechariah 12 make an impact on you, you are not astonished that this part begins with a *doxology*. The NAME of God is made great again. Zechariah 12 opens with the power of the almighty God. He is "the LORD who made heaven and earth." He's speaking. In fact, it is even more exciting. God is speaking in the present tense. Creation is not only a thing of the past. For the LORD, creation is something of every day. God is not the great clockmaker who has made the clock and winds it and then the clock runs by itself to the end. The LORD maintains His creation to this day. He, the Creator of heaven and earth is also the Savior of the world. He takes history in His hand and completes it. In the great space and time of heaven and earth, the crown of creation is also mentioned: man. God, who forms the spirit of man within. We are reminded of Genesis 2:7 *Then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the earth and breathed life into his nostrils; thus man became a living being.*

Who spans the sky, foundations the earth and forms the spirit of man within him?



Man, the LORD has had a lot to do with him. The fall in sin put man in the grip of God's adversary, the devil. The devil took man hostage with the weapons of death and guilt. He had seduced man into evil. By sin – as a cause – man had run into the righteous judgment of God with – as a result – death. From the beginning, the LORD has made it clear that He is going to deliver man from the deadly grip of Satan and that He would destroy Satan. Genesis 3:15 *And I will create enmity between you and woman, and between your progeny and her Progeny; That will crush you head, and you will crush it the heel.* In other words, it's war. Some people think it's peanuts for God to defeat Satan – a fallen angel. It was, were it not for Satan's grasp of man with "the weapons" of guilt and death. It was the art of first freeing man from the grip of the evil and then destroying the opponent.

God with His power and vulnerability.

What we see in Zechariah 12 is God in all His Power and Strength. At the same time, we see God in His weakness and vulnerability. Along these two ways, God overcomes His enemies and frees the elect. This is the way the LORD – in force majeure and vulnerability – makes Himself known in the history of His people. God shows Himself from His mighty side. But the LORD also has an unthought vulnerable side. This side of God we see in the Person of Jesus Christ, God's Son. The Lord Jesus has come to conquer Satan. 1 John 3:8 *To this end, the Son of God has been revealed that He would break the works of the devil.* At first, it looks like the Lord is losing the battle. He is handed over by His fellow folk to the Romans who crucify him. But not everything is as it seems. The Lord actually achieves a great victory over His opponent. What happened? As an innocent man, the Lord underwent the judgment of God over mankind on the cross of Calvary. God affirms the victory of His Son Jesus Christ through the resurrection from the dead on the third day. Every man who believes in the Lord Jesus receives forgiveness of sins and salvation from the coming wrath. Even Satan has been surprised by this liberation action on God's part. He must let go of all the people who deal with the outstretched hand of God in Christ. This is the vulnerable side of

God. This is also the way the LORD – the Creator of heaven and earth – makes Himself known here in Zechariah 12. He is the One who, in all His Power and Glory, is turning off the people's attack on His people and His city – yes the attack on God Himself – with great force. The LORD overcomes His opponents. He – That mighty God – is also the One who has allowed Himself to be killed in all vulnerability and apparent weakness on the cross of Calvary. There is a reference to the crucifixion of Jesus in Zechariah 12. We read of the death of (the Son of) God in Zacharia 12:10 *They will look on Me, The One they have pierced.*

They will see on Me the One they have pierced.



It is the New Testament that gives this verse the authoritative interpretation. John cites this verse when a Roman army officer with a sword has made a cut in the side of Jesus. Water and blood flow out to mark the death of the crucified. Two verses are fulfilled here according to John:

1. Psalm 34:21 *He keeps all his bones, shin not one of them is broken.* By the cut with the sword, the officer observes the death of Jesus. That reminds John also of Zechariah 12:10. John 19:35 *And who has seen it, who testifies of it and his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth, that you too may believe. For these things have been done so that the scripture is fulfilled: No leg of Him will be broken.*

The final battle of the nations against God and Jerusalem.

It is remarkable that here in Zechariah we hear of the war that will be waged against God and Jerusalem in the end times. Zechariah 12:2,3 *Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem an intoxicating cup for all the peoples around, yes, also against Judah it will go with the siege of Jerusalem. On that day, it will happen that I will make Jerusalem a stone that is difficult to lift for all the nations. All who lift him up will surely inflict deep cuts upon themselves, and all the nations of the earth will gather against her.* That in itself is not new. Also in Ezekiel, God reveals this future broad-based final struggle of the nations against God and His people. There, God calls the enemy kings by name: Gog and Magog. Ezekiel 39:1-7 *And you, child of man, prophesy to Gog, and say, "So the Lord LORD says, Behold, I am against you Gog, supreme prince of Mesech and Tubal! I will turn you around, drag you, pull you up from the far north and take you to the mountains of Israel, but I will strike your bow out of your left hand, and drop your arrows out of your right hand. I will send fire into Magog and among those who inhabit the coastal lands without worries. Then they will know that I am the LORD. I will make My holy name known in the midst of My people Israel and no longer let My Holy Name be desecrated. Then the people of the pagans will know that I am the Lord, the Holy one in Israel.* The war against the Saints in the end times is confirmed in the book of Revelations. Revelation 20:7-9 *And when those thousand years*

have come to an end, Satan will be released from his prison. And he will go out to deceive the nations that are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for war. And their number is like the sand of the sea. And they came up across the breadth of the earth, and surrounded the army place of the saints and the beloved city. But fire from God descended from heaven, and that devoured them. In itself, the final battle is an element of the end time; otherwise, it is a revelation that God is also talking to Zechariah about this.

Jerusalem.



Behind the final battle lies a special movement of God.

We all know that God – because of Israel's rejection – has gone to the nations with the gospel. Paul has also experienced this rejection in his personal mission. As the Jewish community in the foreign cities continued to overwhelmingly reject the gospel, the apostle said that God would pass his people in the future and go to the Gentiles with the good news. Acts 13:46,47 *But Paul and Barnabas said boldly: It was necessary that the Word of God be spoken to you first, but since you reject it and do not consider yourself worthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. So the Lord has commanded us: I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may be salvation to the extreme of the earth.* Also in the Roman letter 11 he incorporated this change of peoples; instead of Israel God went to the nations. Although the Apostle Paul later became aware of it, it was already clear to the Lord Jesus that the rejection by the Jewish community – of Him as Messiah – meant the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Luke 19:41 *And when He came close and saw the city, He was full of tears over her. He said, Oh, that on this day you would also recognize what serves to your peace! Now, however, it is hidden from your eyes. For there will be days when your enemies will set a wall around you, encircle you and corner you from all sides. And they will destroy you and crush your children in you. Nor will they leave a stone on the other stone in you, because you have not recognized the time when you were looked at.*

There are two inferences that arise from the eschatology of Zechariah:

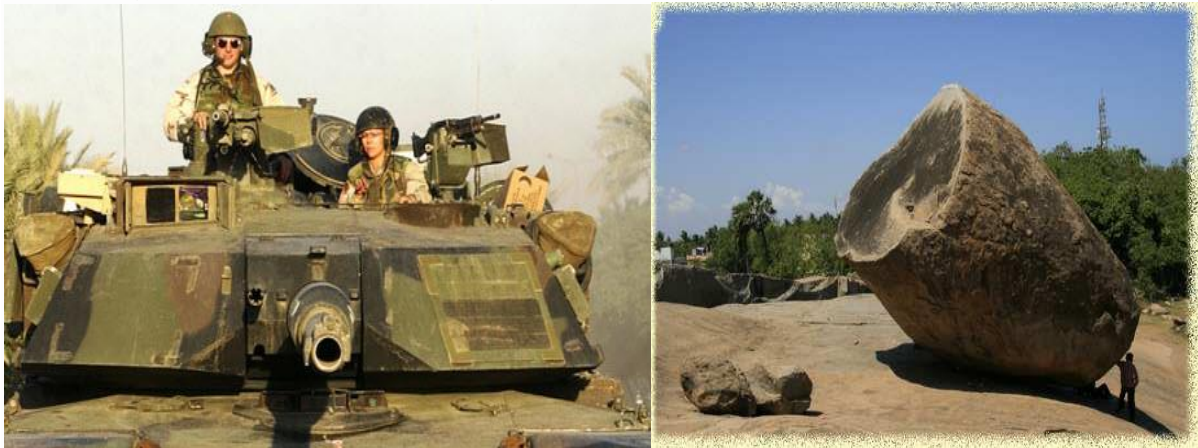
1. Already in Zechariah 12:10 (They will see Me who they have pierced) the rejection of the Messiah is palpable. The rejection of Christ and the Gospel will lead to the destruction of Jerusalem in the year 70 AD and the diaspora of the Jewish people. That time uses God to approach the nations of the world with the gospel of salvation and He will save many people from all countries and languages.
2. When God speaks in Zechariah of the death of Jesus and of the final war against God and Jerusalem, there is also room for the inference of the return of the Jews to the country of origin and the possession of the land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem towards the end of time. This – return of the Jews to their country and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple – is supposed by the Lord Jesus in Mark 13:14 and by Paul in 2 Thessalonica 2:4 and by John in Revelation 7:1-8 and by Luke in Luke 21:24. Without saying it in so many words, the LORD teaches us in Zechariah that after a period of 2,000 years of Gospel for the nations, He will return to His old people of Israel. That happened in 1948 AD. Meanwhile, the Jewish people are

back in the land that God gave to their ancestors and to them, and the city of Jerusalem is also in their possession as the eternal capital. The temple reconstruction is still a while away. The time is not yet ripe. The Arab peoples (Islam) seem to be blocking the way. They may step aside in the (near) future. The final battle is in a more distant moment in time.

A heavy rock.

The people will have the impression that they themselves are pulling the strings when they go to war against Jerusalem. In fact, God determines the course of history. He stuns them with wine. Zechariah 12:2 *Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem an intoxicating cup for all the peoples around, yes, also against Judah it will go at the siege of Jerusalem.* Wine is the metaphor the LORD unleashes on it. Wine makes people overconfident. Also, the real estimate – of what can and cannot be done – decreases as the quantity of wine increases. Jerusalem apparently exerts – willingly or unwittingly – a certain power on the peoples. God, the LORD gets it so far that His enemies attack Jerusalem at a time when they are not actually ready for it. Was it the rest in Judah that made them overconfident? It could be. The fact is that they then stand up to Jerusalem on the assumption that they will not only besiege, but also take and defeat it. But they're going to cut themselves in the fingers ugly. With the image of the rock or the heavy stone, God makes it clear that the world's population will make an enormously mistake in the case of Jerusalem. This action will be fatal to them. Zechariah 12:3,4 *On that day, it will happen that I will make Jerusalem a stone that is difficult to lift for all the nations. All who lift him up will surely inflict deep cuts upon themselves, and all the nations of the earth will gather against her. On that day, the LORD speaks, I will beat all the horses with skittishness and their horsemen with insanity. But over the house of Judah I will keep my eyes open, and all the horses of the nations I will strike with blindness.*

On the day when all nations march against Jerusalem, I will turn the city into a heavy stone.



God is a master of tactics. With the way in which the LORD showed Himself – or did not show at first – in the struggle for His people, He puts the adversary in the lurch. The adversary thinks God can't do anything. There is much to be said about the LORD's strategically chosen approach to establish itself one time with great force majeure and the other time in incomprehensible vulnerability. Thus, Christ's agony was simply necessary to free us people from our sins. But it has also always had something strategic in it, for example in the sense that Satan has let himself be put in the lurch. Satan never realized that – by having Jesus Christ killed – he was cooperating in his own demise. Yet that is how it has been. Paul notes this in 1 Corinthians 2:7,8 *However, we speak the wisdom of God, as a mystery; a wisdom that was hidden and which God before all centuries*

predestined to be our glory; a wisdom that no one of the leaders of this world has known. After all, if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. With His strategy of power and weakness, the LORD not only empowers the earthly rulers, but God is also outsmarting the spiritual powers.

The final battle drawn in terms of own time.

