

THE MESSIAH'S RETURN, PT. 2
ZECHARIAH 14:6-9

The coming of the Messiah (Christ) as King is one of the dominant themes in the OT:

- ✓ For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, **On the throne of David** and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and **forevermore**. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this. (Is. 9:6-7)
- ✓ He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; **I will also make You a light of the nations** So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth." (Is. 49:6)
- ✓ "Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; And **He will reign as king** and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. "In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, "The LORD our righteousness." (Jer. 23:5-6)
- ✓ ...and behold, **the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east**. And His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. And it was like the appearance of the vision which I saw, like the vision which I saw when He came to destroy the city. And the visions were like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face. And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east. And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house....Then He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the house; and I looked, and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD, and I fell on my face. (Ezek. 43:2-5; 44:4)
- ✓ "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. **And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom**, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed." (Dan. 7:13-14; also, v. 27)
- ✓ I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; **And His dominion will be from sea to sea**, And from the River to the ends of the earth. (Zech. 9:10)

The theme of Christ's return continues to be a significant focus of the NT (including several books):

- ✓ They (the angels) also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, **will come in just the same way** as you have watched Him go into heaven." (Acts 1:11)

- ✓ “But immediately after the tribulation of those days **THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL** from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and **they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY** with power and great glory.” (Matt. 24:29-30)
- ✓ “But **when the Son of Man comes in His glory**, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats...” (Matt. 25:31-32)
- ✓ “If I go and prepare a place for you, **I will come again** and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.” (John 14:3)
- ✓ ...so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father **at the coming of our Lord Jesus** with all His saints. (1Thess. 3:13)
- ✓ For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well **when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven** with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. (2 Thess. 1:6-8)
- ✓ ...so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor **at the revelation of Jesus Christ** (1 Pt. 1:7; cf. also 4:13)
- ✓ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening **the coming of the day of God**, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! (2 Pt. 3:11-12)
- ✓ **BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS**, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen. (Rev. 1:7)
- ✓ And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, “**To Him who sits on the throne**, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.” (Rev. 5:13; cf. also 15:4)
- ✓ And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war....And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “**KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.**” (Rev. 19:11, 16)

Of all the sections of Scripture that speak of the coming of Christ, perhaps one of the greatest sections is Zechariah 14. The power and significance of this chapter cannot be overstated: “Few chapters, if any, in the Scriptures are of greater eschatological significance than the chapter before us...” [Feinberg.] After 13 chapters of prophetic visions and oracles, this chapter stands above the rest in the book as a crescendo of hope and praise. And the focus of this section in this chapter is the truth that —

God has not only chosen Israel as His people but He has promised to be Israel's King. And He *will* be King. Though we do not know the time when He will come as King, there is no uncertainty about whether He will be King. He will. And Zechariah gave that truth to the people who had returned from captivity in Babylon to the land of Israel as their encouragement and joy. In this crescendo chapter, hear the message to rejoice in Christ the coming King. **Rejoice in two aspects of Christ's kingship.**

1. Rejoice in Christ, the King of All the EARTH (vv. 6-8)

- ✓ He will provide a new LIGHT (v. 6-7)
- ✓ He will provide a new DAY (v. 7)
- ✓ He will provide new WATERS (v. 8)

2. Rejoice in Christ, the King of all PEOPLE (v. 9)

- ✓ Christ is — and will be — King
- ✓ Christ will be the singular King over every single person in every single nation

1. Rejoice in Christ, the King of All the EARTH (vv. 6-8)

• He will provide a new LIGHT (vv. 6-7)

- ✓ **In that day** — a continuation of the theme of judgment and blessing that will come when the Messiah returns to earth to establish His Kingdom.
- ✓ When Christ comes on His day, there will be several phenomena in the natural world:
 - His coming will follow the Tribulation where there will be uncommon “natural disasters” like famine (6:5-6; Mt. 24:7), forest fires (8:7-8), plagues (9:18), scorching heat (Rev. 16:8-9), the drying up of rivers (Rev. 16:12), massive hail stones (100#, Rev. 16:21), and unprecedented numbers of deaths (half the population of the world, Rev. 6:8; 9:15).
 - In the Day of the Lord, there will be earthquakes and famines (Joel 2:10; Mt. 24:7)
 - There will be “wonders in the sky and on the earth, Blood, fire and columns of smoke” (Joel 2:30)
 - While Zechariah primarily points to the joy of Israel on the Lord’s day, it is worth remembering that it will also be a day of harshness, as Amos says (Amos 5:18).
- ✓ Zechariah notes several phenomena in this chapter, and the first he mentions is **there will be no light**. And to make his point, he also says, **the luminaries will dwindle**.
 - **No light** refers to no “natural light” (daylight). The provision of Gen. 1:3-5 is changed.
 - The phrase **the luminaries dwindle** is interesting; “luminaries” refers to things that are scarce, precious, and valuable (like “precious” jewels). It points to the uniqueness of the sun and moon — when they are gone, they are irreplaceable.
 - And the sun, moon, and stars all **dwindle** — they literally “congeal” and “fade to black.” Some translations say something like, “there shall be no light, cold, or frost.” The Hebrew text is unclear, but it is probably best to see the parallelism Zechariah is using in vv. 6-7 to emphasize the loss of light and not absence of cold. He wants us to feel the significance of the darkness.
 - The work for the sun, moon, and stars is completed and at an end, so they also will end.
- ✓ While the world will be darkened, let’s also understand that this isn’t just a physical reference; when the Bible talks about physical darkness, it often is also suggesting spiritual darkness (think about the angel of the Lord that came at night in the final plague against Egypt).
 - Darkness often anticipates judgment (both for Israel and/or the nations; cf. Jer. 4:23-26 — a precursor to the Babylonian captivity for Israel’s disobedience).
 - So in that day, when the light fades, it is not just darkness, it is judgment for sin. The world is a dark and sinful place and it will receive judgment that matches its sin. (This is often our lament, both personally and for the world in which we live — we are weary of sin and its effects.)
- ✓ Then into that darkness, **at evening time there will be light** (v. 7)! The reference to **evening time** is probably a reference to the end of the time of judgment, God will interject Himself and provide light.