Both Ezekiel and Zechariah have drawn the final battle in fairly detailed form. Someone will wonder if we should imagine the final battle as a war with horses and chariots, swords and spears? The war is clearly drawn within the Old Testament setting. The agreement is that it is a battle against God and Jerusalem, the difference that modern weapons will be fought against. Indeed, when Revelation 20 is a later representation of the same struggle, we see the fire that plays an important role in both previous descriptions in Ezekiel and Zechariah. There is the fire that can be a powerful weapon in battle, but can also be useful after battle in cleaning up everything that was left behind on the land. In Revelation 20, victory over the world of nations is at the same time the final judgment, i.e. the end of the old world. The former enemies of God go to the fire of hell. Revelation 20:10,14 *And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the pool of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are already. And they will be tormented day and night in all eternity. And the death and the realm of death were thrown into the pool of fire. This is the second death.* There are therefore similarities and differences between expectation and fulfillment, but the essence is the same.

The flames scorching the surrounding peoples. Jerusalem will remain where it is.



David's house.

Although the people of Judah and Jerusalem fight as soldiers, one thing must have become undeniably clear: They owe victory not to themselves, but to the LORD. Normally there is something of competition between town and countryside. Most of the time, the city – in this case Jerusalem – takes credit when it comes to war and peace. The outside area is completely open and is overrun by people with enemy intentions. Not a dear mother helps with that. In fact, the tendency of many people in times of war – to flee to a walled city – confirms the idea that you are better off in a city. But this time they can shake hands, city and countryside. Judah is not inferior to Jerusalem, and vice versa, Jerusalem has nothing to be ashamed of. It becomes clear that, in addition to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the Judeans, there is another group that catches the eye. It seems to be a specialization of the Judeans as it is also people who are descended from Judah: the house of David. Although it is understandable that these people are situated in

Jerusalem – there is a reference to the royal family of David and those residing in Jerusalem – there is still much to be guessed at. That house of David; What's their position? It's not about the king, it's about people who are apparently part of the royal family. One thing is clear, perhaps the royal family – when it comes to struggle and commitment to peace and security – is to expect more than from ordinary people. Terms fall as: *Those who falter among them will be like David on that day, and the house of David will be like God, as the Angel of the LORD before their eyes.* David's family has an earthly, but also a heavenly side. Slowly but surely, the enumeration seems to be climbing from the earth to the sky. It begins with King David, who is known for his fearlessness and great strategic victories. There is fighting on earth, but also from heaven. The second one mentioned is God Himself. Remarkably, the translation goes for 'gods', Elohim a word that is normally translated into God in the Bible, if – as is the case here – the God of the Bible is meant. Finally, there is the Angel of the LORD, or the Maleach Yahwe, whom we came to know in Zechariah as the Lord Jesus. It is not a surprise – at the house of David and the struggle – or the thought imposes itself on the Bible reader to Jesus, the Son of David. He is the Son of God and the son of Mary who connects heaven and the earth. He will fight the spiritual and historical battle and will overcome Satan and the world ruler of that moment. It is he who shows God's vulnerability, but later also His Almighty Power. According to Revelation 20, the final battle is a physical battle on earth, but also a spiritual struggle of Christ against Satan with the final destruction of Satan and the world of nations standing up to God. It is the Lord Jesus who, after His death and resurrection, put himself with the Ascension to God's right hand until all his enemies lie before His feet like a footstool. He, Jesus will come in the end times on the clouds of the sky, and He will resent the attack on Jerusalem and the believers and bring the final liberation. Revelation 19:11-16 *And I saw the heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He Who sat there, was called faithful and truthful. And He judges and wages war in justice. And His eyes were like a flame, and on His head were many diadems. He had a name that was written down, and that no one knows but Himself. And He was clad in a blood-dipped top, and His Name reads: The Word of God. And the armies in heaven followed Him on white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and immaculate. And from His mouth came a sharp sword, so that he would strike the peoples of the pagans with it. And He will herd them with an iron staff. And He enters the wine press box of the wine of the grim wrath of almighty God. It was written on His upper and on His thigh this Name: King of kings and Lord of lords.*

King David.



Restoration of relations with the Jewish people.

At some point, the peoples will act together – in a military sense – against Israel. The question is, where do the hostilities come from? Presumably we are dealing with a world that has shaken off the Christian faith like a duck the water. The Apostle Paul warns of this in Romans 11. When the Gentiles, who have become Christians at some point forget what the grace of God means, God's old people Israel will be the victim of it, it seems. In that moment, God can also reverse history and turn to His old people in grace. In WWII, the heart of once Christian Europe finally turns against the Jewish people. One wants to destroy all the people of Israel with the sentence of Hitler; 'die Endlösung der Judenfrage'. This is probably also the moment when God turns to His old people and blesses them. In 1948 AD, the Jews received the opportunity to establish the State of Israel in the country of origin. The history after that – in the wars and the victories – is the hand of the LORD Who saves His people. During the war of 1967 AD, Israel once again acquired Jerusalem to never let go of that eternal capital. In addition to returning to the land, there is also the possibility of returning to God – by accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior – as the LORD also promised to remove the hardening that lay over the heart of the Jewish people. This offers a hopeful expectation for the future of Israel, something the apostle wants to underline by the end of his speech – as if it were an open secret. Romans 11:25 *For I do not want, brethren, that you have no knowledge of this secret (lest you be wise in your own mind), that some hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has entered.* Again that word *until* meant a lot.

until

a meaningful word in Biblical eschatology.

After the Jewish people not only surrendered the Messiah Jesus to the cross and also rejected the Gospel of Atonement and the Holy Spirit through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ – and was thus rejected – it will have an awakening by the end of time precisely at the point of accepting Jesus as Savior and Lord. It will be bad with the nations at that time. On the contrary, they have said goodbye to the Christian faith quite en masse. Yet they hold a certain sensitivity towards the God of the Bible. At first they walked away with it quite en masse, towards the end of time former believers act against God and the believers. In fact, the critical attitude towards Israel will result in a major military action towards Jewish territory and Jerusalem. By the end of time, sympathy for the LORD has completely changed. God's heart lay with the believers of the nations for centuries, but when they turn their backs on Him en masse, the LORD will turn again to His old people of Israel. Zechariah mentions that. Zechariah 12:9 *On that day, It will happen that I will want to wipe out all the pagan peoples who advance against Jerusalem.* While the attitude of God in the end times towards the Gentiles does not lie, the LORD is lenient and open to His old people. This is not only evident in the relationship of God to man, but that also results in changed people. The hearts of the Jewish community will soften and seek mercy and forgiveness from God. Zechariah 12:10 *But over the house of David and over the inhabitants of Jerusalem I will pour out the Spirit of mercy and of the prayers.* This way, God and the Jewish community can close each other in the arms again. One greets each other as the father of the prodigal son greeted his son. Mercy comes from God and the prayer for mercy is from the people. It fits together like the key on a lock. The

door can be opened to God and to the people. We find by God mercy and in the people we see a growing awareness of what one has done and a deep repentance. Zechariah 12:10 *But over the house of David and over the inhabitants of Jerusalem I will pour out the Spirit of mercy and of the prayers. They will look on Me, the One they have pierced. They will mourn Him, as with the grieving complaint about an only child; and they will complain bitterly about Him, as one bitterly complains about a firstborn.* The Jewish community will be shocked to find out what they did when they surrendered Jesus to be crucified.

A Spirit of mercy.



They will look on Me, the One they have pierced.

On the one hand, it is understandable that the Jewish community of the end times becomes aware of the implications of Jesus' death. In the Bible, they are drawn as a people who have overwhelmingly turned their backs on the Messiah and the gospel. Even if this has been a process of centuries, in which the attitude of the majority of Jews to the gospel remained unchanged, then – at the moment when God takes away the hardening and the openness to Christ Jesus grows – the awareness will be able to penetrate the realization of the things that took place at the beginning of our era. One thing is clear, it are the converted Jews who will feel remorse over the death of Jesus. The others will still have nothing with the Lord. We know someone who has happened to the same thing; Paul. In the beginning he had nothing to do with Christ; more strongly he fought Him and the spread of the gospel with all that was in him. Acts 9:1 He considers himself afterwards as one who has received extraordinary grace from God. 1 Corinthians 15:8-10 *And last of all, He has also appeared to me, as if to the untimely born. After all, I am the least of the apostles – i who are not worthy of being called an apostle, because I have persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace to me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I have made more effort than all of them; not me, however, but the grace of God, who is with me.* For Paul, the rejection of Christ by the Jewish people is the proof that they, like the Gentiles, must have it from the grace of God in Christ. Through faith in Jesus Christ, God has made friends of former enemies. They have no edge and – with all their memorable ancient traditions – are not better than the peoples. Despite the differences – which presumably have a lasting character – the similarities between Jews and non-Jews in relation to our salvation are decisive. There is no one – no Jew and no pagans – who can be saved outside of Christ. Acts 4:12 *And salvation is in no other, for there is no other Name given among heaven that we must be blessed.*

Every eye will see Him, including those who have pierced Him.



Two quotes in the New Testament.

It is remarkable that this Part of the Bible – They will look on Me, the One they have pierced – is mentioned twice in the New Testament. The first time falls at a time when the Lord Jesus is still hanging on the cross. We read it in John 19:33-37 *But when they came to Jesus and saw that He had already died, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers put a spear in His side and immediately blood and water came out. And another scripture goes: They will see on Him that they have pierced.* The situation is clear. In fact, the Jews did not stab Jesus with a sword, but it was a Roman soldier. However, it is – and this is, of course, the underlying reason – that the Romans carried out the judgment for which the Jews had condemned Jesus. Because they were not allowed to apply death by crucifixion themselves – which was reserved to the Roman government – that punishment had to be implemented via Pilate. And so it came to pass. When the soldiers made a round with the people hanging on the cross, they broke the bones to hasten their deaths, but Jesus had already died. That's what they wanted to confirm. By making a wound in the side, it was seen that water and blood came out. Apparently that was the confirmation they were looking for; namely that Jesus had already died. To make that wound, Jesus was stabbed in his side with a lance point. Seeing that stab wound reminded John of this Bible verse from Zechariah.

Pentecost twice?

Although there is no direct reference to Zechariah 12, Peter's Pentecostal sermon means that many Jews suddenly realize what they have done. Peter doesn't mince his. In fact, he says that they crucified Jesus, but that God has given a special twist to His death. Acts 2:36 *Then let the whole house of Israel know for sure that God has made Him a Lord and Christ, namely this Jesus, whom you have crucified.* Many Jews are frightened when they see what they have on their conscience. This fear and the remorse that comes with it is very reminiscent of this text in Zechariah. On the day of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit there is that Spirit of grace and of the prayers for mercy. They ask Peter in shock, "What should we do?" Fortunately, Peter comes

with the full offer of mercy through faith in Jesus Christ. Acts 2:37-39 *And when they heard this, they were touched deep in the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "What should we do, brothers in men?" And Peter said to them, "Convert you, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, to forgiveness of sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For you is the promise and for your children and for all who are far away, so many as the Lord, our God, will call for it.* What we see in the beginning – the deep repentance immediately after Jesus' death on the cross – we will also see by the end of time. Again, in the end times, there will be some sort of outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We see this not only in Zechariah but also in Ezekiel 36:24-27 *I will take you from the pagan peoples and bring you together from all countries. Then I will take you to your country. I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean. Of all your impurities and of all your stink gods, I will cleanse you. Then I will give you a new heart and a new spirit within you. I will take the heart of stone from your body and give you a heart of flesh. I will give My Spirit within you. I will make you walk in My Ordinances and you observe my provisions and keep them.*

Will there be again some kind of outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the end times?



Also at the second coming of Christ there is a reminder of this Zechariah text.

The second time we encounter this text from Zechariah 12 in the New Testament is towards the end of time. This time we are not immediately after the Lord's death, but we meet Him at His second coming. It is the same John, the Evangelist who may pass on to God the next Revelation about our Lord Jesus Christ. Revelation 1:7 *Behold, He comes with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, including those who have pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn Him. Yes, amen.* The moment the Lord Jesus returns on the clouds, the believers from the nations and Israel will see Him. That has the added effect of being aware of His wounds as well. Christ Who died on the cross, is alive! Not only on earth, but also in heaven, the Lord Jesus can still be seen that He is the crucified. He is called in the book of Revelation "the Lamb that stands as slaughtered." A Lamb that is slaughtered cannot stand, that is clear. The fact that 'this Lamb stands as slaughtered' means that the risen Lord can also be seen in heaven that He has been pierced. Revelation 5:6 *And I saw, and see, in the midst of the throne and of the four animals, and among the elders stood a Lamb as a slaughter, with seven horns and seven eyes. These are the seven Spirits of God that have been broadcast all over the earth.*

The Lamb of God.



It will move us again and again when we meet the Lord Jesus in heaven or on the new earth. We see at a glance His suffering and resurrection, His great love for us. We will perish as 24 elders who fall to their knees to worship Jesus and as the angels who lift a song upon seeing the Lamb. Revelation 5:9,10 *And they sang a new song and said, You are worthy of taking the scroll and opening his seals, for You are slaughtered and have bought us for God with Your blood, from every tribe, language, people, and nation. And You have made us kings and priests for our God, and we will rule the earth as kings.*

As God is closer to us, the dark side of our debt becomes more pronounced.

In the book of Revelation, the whole world is witnessing the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the clouds. The question is whether Zechariah 12 refers to the Second Coming of Jesus. This is only mentioned in Zechariah 14:4 *On that day, His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which lies before Jerusalem, to the east of it.* Presumably in Zechariah 12 we have previously done with a breakthrough of the gospel in the Jewish community, which makes one become aware of what has happened in history. We read in Zechariah 12:10 *They will see Me, which they have pierced. They will mourn Him, as with the grieving complaint about an only child; and they will complain bitterly about Him, as one bitterly complains about a firstborn.* This verse doesn't lie: God is speaking. God says they've pierced Him. It's a reference to the death of Jesus. The dagger sting did not end Jesus' life, but demonstrated his death. Yet it becomes clear to all those who take the history of suffering to heart that we as people have had killed God's Son. We humans, I say. Not them, the Jews. The history of humanity certainly teaches us two things: We humans did not settle for our place. We wanted to be like God. When God came to save us from our loss and guilt, we killed God. It's not that one people is better than the other. Rather, we must say that as God is closer to us – as with the Jewish people – the dark side of our lostness and guilt becomes even more exposed. This is also the case with the pagan peoples who, after the light of God's salvation has been extinguished, want to avenge themselves en masse against God and His people. The final battle makes people's hatred of God unmistakably clear. When all the tribes of the earth mourn when we see Christ appear on the clouds, there is a similar sadness as under God's ancient people Israel. One thing will be clear; this applies only to the people of the Jewish people and from the nations who have adopted the Lord Jesus as their Savior and Lord. The others have nothing with Christ. This is the time of mercy. This is the time of the Spirit. Until the return of the LORD, there is an opportunity for the Jewish

community to come to its senses. There is certainly something special going on with the Jewish people in this respect. Paul said something along those lines. He expects – if the Christian faith among the nations has had its longest time – that the preferred grace of God will then turn again to His old people of Israel. The final phase of history leads to the attack on Jerusalem, in which God intervenes from above with the return of Christ. Revelation 8-11



Believers from the Jews and the Gentiles.

The appearance of the Son of Man.

Zechariah 12:10	But over the house of David and over the inhabitants of Jerusalem I will pour out the Spirit of mercy and of the prayers. They will behold me, which they have pierced. They will mourn Him, as with the grieving complaint about an only child; and they will complain bitterly about Him, as one bitterly complains about a firstborn.
Matthew 24:30	And then the sign of the Son of man will appear in heaven; and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of man as He comes upon the clouds of heaven with great power and glory.
Matthew 26:63,64	But Jesus was silent. And the high priest replied to Him, "I swear to you by the living God that you tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus said to him, "You said it." But I tell you: From now on you will see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God and seeing the clouds of heaven coming.
Mark 13:26	And then they will see the Son of Man come into the clouds, with great power and glory.
Mark 14:61,62	But He remained silent and answered nothing. Again, the high priest asked Him a question, and said to Him, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" And Jesus said, "It's me." And you will see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God and come with the clouds of heaven.
Luke 22:67-69	And they said, "Are you the Christ?" Tell us. And He said to them, if I tell you, you will certainly not believe it. And if I ask a question, you will certainly not answer me, or let go of me. From now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God.
Acts 1:10-12	And when they, as He left them, kept their eyes to the sky, behold, two men stood with them in white clothing, who also said, Galilean men, why are you looking up at the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken from you to heaven, will come back in the same way as you have seen Him go to heaven. Then they returned to Jerusalem, from the mountain called the Mount of Olives, which is close to Jerusalem and is a Sabbath journey away from it.
1 Thessalonians 4:17	Then we, the living that remain, will be taken with them in the clouds, to a meeting with the Lord in the sky. And so we will always be with the Lord.

Revelation 1:7

Behold, He comes with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, including those who have pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn Him. Yes, amen.

Repentance comes after sin.

In the final phase of history – at a time when a great apostasy of the Christian faith is taking place among the Gentiles – the Jewish community will show greater openness to Messiah Jesus. At the same time that their interest in the Person and the work of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ is increasing, they will be seized by what has taken place in the heart of their people, in the center of the world in Jerusalem and the judicial murder of the Son of God. It may not even be the mass of the grieving complaint – that too – as well as the depth of guilt that makes the grief so poignant. Zechariah 12:11-14 The sadness over what went wrong is widely supported. It is not only the men from the prominent family of David and Levi's house, but also their wives and other families where the insight breaks through and the tears take off. It is remarkable that here in the first place the royal and priestly families are mentioned. Is it because of their kinship with Messiah Jesus the priest-king? That will certainly play a part. The expected priest-king is in the book Zechariah – in the person of Josua and Zerubbabel – a special theme. Also mentioned in the book of Hebrews – where the link with the priest-king Melchizedek is mentioned – Is that Jesus was descended from the royal line of Judah. Hebrews 7:14,15 *It is abundantly clear that our Lord is descended from Judah, about which tribe Moses has said nothing about the priesthood.* And this becomes even clearer when, in the image of Melchizedek, another Priest stands up. At the same time, it is a representation of the way Jesus, God's Son has gone to acquire the kingship. He went the way of the priest and the sacrifice. He is the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. John 1:29 *He is the king who has not come to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many.* Mark 10:45 With David and Nathan (2 Samuel 5:14) we have two men from the king's dynasty. And with Levi and Simi (Numeri 3:18-21) two priests from the tribe of Levi. The weeping of the whole people is reminiscent of the period of mourning and sorrow for the death of King Josiah.

The Jewish community will cry over the death of the Messiah.



The end time/final battle.

All indications are that Zechariah 13 is a continuation of 12. David's house plays an important role.

There is also an expression that explicitly connects Zechariah 12 and 13 and that is the term 'on that day'.

On that day.

Zechariah 12:4	On that day, the LORD speaks, I will beat all the horses with skittishness and their horsemen with insanity. But over the house of Judah I will keep my eyes open and all the horses of the nations I will strike with blindness.
Zechariah 12:4	On that day, I will make the leaders of Judah like a fire pit in a pile of wood and like a burning torch in a grain scum. On the right and left they will consume all the peoples around them, and Jerusalem will remain in place, in Jerusalem.
Zechariah 12:8	Those who stagger among them will be like David on that day, and the house of David will be like gods, as the Angel of the LORD before their eyes.
Zechariah 12:9	On that day, I will want to wipe out all the pagan peoples who are advancing against Jerusalem.
Zechariah 12:11	On that day, the grieving complaint will be great in Jerusalem, such as Hadad-Rimmon's grieving complaint in the Valley of Megiddo.
Zechariah 13:1	On that day, a source will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem against sin and against the impurity.
Zechariah 13:2	On that day it will happen, the LORD of the armed forces says, that I will exterminate the names of the idols from the land, so that they will no longer be thought of. Yes, I will also get rid of the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land.
Zechariah 13:4	On that day, it will happen that those prophets will be shamed, each because of his vision, when he prophesies. They won't wear her cloak to lie.

A first fulfillment of the prophecy in Zechariah.

It is Zechariah 13 that comes with the liberating message of atonement. The metaphor is that of the water that unites so many aspects in it to express what the atonement of guilt and renewal by the Holy Spirit on God's side does to a man. It's just one sentence, but this sentence says it all.

Zechariah 13:1 On that day, a well will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem against sin and against the impurity. Not only is there a changed relationship with God and humans, but there is also a changed relationship with people in God. God comes with atonement of guilt. He wants to take away the an impurity. This is not just a source from which a human being has to scoop water out of it, but even a fountain, the water comes out of the ground and cleans everyone who steps forward. Water is the sign of the washing-up of sins and renewal by the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus tries to make it clear to the Samaritan woman that it is through Him that the people can be cleansed of sin and can live by the Spirit. The Lord also makes this clear with the metaphor of the water. John 4:13,14 *Jesus answered and said to her, "All who drink from this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink from the water I will give him will no longer be thirsty in eternity." But the water I will give him will become in him a source of water that will rise to eternal life.* Also later in the book of John – where there is remarkably often water – the Lord takes this premonition to Himself. John 7:38 *Who believes in Me, as scripture says, flows of living water will flow from within.*

On that day, a source will emerge in which David and Jerusalem can wash off their sin.



Water as a sign and seal of God's promise of cleansing.

Water is not coincidentally a sign and seal – namely the Holy Baptism – through which God enlists the new believers in the new community of His people on the first Pentecost day. Acts 2:37-39 *And when they heard this, they were touched deep in the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "What should we do, brothers in men?" And Peter said to them, "Convert you, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, to forgiveness of sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For you is the promise and for your children and for all who are far away, so many as the Lord, our God, will call for it.* To our realization, this is a fairly massive conversion in Jerusalem. Through God's grace and people's prayers, understanding breaks through and repents come to repentance.

Circumcision and/or Holy Baptism?



God or the gods; a big difference in experience.

There are two things that always occur when people come to God. People are going to do things that they didn't do before, like in this case "mourning the death of Jesus." This is telling. One takes responsibility for what has taken place in the midst of the Jewish people. There is recognition of the fact that one had (the Son of) God killed when God sent Him to save Israel. Although God has given a special twist to the death of His Son – God bore the blame of the world in Him and makes Him the Savior of Jews and Gentiles – Jewish people still feel they have done something almost unforgivable. Romans 11:12. Almost, for Christ has prayed for the Jewish people, *"Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing."* Luke 23:34 Also, the Jewish people are promised in the heart of Jerusalem with Pentecost God's forgiveness and the Holy Spirit. All understanding and acclaim for the mourning of the Jewish community. Gratitude

also because it indicates that their souls are also being cleansed by their repentance and their tears. But one is not only going to do things, people also are going to leave things behind. Two things are mentioned: *the idols and the prophets*. By naming these two, we can also become aware of how strongly we are alienated from the God of the Bible. With these two, we are approximately on the opposite side of what God likes. What is the case? We must realize that the situation is special. We live in a world where the devil has great power. It is the world where we used to belong, but we have been profoundly changed by faith in the Lord Jesus and trying to keep the right track through His Spirit. It is therefore no less than about the difference between living with an unclean mind or living through the Holy Spirit. At the end of Zechariah 13 we are made aware of this. We notice there that the life of Christ and His followers – so on the eye – is not so attractive. Christ is rounded up and his followers are beaten up. Furthermore, we notice that the life of a follower of Christ does not look much more favorable, than that of the Lord. This is the other side of the story. One side – which we see so often and also in the end times is that people are chasing idols and so-called prophets. People who do this are looking for success and immediate benefit and positive stories. Idols are often taken over from people with success. Who wouldn't want this? The suggestion is that if one does the same, one will also have such a successful life. In our day, money is the mammon par excellence. "Everything is for sale for money." Of course, one is also religious and therefore interested in stories about God – but with one restriction – as long as it is positive. One also likes the charismatic and the slogan 'that there is more between heaven and earth.' There are people 'so-called prophets' who can arrange something for such people. How difficult it is to move from that unclean spirit to the Holy Spirit of God. On Christ who is pierced one can see "that life with each other and with God is not always easy." God teaches the believers not to have too high expectations and to be patient in adversity and willing to suffer for faith. It is and remains of extraordinary value that God commits to removing the unclean spirit – the source of evil – from the land. Zechariah 13:2 *On that day it will happen, the Lord of the armed forces speaks that I will exterminate the names of the idols from the land, so that they will not be thought of. Yes, I will also get rid of the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land.*



End of the idols.