- Like creation in Genesis 1, this light will seemingly come from nothing.
- (Notice that the creation of light is not in the normal order — it doesn't come in the morning, but in the evening" — God is demonstrating His sovereign power.) And it is not created light —
- This light, of course, flows from God Himself (**Rev. 21:23-24; 22:5**). It is infinitely bright, infinitely powerful, and eternally lasting light. And that's why darkness and night cease.
- And just as the darkness indicated both physical and spiritual darkness, we should also see God's provision of eternal spiritual light in this phrase. Wrath, judgment, gloom, oppression, distress, sin, death, and all that is associated with the futility of this world will be gone.
- The darkness of sin and Satan are replaced by the infinite light and glory of Christ.
- The Reformers had a saying to reflect the brightness of the gospel after the spiritual bondage of the dark ages — *Post tenebras lux* — "after darkness light." So in that day, "out of pitch darkness, the blazing glory of Jesus Christ will appear." [MacArthur] It will appear eternally.
- "...the course of nature is changed, for the day is darkened to night and the evening sees light. In the hour of deepest gloom and blackness God causes the bright light of His deliverance to shine forth for the distressed ones." [Feinberg]

- **He will provide a new DAY (v. 7)**

- ✓ Zechariah reminds us in v. 7 that he is still speaking of the coming day of the Lord, but he uses a different phrase to refer to it — it is **a unique day**. Literally, it is "one day." A singular day — a day like no other day.
- ✓ Zechariah tells us what is particularly unique about this day — there will be **neither day nor night**.
 - In part, He is reiterating what He has said in v. 6 — light will cease and it will be dark.
 - But he is also indicating something else — the first time this phrase "one day" was used was in Genesis 1:5, when God created day and night and the 24-hour-cycle and the week and calendar.
 - On this future day, what God created in Genesis 1:5 will cease:
 - ... Day and night will cease. The markers of the 24-hour-day will be gone; there will only be day.
 - ... The sun will cease, so there won't be annual trips around the sun marking a year.
 - ... Since rotations around the sun cease, there will no longer be seasons of summer and winter (the harshest of the season).
 - This will be an entirely new day with a whole new world order that is not marked by a succession of days, but only one eternally unending day. And that is what makes it unique.
- While this is the initiation of the MK, Zechariah is also anticipating the "day" of eternity.
- ✓ Notice that Zechariah says that this day is also only **known to the Lord**. God alone knows the details of that day, and only He knows how to carry out those details. And only He knows when that day will arrive (even Jesus in His humanity did not know, Mt. 24:36).
- ✓ That it is **known** to the Lord also means it is certain — it *will* happen (don't be discouraged by sin and the proliferation of evil — and that evil people seem to escape justice).

- ✓ That is it **known** also means that it will happen according to His sovereign (right) plan. The timing of that day will be appropriate and good (don't be discouraged by the wait). That Christ is "delayed" is not reality, but only our perspective. God is not late. He will come and it will be at just the right time.