The idols can always be found near God. If people are already disappointed in an idol, they are more likely to take another one – which increases the chances of success – than break with the gods. In the history of Israel the idols were there from the beginning. Izaak's wife, Rebecca, had an idol. Michal, Saul's daughter, had one. Solomon married foreign women who took their gods.

King Ahab and his wife Jezebel also had the gods Baal and Astarte. But it's definitely not just a women's thing. King Achaz wanted a copy of the god of Assur because they had so much success. He had the statue placed complete with altar on the temple square in Jerusalem. There were kings who came with a reformation such as Hezekiah and later Josiah, but when they died the gods filled the streets again. It's like weeds. That has to do with those gods. They all have something special. They promise prosperity and wealth. But it also has something to do with man. He feels that when he gives a lot to his idol, he also receives a lot. So men have big influence to the gods, as they think. The relationship between God and man as it was in Israel is thus completely clouded by man's relationship with the idols. If one still believes in the God of Israel, it is 'because it may also be advantageous.' God has acted against it, but it was mopping with the tap open in the time before the exile. After that it got better, but there have been times in Israel when it was back in full force, as in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes IV the monarch of Syria who wanted to hellenize the Jewish people (= make them Greeks) and put up a statue of the god Zeus in the temple square complete with altar. In the end times, God will put a definitive end to the idols as well as the prophets. Zacharia 13:3 *On that day it will happen, the Lord of the armed forces speaks that I will exterminate the names of the idols from the land, so that they will not be thought of. Yes, I will also get rid of the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land. When that time comes, I will make all the idols disappear from the land.*

When that time comes, I will make all the idols disappear from the land.



End of the prophets.

With the recognition of 'Me they had pierced' – the Messiah Jesus – there is a clear shift in the people of the end times. This change involves all kinds of elements such as repentance and return but also reconciliation and – as we read later in Zechariah – repentance. One thing is deeply felt and widely supported after repentance and reconciliation: It must be over once and for all with the idols and the spirit of uncleanness. The spirit of uncleanness settles where people go after the idols quite en masse. Only God can take away the spirit of uncleanness. God promises to do that. The prophets – or at least those who suggest of them selves they are prophets – also have to suffer greatly. Zechariah 13:2 *Yes, I too will get rid of the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land.* The reaction is so fierce that the prophets – who are held responsible for the erroneous influence of idolatry and uncleanness, – do not know how soon they have to shed everything that still smells of prophecy. The prophet's cloak – reminiscent of the hair cloak of Elijah and John the Baptist – can be found in the coal fire that loathes. Maybe a few tufts of hair, but that's it. Yet there are young men who are suspected of acting as prophets. In all respects, these boys deny having anything to do with prophecy. What about the scars on your hands? They hadn't thought

of that. These so-called prophets tried in ecstasy by self-harming to summon the spirits from above and receive visions. They quickly had their excuse ready: 'Yes that comes from a friendly fighting at home with my friends.' And you believe that? The cover is so clear and so definitive on God's side that even the parents of such a boy distance themselves when he dares to bring up something resembling a prophecy or a dream or a vision. Zechariah 13:3 *And it will happen, when one still prophesies, that his mother and father, who produced him, will say to him, "You cannot live, for you have spoken lies in the name of the Lord."* The parents are even allowed to use the knife, which is quite a lot. The fact is that the so-called prophecy must be over. Because, this may be clear, these are not prophets at all. They're false prophets. Guys who impersonate prophets, but what they say is mere fantasy. They do not receive the words from God, but shake them out of their sleeves. Coincidence or not, but the people who lead their brothers and sisters in faith in the end times are called in the time of Daniel 'the enlightened' or 'wise' and not prophet. Prophet might have been some kind of honorary title for a long time. With that, one could gain respect, but in the end times the so-called prophet lost all goodwill. No one wants to be advertised there any longer. Prophet? No, I am not a prophet.' While we do not use that name, we would do well – at the time when we advise someone on behalf of God or the Bible – to inform ourselves that we speak in accordance with the Bible. It is about a man being trustworthy and saying only those things on behalf of God that he can deliver.

When someone else utters a prophecy....



Three times a link from Zechariah to the suffering and dying of the Lord Jesus.

It is remarkable that we are now beginning to understand for the second time from out of the fulfillment – the expectation that is aroused in Zechariah. It is the Lord Jesus who draws this part of Zechariah 13 into Himself and His end. We read the following in Zechariah 13:7 *Sword, awaken against My Shepherd, and the Man Who Is My Companion, speaks the LORD of the forces. Save that Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered everywhere. But I will turn my hand to the little ones.* Now that the Lord is relating this verse into His suffering and dying, there are clear indications. Also, "the Man Who Is My Companion" points to God's close relationship with this Shepherd. Fortunately, it is also the Lord Himself who removes all doubt when He takes this verse in the way He must walk for us on behalf of God. Matthew 26:31,32 *Then Jesus said to them, "You will all take offense to Me in this night, for it is written: I will beat the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be dispersed."* But after I will be resurrected, I will precede you to Galilee. Compare Mark 14:27. This is the third time that the book of Zechariah has directly linked to the suffering and dying of our Lord Jesus Christ and that this connection is confirmed from the New Testament.

Three references to the suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ in Zechariah.

Expectation.

- 1 Zechariah 11:12,13
For I had said to them, If it is good in your eyes, give me My reward; If not, leave it behind. Then they weighed my wages: thirty pieces of silver. But the LORD said to Me, "Throw that to the potter – a nice price to which I am valued by them! Then I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord the potter.
- 2 Zechariah 12:10
But over the house of David and over the inhabitants of Jerusalem I will pour out the Spirit of mercy and of the prayers. They will see Me, The One they have pierced. They will mourn Him, as with the grieving complaint about an only child; and they will complain bitterly about Him, as one bitterly complains about a firstborn.
- 3 Zechariah 13:7
Sword, awaken against My Shepherd and against the Man Who is my companion, speaks the LORD of the armed forces. Save that Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered everywhere. But I will turn my hand to the little ones.

Fulfillment.

Matthew 26:14-16 Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the overpriests and said, "What do you want to give me if I surrender Him to you?" And they awarded him thirty pieces of silver. And from then on he sought a suitable opportunity to hand Him over.

Matthew 27:3,4,6 When Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he repented, and he returned the thirty pieces of silver to the overpriests and the elders and said, I have sinned, for I have betrayed innocent blood! But they said, "What's that to us?" You'll have to see yourself. The overpriests took the silver pieces and said, "It is not permissible to put them in the sacrificial box, because it is blood money." And after they had deliberated, they bought the potter's field as a cemetery for the strangers.

John 19:34-37 But one of the soldiers stuck a spear in His side and immediately blood and water came out. And who has seen it, who testifies of it, and his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth, that you too believe. For these things have been done so that the scripture is fulfilled: No leg of Him will be broken. And another scripture goes: They will see on Him that they have pierced.

Matthew 26:31,32 Then Jesus said to them, "You will all take offense to Me in this night, for it is written: I will beat the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be dispersed." But after I will be resurrected, I will precede you to Galilee.

The crucifixion of Christ.



The good Shepherd and the sheep.

Not only is something said about the Shepherd this time, but also about the sheep. They – we – will share in the fate of the Messiah. Although the Lord Jesus is sober in this towards the disciples, He nevertheless tries to protect them from persecution when He himself is arrested. John 18:8,9 *Jesus replied, I have told you it is Me. If you're looking for me, let them leave. This is what He said so that the word he had spoken would be fulfilled: From those whom You have given me, I have not let anyone be lost.* The 'letting no one be lost' seems to be the intention of God if He does not spare us as followers of the Lord Jesus in the point of persecution. In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord makes it clear that we as His followers must take into account persecution. Matthew 5:10-12 *Blessed are those who are persecuted for justice, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you when you are persecuted, and by lying they speak all kinds of evil against you, for the sake of Me. Rejoice and rejoice, for your wages are great in the heavens, for so they have persecuted the prophets who have been before you.* The Lord Jesus is realistic at this point. The Lord's also made a statement that 'when they do this – persecution – with Him, how much more with His followers.' Luke 23:31 *For if they do this with the green wood, what will happen to the arid?* Also in the book of John, it is clear that the Lord wants to prepare His disciples for difficult moments that the imitation of Christ will entail. John 15:20,21 *Remember the word I told you: A servant is no more than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you; if they have taken my word for it, they will also observe yours. But all these things they will do to you for the sake of My name, because they do not know Him who sent me.* In the book of Zechariah, the LORD prepares us for it. Zechariah 13:7,8 *Save that Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered everywhere. But I will turn my hand to the little ones.* Our Translation leaves it a bit in the middle. In other Translations, it becomes clear that the followers, together with Jesus, must be deprived of it. We, too, as the little ones, will have a hard time. The Lord Jesus has always been aware of the path of suffering through which His life would run. In the metaphor of the sheep in John 10, the Lord mentions that He is aware that caring for the sheep will cost Him his life. John 10:14,15 *I am the good Shepherd and I know the Mines and am known by the Mines, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; And I give my life for the sheep.* Jesus sees it as part of God's plan to save the world. Life is not taken from Him, but He gives it for the sheep to take it back. John 10:18 *No one takes it from me, but I give it from myself; I have power to give it, and I have power to take it again. I have received this commandment from My Father.* In all that we will have to go through 'like sheep', we may

know that we have a good Shepherd who loves us and leads our lives and Who is with us. He has also opened – through His death and resurrection – the way from this life right through death into eternal life with God.

Jesus is the good Shepherd.



The crucifixion of Jesus was known from the Old Testament.

It is remarkable that the sad death of the Lord has already been preannounced in the Old Testament. God is open about it in the prophecies of Zechariah. The 'Seeing Me Who they have pierced' leaves little to be guessed at, especially when we know the facts. The prophet Isaiah had also prepared us for it centuries before with 'the suffering Servant of the LORD.' Isaiah 53. Christ was therefore aware that His path would run along rejection and death, but also that He would rise after three days. Three times the Lord spoke this out in the Gospels. Mark 8:31 *And He began to teach them that the Son of Man should suffer greatly and be rejected by the elders and overpriests and scribes and be killed and after three days of standing up.* When we think carefully about this, we realize that the second diaspora is therefore also assumed. From all the reactions to this in the New Testament it emerges that the rejection of the Messiah has consequences for the Jewish community. The Lord Himself responds to this with Mark 13:1,2 *And when He left the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Master, look, what a stone and what a building!" And Jesus replied to him: Do you see these great buildings? There will not be one stone left on the other stone that will not be broken down.* However, later in the same chapter, the Lord – after the gospel proclamation to all nations in vers 10 – presupposes the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple. Mark 13:14 Paul also teaches that, because of rejection by the Jewish people, God turns to the nations with the gospel of salvation by the Lord Jesus. Romans 11:11 *I say: Have they tripped with the intention of falling? Not at all! By their fall, however, salvation has come to the Gentiles to envy them.* Paul hopes to make his people jealous and save at least some of them, but also foresees a restoration of the relationship with God and Israel by the end of time. Romans 11:25 *For I do not want, brethren, that you have no knowledge of this secret (lest you be wise in your own mind), that some hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has entered.* Also at Luke 21:24 we find this, and with John in the book of Revelation 7, we see a return of God to His people Israel. Something that began in 1948 AD with the Jewish State and the return of Jews from all over the world to the land of Israel that God gave to their fathers. It is therefore extraordinary in the sense that the LORD in Zechariah is making a great step from the suffering of Christ – bridging the time of the nations – back to the time before Christ returns.

Israel.**The Peoples.****Israel.**

The end is marked by judgment and purification.

When we look for the fate of the sheep – in the light of the suffering and death of the Shepherd – the Lord will speak in terms of purifying and trial. But before that, a judgment takes place for the reader's sense. 2/3 of the people are killed. Not only does that sound violent, but it is. It makes us aware that God is in the process of judgment in the death of the Lord Jesus. The Lord bears this judgment for the world community, but for Him it does mean deep misery and a particularly heavy road among humanity. The believers participate in Christ's suffering and death, but those who do not accept Christ's work of salvation continue to live under judgment. John 3:18 Perhaps it is worth saying that there is much wrong in the Jerusalem of the end times – about which Zechariah 13 also acts. It is true that some of the inhabitants have adopted the Lord Jesus, but a large part has not. The Jerusalem of the end times is compared by the Lord to Sodom. That's not a best reference. Revelation 11:8 *And their dead bodies will lie on the street of the great city, spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was also crucified.* It also becomes clear from the book of Revelation that part of the city is lost in the end times. Revelation 11:13. *And at that same hour, a major earthquake struck, and the tenth part of the city collapsed. And in that earthquake, 7,000 people in particular were killed. And the others became very fearful, and gave honor to the God of heaven.* Some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem are spared, and they give God the honor; something that is a very nice detail. These people might also have turned away in anger, but on the contrary they repent and seek the honor of God.

I will bring that third part into the fire and purify it, as silver is purified.



Effort and sorrow as trial and purification.

It is not the case that people are judged – the non-believers – and that the believers are totally spared. It's not like that. The Lord God also presents the people of faith with hot fires. In other words, he admits a great deal of effort and trouble. The goal is clear. Just as fire from the oven removes the pure silver and pure gold from all impure elements, so God wants the pure faith to remain and that all the trouble and effort will get rid of all the unclean things. Thus the LORD speaks of us as followers of the Lord Jesus in Zechariah 13:9 *I will bring that third part into the fire and purify it, as one purifies silver. I'll try it, as they try gold. They will invoke my name, and I will respond to them. I will say: This is My people; and they will say, "The Lord is my God."* The image – of the purifying effect of the fire at the ore of gold and silver – has not escaped the Apostle Peter either. When Christians in his church have to go through hardship, he comes up with the same image and the same goal: a pure faith. 1 Peter 1:5-6 *In it you rejoice, even if you are now saddened for a short time – if necessary – by all kinds of temptations, that the trial of your faith – which is of greater value than that of gold, which remains and is tested by fire – may turn out to be to praise and honor and glory, in the revelation of Jesus Christ.* The prophet Zechariah and the apostle Peter seems to prepare us for things that are known as trials in the Bible. Isaiah 48:10 *Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I've tested you in the crucible of misery.* If this results in the tried and tested man folding his hands and expecting it only from God, God has come to His goal. Zechariah 13:9 *They will call my name, and I will respond them. I will say: This is My people; and they will say, "The Lord is my God."* That's what God likes to see, that we call His Name. Some people of faith have to lose every other grip, before they want to fold their hands and say, 'LORD, save me!' But when they do, God is with us where He wants us to be. Romans 10:8-13 *But what does she say? Close to you is the Word, in your mouth and in your heart. This is the Word of faith that we preach: If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe with your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be blessed. For with the heart one believes in justice and with the mouth one confesses to salvation. For scripture says, "Anyone who believes in Him will not be ashamed."* This word touches the Messiah Jesus and His direct followers in the time of His suffering and dying and resurrection from the dead. But it also affects the – if we can put it that way – the end time that is still ahead of us. It is the faithful Judeo-Christian faith community in Jerusalem that is suffering in the end times, as Revelation 11 teaches us with the death of the great witnesses of faith and the earthquake in Jerusalem. The setting of Zechariah 12 and 13 – with the people's attack on Jerusalem – actually focuses on the end time that lies ahead, but central to it – 'seeing Who they have pierced' – is the dying and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus before Pilate.



The end time from the angle of the final battle and the new earth.

In the last part of the end time the time compacts itself. There's a lot going on; too much, you'd almost say. There are the Saints in Jerusalem. They remain true to their faith no matter what. But also the apostates among the believers speak of themselves. It's a relatively large group. They arouse God's wrath. There is talk of a foreign power, of war and rising armies to the city of Jerusalem. The struggle seems to be about expanding power and land, but when it comes down to it, the struggle is spiritual, directed against the believers and the God of the Bible. The enemy attacks the believers at the heart of their faith. But there is also God's intervention and salvation. A new time is dawning for the faithful and for God, for Jerusalem and the temple. Without being complete, we have brought forward a number of important aspects of the end time with Zechariah 14.

The end and the new beginning.

The LORD has chosen not to tell everything at once in the Bible – as far as eschatology is concerned. From a certain angle, God makes us look at the end times. This time – in Zechariah 14 – this means that God makes us look at the final battle and the beginning of the new heaven and the new earth. Other Bible books also describe this period. In the book of Ezekiel, the final battle is described in Ezekiel 38 and 39 and the new temple in 40-48. Then come several other aspects that we also encounter at Zechariah, such as the water flowing in the east direction from under the temple and the light and eternal day of the LORD. *The final battle* is also present in the book of Revelation 20. There is also the river and the light in Revelation 22.

Ezekiel future expectation.

Ezekiel 38 en 39	The attack of Gog and Magog and the victory of God
Ezekiel 40-46	The new temple and the entrance of the LORD.
Ezekiel 47,48	The river flows from the temple from under the throne of God.
	John's future expectation.
Revelation 20:7-10	The attack of Gog and Magog and the victory of God.
Revelation 21:1,10	The new Jerusalem.
Revelation 22:1,2	The river flows out of the temple. Medicinal fruits and leaves.

The final battle and the new temple in Jerusalem



Live out of victory.

The struggle of the nations against the Christian-Jews in Jerusalem in the end times does not fail to cause fear and terror to the reader. Whether it is for that reason is not known, but the LORD

begins this 'terrifying' story with the favorable ending. God puts everything in the sign of victory right from the beginning. Zechariah 14:1 *Behold, there will come a day before the LORD when the spoils, upon you, will be divided into your midst.* Although the battle is no less fierce, it helps the believer to know from the beginning that victory falls on the side of God and those who have chosen His side. One of the reasons that the LORD goes into details about things to come is that He wants to make us sober and real about the things that await us. It may help us as believers to stand and not to succumb to the trials and temptations of the end times. It is a tried and tested method of the adversary of God to seduce people into evil. If he doesn't succeed, he can make our lives also very miserable. It's good or bad. In the beginning, Satan also tried to entice the Lord Jesus to do something that would force Him make a mistake to God. Luke 4:13 *And when the devil had ended all temptation, he left Him until a certain time.* When that failed, Satan later returned with the ordeal of the crucifixion. Luke 22:53 *When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not extend your hands to Me. But this is your hour and the power of darkness.* Thus the devil – who all the time with temptations wanted to alienate the believers of God – finally comes with trial. Anyway, with that, the devil is at the end of his ability. In the end, the faithful believer pulls the longest end. God will prevail, and He will let all of the chosen people share in victory.

The day when the LORD will intervene Jerusalem and the loot will be divided in your walls.



The great waste of faith.

While we tend to place full responsibility for the attack on the holy city with the peoples, the LORD points out that He is persuading the nations to do so. Zechariah 14:22 *Then I will gather all the pagan peoples for the fight against Jerusalem.* For us as believers, there is indeed a difference between admitting to inflicting one. Speaking of admissions, God gives Satan sometimes space to harm believers. Job knew that. Satan was allowed to go far in the damage he did to Job. He just may not kill Job. And yet, there remains a difference between what God allows for evil that afflicts the believer and the blows that God sometimes inflicts on Himself. The difference lies with God's punishments in the guilt that the believer has taken on their neck or the wrong way he or she is going. One thing is clear. It is God's intention to save the believer in Christ. For this reason, it is sometimes necessary for God to take a hard line on the believer. In the end, whatever happens, the LORD is responsible. Nothing happens outside of God. Satan can't raise his hand yet, or God has to approve it. Yet the book of Revelation also holds Satan responsible for the attack of the nations. Revelation 20:7-9 *And when those thousand years have come to an end, Satan will be released from his prison. And he will go out to deceive the nations that are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for war. And their number is like the sand of the sea. And they came up across the breadth of the earth, and surrounded the army place of the saints and the beloved city. But fire from God descended from heaven, and that devoured them.*

And they came up and surrounded the place of the saints and the beloved city.



The attack on Jerusalem in the end times.

It becomes clear from the context that God allows Satan to take free reign in the end times. So Satan has a free hand to start this gigantic war against Jerusalem with armies from all nations on earth. Yet it would not be correct to see the fight against Jerusalem as something God – in the beginning – allows. From all the eschatological Bible sections it emerges that the apostasy of faith is great in the end times and that it evokes the wrath of God. He's the one who wants to punish the apostates. The Jerusalem of the end time certainly does not have a good name. The city is remembered as the city where the crucifixion of Christ Jesus took place. Also, Jerusalem at that time is not without reason compared to Sodom and Egypt. Revelation 11:8 *And their dead bodies will lie on the street of the great city, spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was also crucified.* Subconsciously, we also feel an aversion to Messiah-professed Jews in the Jerusalem of the end times. The Apostle Paul also sees the apostasy as the reason for the final battle. 2

Thessalonians 2:3 Don't let anyone fool you in any way. *For that day does not come, unless first the apostasy is come and the man of lawlessness, the son of the perdition, is revealed.* In Daniel 8, the well-known phrase 'devastating abomination' is even called 'devastating waste', after the waste of faith that precedes it. God Himself is primarily behind the war of all against one, the war of all nations against the believers in Jerusalem. The consequences don't lie. The enemy will inflict a heavy blow on Jerusalem and the people who live there. The city is taken and half the inhabitants are taken away. All the bad things we encounter in a war, we see in Jerusalem at that moment. Zechariah 14:2 *Then I will gather all the pagan peoples for the fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, the houses will be looted, and the women will be raped. Half the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be exterminated from the city.* It is difficult not to think of a reckoning, yet – if the LORD punishes – there is always another motive behind it and that is to bring people to their senses. The purpose of God is "not the death of the sinner, but that he repents and lives." Moreover, in the end times in Jerusalem and its surroundings, there will not only be a waste of faith. It is possible that the waste of faith is dominant and it controls the city. But among the apostates are the faithful believers, people from Jewish backgrounds who do not mix their faith in Christ with things that does not belong to it. And among all those people – apostates and faithful followers of the Lord – there are also those who repent. They have God in mind with the attack on Jerusalem and later with the earthquake that plagues the city. Zechariah 14:2 *Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be exterminated from the city.* There's a rest, a sacred relic. It's the people who don't bend their knees to another god.

I will bring all nations together – says the LORD – to go to war against Jerusalem.



The final battle of all nations against the Jewish people and the God of Israel.

There is probably another motive for God to persuade the nations to fight Jerusalem. The first reason is the punishment and salvation of the renegade people. But the LORD wants to achieve another goal with the final battle. The LORD wants to make the judgment of the nations. The judgment of all who do not honor and serve Him. The nations seem to have only one goal in mind at some point, the complete destruction of all that is still reminiscent of the faith and the God of the Bible. Immediately after God has observed that Jerusalem has been conquered and half the population has been taken away, the LORD turns against the peoples who are hostile to Him. Zechariah 14:3 *Then the LORD will set out and fight against those pagan peoples, like the day he fought, on the day of battle.* The book of Revelation 7:9 shows that the entry of the believers from the nations in heaven takes place before the last seal – the seventh seal – is opened in Revelation 8. It seems that the LORD will allow the fullness of the believers from the nations to take place first and later that of the believers of the Jews. This corresponds to the public secret that Paul discloses in Romans 11:25-27 *For I do not want, brethren, that you have no knowledge of this mystery (lest you be wise in your own mind), that some hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the gentiles has entered. And so all of Israel will be blessed, as it is written: The Savior will come from Sion and turn away the wickedness from Jacob. And this is the covenant of Me with them, when I will take away their sins.* The end of the fullness of nations heralds the beginning of the fullness of the Messianic-Jews.

Entering the fullness of the nations and of Israel.

The Lamb can open the scroll in the sky which is closed with seven seals. In Revelation 6, we witness the opening of six seals. It leads to the entry of the believers from the nations and judgment. In Revelation 7, we witness the entry of the believers from the nations. It is a bevy that no one can count from all the nations and languages in heaven. Revelation 7:9 *After this I saw and behold, a great multitude, which no one could count, from all nations, tribes and languages, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clad in white robes and palm branches in their hand.* With the conclusion of the fullness of the believers from the nations, a new and final phase opens up for the believers of Israel. Are the believers from the nations absorbed into heaven, on earth we find in the same chapter the 144,000 believers from the Jews with the seal of God, each from his own tribe. Revelation 7:3,4 *And said, do not harm the earth, nor to the sea and the trees, until we have sealed our God's servants to their foreheads. And I heard the number of those who were sealed: one hundred and forty-four thousand were sealed from all the*

tribes of the Israelites. While – according to the testimony of the Lord in Revelation 6 – the phase of the believers from the Gentiles finds its own conclusion in the end times and the recording and judgment of God, the focus of the final phase is on the believers from Israel and Jerusalem and the temple. The seventh seal is opened in: Revelation 8:1 And when the Lamb had opened the seventh seal, a silence came into the sky of about half an hour.

A remarkable difference is that in this last phase there will be no more believers from the nations. Whatever God does to make people feel that they need to change their lives, there is no trace of repentance. Revelation 9:20,21 *And the other people, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands; they continued to worship the demons and the gold, silver, copper, stones and wooden idols, who cannot see, hear or walk. Nor did they repent of their murders, their sorcery, their fornication and the commission of theft.* In the last days, however, conversions are still taking place in the Jewish community. Revelation 11:13 *And at that same hour a great earthquake occurred, and the tenth part of the city collapsed. And in that earthquake, 7,000 people of particular were killed. And the others became very fearful, and gave honor to the God of heaven.* In this too you notice that the time of the Gentiles is over.

With the closure of the nations, a final phase opens up for the Messianic Jews in Israel.



The great turn of time to eternity.

Zechariah 14 and the next chapter is about the final judgment and the breakthrough of the Kingdom of God. Eternity breaks in here in time. The New Jerusalem is going to replace old Jerusalem. God comes to live on earth. He moves into His home in Jerusalem. That's where His throne is established. Heaven is coming to earth. An important clue to this is the mountain that lies east of Jerusalem, the Mount of Olives. The Lord will plant His feet on the Mount of Olives. We are talking about the second coming of the Lord Jesus. This part in the book of Zechariah is the only time *the Mount of Olives* is mentioned in the Old Testament. Mount of Olives was the beloved place the Lord went to during his stay in Jerusalem. Mount of Olives was the place where the Lord Jesus gave His eschatological speech to His disciples. This was in response to their demand for the signs of the time. That question came up when the Lord said that the temple in Jerusalem would be completely destroyed. Mark 13:1-4 *And when He left the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Master, look, what a stones and what a building!" And Jesus replied to him: Do you see these great buildings? There will not be one stone left on the other stone that will not be*

broken down. And when He sat on the Mount of Olives, opposite the temple, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him when they were alone, "Tell us, when will these things happen?" And what is the sign when all these things will come true? The Mount of Olives was also the place where the Lord prayed passionately to God three times "if there was no other way than the cross?" There wasn't one. The Lord was willing to go the way he had to go from God. Mount of Olives is the place where He was captured. From this mountain, the Lord has gone to heaven with the cloud that took Him from view. Acts 1:9 *And after He said this, He was lifted up as they saw it, and a cloud eluded Him from their eyes.* Mount of Olives is also the place where we expect the Lord back at the Second Coming. That's what the angels said. Acts 1:10,11 *And when, as He left them, they kept their eyes to heaven, behold, two men stood with them in white clothing, who also said, Galilean men, why are you looking up at the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken from you to heaven, will come back in the same way as you have seen Him go to heaven.* The location is known. It's the Mount of Olives. From that mountain, the disciples returned to Jerusalem after the Lord's Ascension. Acts 1:12 *Then they returned to Jerusalem, from the mountain called the Mount of Olives, which is close to Jerusalem and is a Sabbath journey from there.* Not only do the angels refer to the Mount of Olives as the place where the Lord will return, but Zechariah is assisting the angels in it. Zechariah 14:4 *On that day, His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which lies before Jerusalem, to the east of it.*

The Mount of Olives.



Christ Jesus will settle the final battle upon the second coming from heaven.

The Mount of Olives is the location of the Lord when the final battle is intervened from above. The struggle of the kings on earth is directed against the Lord Jesus Christ and is actually settled by Himself. Revelation 17:13,14 *These are united, and they will transfer their power and power to the beast. They will wage war against the Lamb, but the Lamb – for Lord of lords is He and King of kings – will overcome them, and those who are with Him, called, chosen, and faithful.* The Apostle Paul also points to a step forward by the Lord Himself. 2 Thessalonians 2:8 *And then the lawless will be revealed. The Lord will consume him through the Spirit of His mouth and destroy him by the apparition upon His coming;* Two things keep the Lord busy at that time. Getting to safety the people who took His side. And then He will deal with His enemies forever. But first the Lord makes room for the safe future of the faithful believers. Although there are not so many words pointing to an earthquake in Zechariah 14, it is referred to. Apparently, the events evoke memories of the

earthquake that occurred in the time of King Uzzia. That was such a profound event that people talked about "before or after the quake." Amos 1:1 It must be an earthquake when you consider that the Mount of Olives – when the Lord touches the mountain with His feet – splits in two parts. It is remarkable that the book of Revelation also expects an earthquake just before the end. Revelation 11:13 According to Zechariah's testimony, we must imagine the Mount of Olives disintegrating into two parts; half to the north and the other half to the south. Zechariah 14:4 *Then the Mount of Olives will be split in two parts to the east and west. A very large valley will emerge, if one half of the mountain will recede to the north and the other half of it will move south.*

The Mount of Olives will split in two parts: one half to the north and the other to the south.



By the attack and conquest of the city and earthquake urged, the inhabitants of Jerusalem will want to leave the city as soon as possible. As a result of the quake, an escape route to the east is taking effect in a natural way. Zechariah 14:5 *Then you will flee through the valley of My mountains, for the valley between the mountains will reach to Azal. Yes, you will flee, as you fled the earthquake in the days of Uzzia, the king of Judah.* Also in Mark 13 and Matthew 24 – where we learn the teachings of Jesus about the last things – there is a flight from the city. Mark 13:14 *When you see the horror of the devastation spoken of by the prophet Daniel where it does not belong – let those who read it look out for it! – then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.* If the circumstances have not forced one to put it on a run, it is because of the Lord's exhortation not to wait to long. It's not "pack up and get out," it's "get out." Mark 13:15,16 *And whoever is on the roof should not go down into the house to get something out of his house, and whoever is in the field should not return to what he left behind, to get his top rug.* It looks a lot like the flight of Lot and his wife and both daughters. Lot asked if they could not flee to that town – which was a little closer. He wondered if he'd make it. They were in danger of being wiped out by the judgment of the cities in that neighborhood. The Saints are in the same danger in the end times. Anyone who sees the terrible consequences of judgment for the enemies of God understands that one did not want to stand between them. And that this is the moment is clear, for God has appeared with His holy angels. Zechariah 14:5 *Then the LORD, my God, will come: all the saints with You!* It would be strange if this expectation were to be missing from the eschatology of the Lord Jesus Himself. Mark 13:26,27 *And then they will see the Son of Man come into the clouds, with great power and glory. And then He will send out His angels and gather His chosen ones from the four corners of the*

earth, from the extreme of the earth to the extreme of heaven. Anyone who thinks that this is enough knowledge for the faithful, does not have it right. The Lord takes the time to announce through Zechariah where the change between time and eternity can all be seen.

Then one will see the Son of Man come upon the clouds, lined with great power.



God is the source of light and life.

The ceiling with all the lamps on it – or the universe – is on fire. It's getting dark on Earth. Zechariah 14:6 *On that day it will come to pass that the precious light will not be there, nor will the thick darkness.* It's not just Zechariah who's telling you this. It is a fixed part of the things that are subject to change in the transition from time to eternity. This world will not exist forever. Peter reports, for example, that the stars will perish on the firmament with the moon and the sun burning. 2 Peter 3:12,13 *Who expects and desires the coming of the day of God, the day when the heavens, lit by fire, will perish and the elements will melt away burning. But we expect, in accordance with His promise, new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness resides.* It will come as no surprise to anyone that Lord Jesus, in His speech about the last things in Mark 13, also mentions that the sun and moon will be darkened. Mark 13:24,25 *But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its glow. And the stars of the sky will fall from it, and the forces in the heavens will be violently moved.* It may not be immediately clear what the new world will look like, but it gives the impression that not only the face of the universe, but also Jerusalem and its surroundings will change. Zechariah mentions that, too. When God speaks through Zechariah about the day of the Lord, we hear – between the lines – that the LORD God is the only one who knows the exact date of the day of judgment. Zechariah 14:7 *But there will be one day that the Lord will be known, no day, no night. It will be done at the time of the evening when the light remains.*

That one day which only the LORD knows there is no distinction between day and night.



We knew this, but we are surprised that it could already be known through Zacharia. Indeed, it is the Lord Jesus who also reminds us that Heavenly Father is the Only One Who knows the exact day and the hour and no one else. Even the Lord Jesus, God's Son is not known. Matthew 24:36 *But that day and that hour is not known to anyone, not even to the angels in heaven, but only to My Father.* Some will be surprised by this. How is it possible that God the Son does not know what the Father does know? Isn't that weird. That's the way it is also sometimes between people. A father knows more than his son. It is clear that the Heavenly Father is in charge. In that sense, the Son is really the Son that He must trust and obey the Father. The obedience to the Father goes so far that the Lord is willing to sacrifice His life for mankind if it turns out that according to heavenly Father this is the only way to salvation. The struggle with the Father's plan is seen the night before the suffering and dying. Matthew 26:42-46 *Again, for the second time, He went and prayed: My Father, if this drinking cup cannot pass me without me drinking, let your will come to pass. Then He came to His disciples and said to them, "Sleep now and rest; behold, the hour has come to come when the Son of man is handed over in the hands of sinners. Get up, let us go; See, he who betrays me is close.* If the hierarchy had failed in the relationship of the Heavenly Father and the Son, it would have looked bad for us. It is precisely the possibility of obedience that the Lord Jesus Christ in our place could be obedient until death, in order to undergo the punishment of God in this way – innocently – and free us from guilt and death.

The river of life.

As for the surroundings of Jerusalem, we have already seen that the Mount of Olives has been cut in half. Instead of forming an obstacle, a valley has been formed east of Jerusalem. That's how it's become a way out for the fleeing people. But it's not just the people who find a way to go. The water seeping from under the new temple gradually increases in depth and width. Over time, it forms a river that flows between the newly formed mountains to the Dead Sea in the East but – according to Zacharia – also flows to the Mediterranean in the West. In this way, Jerusalem becomes a city on a river. It is a special river, because it comes from a source from under the throne of God. It's a life-creating river. It brings life to the Dead Sea. The place of judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah – which breathed dead for centuries – becomes a paradise area full of life. That will be noticeable by the fish stocks. But not only in the water is changed, also on the shore there are other conditions now – according to Ezekiel 47 and Revelation 22 – trees are growing again; trees that in this case bear fruit every month. Zechariah 14:8 *On that day it will come that live water will flow from Jerusalem, one half of it to the sea to the east and the other half to the sea to the west: in summer and winter it will take place.*

When that time comes, clean water will spring up in Jerusalem.



In Palestine there are actually only two seasons: summer and winter. The difference is not mainly in the temperature, but in the humidity. It is not known whether it will rain more or less, but for the river the climate of the new world apparently makes no difference. The river flows winter and summer with equal amounts through the basin. Zechariah's future outlook is very close to Ezekiel's. Only Ezekiel is much more detailed in his description of the river that begins with drip under the temple, eventually turning the Dead Sea from a dead sea into a sea of life as a broad and deep stream. Ezekiel 47:8,9 *He said to me, This water flows away into the eastern area and flows down into the Plain and enters the sea. Poured out into the sea, the water gets healthy. It will happen that all the living beings that teem there, wherever either streams come, will live. There will be a lot of fish there, because this water is coming there, and everything that this stream is coming to will be healthy and live.* Someone will say that Ezekiel sees the river flowing east, while the river that begins under the throne of God begins in Jerusalem from Zechariah to the Dead Sea, but also to the Great - that's the Mediterranean Sea. God doesn't always tell you everything. Ezekiel doesn't deny it, but it's true that he doesn't mention it either. One who has also seen something of a future river in the new world is John in the book of Revelation 22:1,2. One thing is clear. We are on the new earth with these foretelling. Much of the premonitions in Zechariah 14 – such as the light and the water – are found in Revelation 21 and 22. From Revelation 21, we see the New Jerusalem descend from heaven to earth. So at that moment we are in the situation of the new sky and the new earth.

The Kingship of God.

The Lord Who enthrones in Jerusalem becomes King all over the earth. It will be a relief to dwell in this King's territory, for He is righteous and good. Evil will be completely absent. Not only has the devil been thrown into hell with his cronies and followers – where he burns forever – but there is no other god or goddess revered besides God. Zechariah 14:9 *The LORD will become King all over the earth. On that day, the LORD will be the Only One and His Name will be the only one.*

And the Lord will be King all over the earth.



The position of man and woman on the new earth has changed.

It is not that we cannot sin, but there is nothing left in us that it would want. The chosen people are led by the Holy Spirit. We have come to terms with our will with God's will. We let ourselves be guided by the Spirit and only want one thing, and that is to recognize God as King and fulfill His will and deal with each other in a good way, so that the other comes into his right. When the Lord Jesus had brought salvation through His conciliatory suffering and dying, His enemies had yet to be overcome: death and Satan. They had to be made into a footstool for His feet. Although there are still opponents at that time, the Lord claims to have all the power after His resurrection

from the dead. Matthew 28:18 *And Jesus came to them, spoke to them, and said, I have been given all power in heaven and on earth.* The victory over death effectively means victory over all the powers that stand up to God. The Bible is consistent in pointing out the culprits, who are responsible for the misery that people have caused: sin, the devil, and death. Forensic theology clarifies the metaphor that serves to clarify the struggle – of the LORD God for the liberation of man. Forensics refers to the legal side of the case. It's more than a metaphor. In fact, it's also a real lawsuit. Romans 3 The charge is that man has been condemned to eternal death because of his disobedience to God's law. God had determined this for Himself. Genesis 2:16,17 *And the LORD God commanded man: Of all the trees of the court you may eat freely, but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you may not eat from it, for on the day you eat of it, you will surely die.* In fact, Satan had taken hold of man through the temptation to sin. Man had alienated himself from the Almighty God because of his sin, and because he had hung his ears to Satan, we were in the future at the mercy of Satan. Because Satan had succeeded – by the temptation of man to sin – to drive a wedge between God and man, he had become the boss of the world. When temptation of Jesus in the desert, Satan pretends to be the boss of the world, Jesus does not deny this. Matthew 4:8-10 *Once again the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and he showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, with their glory, and said to Him, "All this I will give you, if You kneel and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Go away, Satan, for it is written: The Lord, your God, you will worship and serve Him alone." Then the devil let Him go; and behold, angels came and served Him.* With the weapons of guilt and death, the devil held man captive. Because God is righteous, the Lord could initially do little – because of man as a hostage – to the brutal grip on the power of this fallen angel. But although the Lord had to endure him in heaven for a while, the plan – to defeat Satan and free men from his mortal grip – was already ready. In Paradise, God already announced His plans. Satan may have done great harm to mankind, but the LORD God would crush Satan's head by the seed of the woman. Genesis 3:15 *And I will create enmity between you and woman, and between your progeny and her Progeny; That will crush you head, and you will crush it the heel.* From the beginning, God has devised a plan to free man from the deadly grip of Satan. By being an innocent man to bear the consequences of sin – death on the cross – the Lord Jesus was enabled to free the people from their guilt. The Lord took upon Himself the punishment we deserved and carried away from us when He died on the cross of Calvary.

Jesus is the King of kings.



As we share in the guilt and curse by the first man Adam, so we share – by faith – in the Atonement and salvation by the second man Jesus. Romans 5:12-21 Because the one who takes the Lord Jesus as Savior and Lord is freed from guilt, eternal death no longer hangs over his/her head like a sword of Damocles. By taking over the guilt and death of the believer, the Lord Jesus freed the believer from the deadly grip of Satan. We have received a new Lord and king in the Lord Jesus and want to serve and trust Him.

The salvation and persistence of the believers in Christ.

Satan had to let us go, but will try to get us in his grip again. According to Peter, he goes around the world for that purpose. 1 Peter 5:8-11 *Be sober and vigilant; for your opponent, the devil, goes around like a roaring lion, looking for who he might devour. Resist him, stuck in faith, knowing that the same suffering is also inflicted on all your brethren in the world. The God now of all grace, who has called us to His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, He Himself may equip, affirm, strengthen and foundation you – after a short time of suffering. To him be the glory and the power in all eternity. Amen.* Guilt and death and Satan are the enemies of God. By defeating those three – each in his own way – the Lord Jesus has basically opened up the Kingdom of God to all men. Through the Gospel – the good News of the liberation of these three thanks to the Lord Jesus – and the faithful acceptance of it, every man freed from guilt and death and evil can enter the Kingdom of God. For this reason, the Lord – to whom all power is given in heaven and on earth – encourages the disciples to make the Gospel known worldwide. Matthew 28:18-20 *And Jesus came to them, spoke to them, and said, I have been given all power in heaven and on earth. Then go, teaching all the nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded. And behold, I am with you all the days, until the end of the world. Amen.* The reality of God's Kingdom is a reality of faith at the moment. For those who believe, it's reality. The Lord rules us through His Word and Spirit. The Lord's enemies – guilt and death and Satan – are still very much alive. Only through faith do we continue to live in the protective environment of God that helps us overcome all obstacles and opposition. It is at the final battle when the death and guilt of the world and Satan make an extreme attempt to attract world domination. In that final battle, the enemies of God are destroyed. That will happen when our Lord Jesus Christ returns to the clouds of Heaven and puts His feet on the Mount of Olives. Then He will finally deal with guilt and death and evil.

The lion and the lamb.



Paul clearly shows in 1 Corinthians 15:23-28 *Each in his own order: Christ as First, then who is of Christ, upon His coming. Then comes the end, when He has surrendered the kingship to God and the*

Father, when He has destroyed all dominion and all power and power. For He must be King until He has put all the enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. After all, all things He has subjected to His feet. However, when He says that all things are subject to Him, it is clear that He has subjected all of them to Him, excepted Himself of course. So the kingship of the Lord is about obedience and trusting in God. About doing God's will. About justice and holiness. When all the enemies of God are conquered in the final battle, He becomes King all over the earth. Then Christ surrenders the kingship to the Father. Then there is no other god to tolerate: the devil and neither do other gods. He is the only God the whole world takes into account. It is the believers in Jesus Christ – who keep God's commandments – from the old world, who receive a place in the new world and are worthy to live in the Kingdom of God; the realm of justice.

The new Jerusalem.

As far as the country is concerned, it is not only a question of splitting the Mount of Olives into two mountains northeast and south-east of Jerusalem, which creates a kind of escape route for the people who are in Jerusalem. This escape route later becomes a river that flows from Jerusalem towards the Dead Sea where the water and banks turn into paradisiacal glory. The water full of fish and the trees with fruits on the land. But more will change near Jerusalem. The land – and then tens of kilometers around Jerusalem – becomes flat as the Jordan Valley. Zechariah 14:10 *All the land will become like the Plain, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem.* Jerusalem itself does not change much, by the way. It retains its lofty place. It also remains inhabited. Never will the city be in danger again. Zechariah 14:10,11 *But Jerusalem will be exalted and inhabited in its place, from the gate of Benjamin to the place of the former gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Hananeous Tower to the king's press tubs. They will live in it, there will be no more curse: Jerusalem will live carefree.* We do not need to ask ourselves why the LORD stresses this so strongly. This is because Jerusalem has so often been the object of enemy aggression. Assur lay in front of the gates of Jerusalem in 701 BC. That attack was thwarted by God. Babel attacked three times to destroy the city with the temple in 586 BC. Antiochus Epiphanes IV stole Jerusalem and faith and placed the statue of Zeus in the temple. God broke off the occupation after 3.5 years with the help of the Maccabees in 164 BC. In the year 70 AD, the Roman general Titus destroyed the city with the temple. Right now, the city is back in Jewish hands.

Jerusalem will live carefree.



The physical city of Jerusalem and the spiritual Jerusalem.

It will be a question for some to see how the view of Zechariah – who talks about the earthly city

of Jerusalem and its immediate surroundings – can be combined with that of the book of Revelation and heavenly Jerusalem. As Zechariah talks about larger and smaller changes to the city of Jerusalem as time transitions from eternity, John talks about the New Jerusalem descending from heaven. Revelation 21:1-4 *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed. And the sea was gone. And I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, descended from God from heaven, prepared as a bride made gracefully for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven say, Behold, the tent of God is with the people, and He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe all tears from their eyes, and death will no longer be there; there will also be no mourning, regret or trouble. Because the first things have passed.* Revelation and Zechariah do not contradict each other, but complement each other. In Zechariah, the LORD talks about the physical city of Jerusalem on the new earth and its immediate natural environment. The book of Revelation speaks more in a spiritual way. It calls the New Jerusalem the bride. God is not talking about the natural environment and the houses, but about the inhabitants. The people of God descend from heaven, and God dwells in their midst. Also, the twelve gates with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve foundations with the names of the twelve apostles in Revelation 21 refer to the Old and the New covenant people that will live on the new earth with the center of Jerusalem, the place where the LORD God resides. In the book of Revelation, the LORD speaks in terms of a *metaphor* about the future people of God from Jews and gentiles.

The new Jerusalem.



The Lord uses imaginations as 'the bride' and uses for the city the image of a cube. In Revelation 21, the Lord seems to indicate spiritual reality when he speaks of God and the Lamb and states that there is neither a temple nor sunlight because the Lamb is the light and the temple. Revelation 21:22,23 While it is clear that nothing can compare the meaning of Christ's sacrifice and righteousness, it does not mean that physical sun and a tangible temple are not again shining on the new earth. In the revelation to Ezekiel, the LORD does assume this. The prophet Ezekiel receives detailed information about the new temple. Armed with a passport lead, one measures the spaces that give shape to the imposing edifice that is not only to represent a temple, but in which there is actually service by priests and where sacrifice is made. People are not yet there to see, but they is the LORD Who has moved into the temple. Ezekiel 44:4 *Then He brought me*

through the north gate to the front of the house. I saw, and behold, the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord. Then I threw myself to the ground with my face. The measuring of the temple spaces takes place immediately after the final battle of the LORD against Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38 and 39. For the description of the temple, Ezekiel clears chapters 40 to 48. Everything seems to be decorated for the future use of the temple. Rules are given for which priestly family – Zadok's – and what sacrifices and areas. Then he sees - mentioned in Ezekiel 47 and 48 - see the water seeping away from the temple's threshold and forming a river towards the East.

The final verdict.

After a few strokes of pen have drawn the future glory of the LORD and brought the believers to safety on the new earth, the reckoning comes with the nations that rebelled against the LORD. The final battle ends in disaster for the rebellious peoples. It is very much a matter of a nuclear bomb falling, but it is doubtful whether this is the case. Zechariah 14:12,13 *And this will be the plague with which the LORD will afflict all the nations that have fought against Jerusalem: He will make everyone's flesh, while still standing on his feet, to dispose; the eyes of all will wander away in their greenhouses and the tongue of all will sink away in their mouths. On that day, it will come to pass that there will be a great confusion among them, which has been worked on by the Lord, so that they will reach out and raise their hands against each other.* Perhaps we should think of the premonition that the first judgment is made with water and the second with fire.

The first judgment came with water and the last judgment comes with fire.



It is the Apostle Peter who defines this in two places in the second letter. 2 Peter 3:5-7 *For knowingly it is unknown to them that through the Word of God the heavens have long been there, as have the earth, which rises from water and is stuck in water. As a result, the world that was there at the time has perished, flooded by the water. But the heavens that are now there, and the earth, are reserved by the same Word as a treasure, and are kept from the fire until the day of judgment and the wickedness of the wicked people.* Paul joins in by mentioning that the Lord Jesus defeats the enemies with fire. 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9 *It is righteous of God to retaliate for those who push you, and to you who are oppressed, together with us to give relief to the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of His power, when He exercises with flaming fire vengeance over those who do not know God, and over those who are disobeying the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. They will suffer eternal death as punishment, away from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His power.* The Apostle John also points out that the enemy is defeated with fire in the final battle from heaven. Revelation 20:9 *And they came up across the width of the earth, and surrounded the place of the saints and the beloved city. But fire from God descended from heaven, and that devoured them.* The battle is fought not only within Jerusalem, but also in the area. If the feast is in Jerusalem – because of the crushed victory and the taking in a great spoils on the enemy – then

the believers who were out of the city participate in the distribution of gold and silver. Zechariah 14:14 *Also Judah will fight in Jerusalem, so that the wealth of all pagan peoples is gathered all around: gold, silver and clothing in very large quantities.*

The loyalty to the Jewish people tested.

Zechariah is clearly written from the perspective of the Jewish people: The chosen people who were and will be the people of God. In light of the above, it is not surprising that the peoples in Zechariah 14 are viewed with suspicion. The question is, "How does one stand with the LORD of the heavenly powers?" Someone will ask how it is possible that the mistakes of the past in the paradisiacal situation are remembered. Yet that is more normal than one might think. Anyone who reads the vision of the new temple of Ezekiel will also notice that God on the new earth is following the priests and the kings with their past mistakes. This can indicate two things:

1. The way we have set our lives as believers, and the extent to which we have managed to get close to God's ideal, has implications for our place in God's people of the future. We know that the Lord Jesus also assumes this – in the parable of the talents. Matthew 25:14-30
2. There is a good chance that we – faithful people of this dispensation – will not be so different when we are allowed to share from God in paradise. Paul calls us "a new creation." Ephesians 4:24 The new man; It can't get much newer. If it is the case – that we are already called the new man and we are – it would mean that the commandments of God and faith, the atonement of sins and the Holy Spirit and the Bible remain of similar significance to life on the new earth. We do receive a new body, but everything else remains the same as it is now. Romans 8:23 Thus, according to the commandment of God, the Feast of tabernacles in the situation of the new earth seems to be celebrated by God's people Israel living around Jerusalem. However, the LORD wants the peoples to participate. It means that there will be a big party where not only people with a Jewish background, but also Dutch, Chinese and Colombians will be among others. Zechariah 14:16,17 *It will come to pass that there will be no rain upon him who will not rise from the lineages of the earth to Jerusalem to bow down before the King, the Lord of the armed forces.* Our loyalty to the Jewish people is tested by the invitation to come to Jerusalem every year and to honor the LORD as King and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast of Tabernacles is a harvest festival at the end of the summer, commemorating – not coincidentally – the Exodus from Egypt. The makeshift huts made up of branches and leaves indicate the temporary residence that the Israelites took advantage of when they were on their way from Egypt to the promised land.

The Feast of Tabernacles.

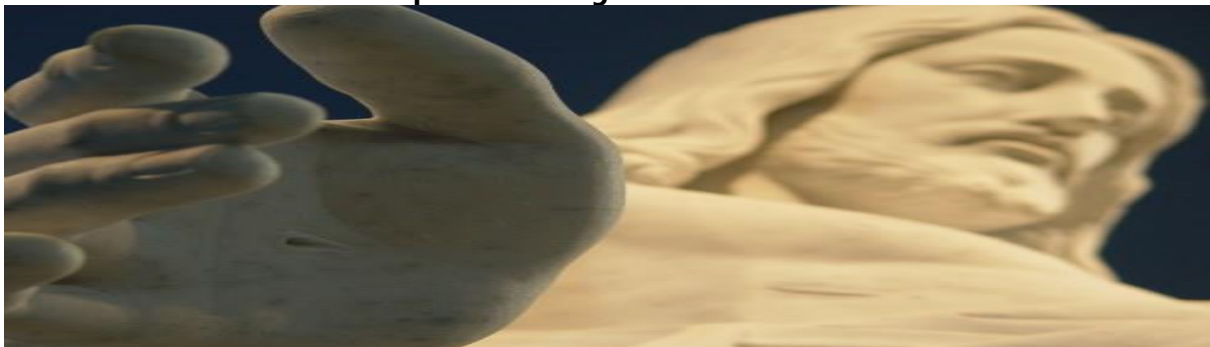


As believers from the nations, we may feel less comfortable with this invitation. It is not nice when there are doubts about our loyalty to God's old people. We are one of the peoples who have made life very difficult for the Jewish people at times. Whether that's Egypt or Assur or Babel or Persia or the Greek Empire or the Roman Empire or the empire Hitler envisioned, the Jewish community has been pushed throughout history into a corner from which it could barely come out. Starting with Egypt and the pharaoh at the time who wanted to remove the Jewish people from the face of the earth. The LORD and His people have never forgotten that. It is not for nothing that Egypt is taken out and mentioned in particular. Zechariah 14:18,19 If the Egyptians, on which no rain has fallen, will not rise and come, then the plague will come with which the Lord will afflict the heathens who will not rise to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. This will be the punishment for the sin of Egypt and the punishment for the sin of all the former pagan peoples who will not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. Because Egypt is not so dependent on rainwater – they have the Nile– they are punished with the punishment that affects the other peoples at the time of the last attack on Jerusalem. Indeed, we must realize that the final battle is the fiercest but also final attack on the faith of God's people and on God. No wonder our loyalty is being investigated. It is not that the people are not loyal to Israel – they are the people who are part of Paradise – but it is a reminder of the past in which the peoples have treated Israel badly.

The final separation of sheep and goats.

The impression that the LORD gives to Zechariah is confirmed in Isaiah. Isaiah 66:22-24 *For as the new heaven and the new earth I am to make will stand before My face, the LORD speaks, so will your posterity and your name. And it will come to pass that from new moon to new moon and from Sabbath to Sabbath all flesh will come to bow down before My face, says the LORD. And they will go out of the city and see the dead bodies of the men who have rebelled against Me; for their worm will not die, and their fire will not be extinguished, and they will be a fear for all flesh.* It is noticeable that Isaiah 60 draws the situation of the new heaven and the new earth, while also the awareness of the enmity of the nations against God and the believers is experienced as they leave the new Jerusalem. We see the corpses of the insurgents in a place 'where the worm does not die and the fire does not extinguish', terms that indicate hell later in the Bible. That's telling. The book of Revelation also has – in addition to positive and negative – memories of the nations at a time when the time of the new Jerusalem has arrived. Revelation 21:27 *All that is impure, will not come, nor will anyone engage in horrors and lies, but only those who are written in the book of the lamb's life.* Again, the impression might arise that the wrong people should stop outside the gate of the New Jerusalem, because access is only for the believers in Christ. Access in Jerusalem – as is stated – is reserved only for those who are in the book of life, the book of the lamb.

Christ is the Lamb and the Temple and the Light and the Sun.



This means – no more and no less – that the final separation between sheep and goats has already been established. The wrong people are in hell. They have been given part of eternal death. There's no turning back from hell. On the other hand, the people whose names are recorded in the book of life share in eternal life. However, there is probably an awareness of the past and of each other's existence. Also, we – in this way – who delve into biblical eschatology are reminded time and again that it is about something. Let's take it as a warning and humble ourselves by it. Zechariah confirms that even in the situation of the new heaven and the new earth, there will remain a realization of the earlier confrontation between the nations and the people of God. The fact is that all the elements we encounter in Zacharia – such as the light and the water and the throne of God in Jerusalem – are at the beginning of eternity and the new heaven and the new earth. In fact, with the final battle and God's feet on the Mount of Olives, we find ourselves on the Mount of Olives immediately prior to the turn of time to eternity, of eternal judgment and eternal salvation. With the drawing of how the relationships lay in the past, God colors the new situation.

Everything and everyone is sacred in the new age.

In the time of the ancient world, some objects and some people were sacred. That has changed dramatically in the new world. Everything and everyone is sacred. The horses that in the old world were the epitome of violence and aggression and war, are in the new world a paragon of devotion to God. The name of the LORD is engraved on their bells. Zechariah 14:20 *On that day will be on the bells of the horses: HOLY TO THE LORD.* In the new world, the horses bear the inscription that only the high priest had on his turban. Exodus 28:36-38 The same applies all the way to the temple. Were in the former situation the sacrificial scales are sacred, in the future everything you encounter in the temple is sacred, even the cooking pots. Zechariah 14:20,21 *And the pots in the house of the LORD will be like the pots before the altar. Yes, all the pots in Jerusalem and in Judah will be sacred to the LORD of the armed forces, so that all who wish to sacrifice will come and take it to cook in them.* The merchants in the temple are also called Canaanites in Hebrew. It was probably in the beginning also non-Jews who engaged in the temple-trade because it was not officially allowed. However, such traders in sacrificial animals were very welcome from the beginning. In that case you could travel to Jerusalem as a pilgrim with a well-stocked wallet. You didn't have to drag part of the harvest and the animals with you, but could buy what you needed in the temple square. That seems like a favorable improvement for the believers in the sense of 'convenience serves man'. In fact, however, it was a decline because the one's own harvest and the yield of one's own animals no longer came to Jerusalem in kind. Quality and care depended on what the traders had bought.



The Lord Jesus was annoyed deeply when he saw the traders in the temple square. The temple is the home of His Father. The Lord became so angry that He tipped the tables of the traders. He chased them off the temple square. In this way, He brought back much-needed peace to the square which was a place of prayer and not of the bleating of sheep and the sales pitch of the traders. John 2:14-16 Also this scene of the traders in the temple will not be seen again in the new time. Zechariah 14:21 *On that day there will be no Canaanite in the house of the Lord of the armed forces.* It is remarkable that the end of Isaiah, but also the end of Zechariah determines us by the sins of the past. Also, the future expectation of the new earth has strong memories of the time of the old dispensation the sins, the struggle, the rebellion against God and the reality of hell where the devil and his cronies, but also all those who chose against God, are. It is probably the external conditions – in addition to the internal conditions of reconciliation and the Holy Spirit – of the new life with God and each other, the circumstances within which the life of God and the elect is preserved forever.