- **He will provide new WATERS (v. 8)**

- ✓ ***In that day living waters will flow...*** Another unique transformation on the day of the Lord.
 - Currently, Jerusalem is 300 feet below the top of the Mt. of Olives. But on that day the water will flow from Jerusalem to the furthest eastern and western locations. So the topography of Israel will change — Mt. of Olives will be lowered and Jerusalem will be raised.
 - Currently, Jerusalem is arid and dry; on that day, Jerusalem will be a source of water for nation.
 - That the water **flows** suggests that there is no longer any rain, but the land is returning to an Edenic kind of existence (**Gen. 2:5-6, 10ff**). Instead of Israel receiving water from other sources, Israel becomes a source of water for the nations.
 - The water supply is limitless — it is available in both **summer** and **winter** — seasons when the water might be limited because of heat or cold, there is still a plentiful supply. There will be unsurpassed fertility of the land in that day (Amos 9:13).
- ✓ As with the two preceding verses, there seems to be something else going on here. When he speaks of **living waters**, it is obviously literal water to both the Mediterranean and Red Seas. But there are also spiritual implications:
 - Jeremiah uses the same phrase **living waters** to refer to the character of God and His provision for His people and how they forsook Him for ungodly desires (**Jer. 2:13**).
 - Ezekiel sees these waters as a source of spiritual restoration (**Ezk. 47:12**).
 - A similar picture in Revelation points to the spiritual provision that flows from the throne of God in these waters (**Rev. 21:6; 22:1-2**).
 - In this same section, Zechariah also refers to the fountain of water that gives forgiveness (**13:1**).
 - And supremely, Jesus Himself uses this same phrase to refer to Himself as the source of "living water" (**Jn. 4:10-11**).
- ✓ When God promises a new source of water, He is promising forgiveness and a new way to live (13:1).
- ✓ If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, know that one day He will come and you will be accountable for everything you have done — and if you have rejected Him, everything will be sin and death.
 - But this passage is a reminder that what He will do in that day is available already. He is the source of light (truth — Jn. 14:6), eternal life, and forgiveness (**13:1**).
 - But you must repent and believe — you must turn away from your sin as a source of satisfaction and turn to Him as a source of joy. You must desire Him and a new way of life.
 - If you repent, and if you believe that Jesus paid for your sin and liberty, you will be saved just as Israel will also be saved one day (**12:10**).

- **Summary:** Observe also that in this chapter Zechariah is subtly revealing creation's "uncreation."
 - ✓ **The Mount of Olives** is "uncreated" in v. 4.
 - ✓ **Light** is uncreated in v. 6.
 - ✓ **The cycle of days** is uncreated in v. 7.
 - ✓ **The provision of rain** is uncreated in v. 8.
 - ✓ All of these also point to God not just "uncreating," but God providing something permanent/better.
 - The light of the sun and moon is replaced by **the glory of Christ**.
 - The cycle of day and night is replaced by **eternal day** (unending time). There is not "one day" (Gen. 1:5) followed by another and another, but one infinitely immeasurable day.
 - The provision of rain is replaced by a fountain and river of physical and **spiritual restoration**.
 - All these hint at the coming new creation of the **new heavens and new earth** where everything broken will be replaced by an eternal source of care and provision.
 - ✓ When Zechariah revealed this prophecy, the nation was still prone to discouragement over oppression from the nations and they abandoned rebuilding the temple (Ezra 4:5). Their joy was gone. And this book is a reminder of the provision of God and the reason for joy.
 - ✓ Supremely and ultimately, their joy was in the coming of the Savior. They were to rejoice in the One who was the sovereign King of everything on this earth — and all things spiritual as well.

2. Rejoice in Christ, the King of all **PEOPLE** (v. 9)

- **Christ is — and will be — King**
 - ✓ We know that Christ is already King, seated on the throne as God's co-regent (Acts 1:11; Rev. 5:7).
 - ✓ But there is a current illegitimate usurper of His throne (Eph. 2:2). That will soon end (**Rev. 20:1-3**).
 - ✓ **And the Lord will be King.** He *will* be King. He is already King, but on that day, He will ascend to His Davidic throne, take His seat, and never be removed from His Kingly position (**2:10; 9:10**).
 - ✓ "The final Adam will possess the dominion lost by the first Adam." [MacArthur]
- **Christ will be the singular King over every single person in every single nation**
 - ✓ He will be the singular King — **YHWH will be the only One** (Dt. 6:4 — "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!"). There will be one King, one Kingdom, and one object of worship. All pretenders and false gods will be eradicated (13:2ff).
 - ✓ His authority will extend **over all the earth** — not just nations, but individuals. All people. There is a totality to His sovereign reign. There will be no resistance to Him as He ascends the throne.
 - ✓ The One who is sovereign, will reign authoritatively over all (Ps. 93:1; 97:1; 99:1).
 - ✓ Not only will He rule and reign, but even those who currently reject Him will acknowledge His authority — He will be King and will be respected as King (**Phil. 2:9-11**).
 - ✓ On Christ's coronation day He will be on His throne and our prayer will be answered (**Mt. 6:9-10**).

CONCLUSION: A preacher from another generation, G. Campbell Morgan, said:

To me the second coming is the perpetual light in the path which makes the present bearable. I never lay my head on my pillow without thinking that maybe before the morning breaks, the final morning may have dawned. I never begin my work without thinking perhaps he may interrupt my work and begin His own.

The second coming of Christ is a warning to the nations; but it is a day of immense comfort for the follower of God in Israel and the believer in Christ. As you walk through your daily troubles this week, be purposefully mindful of this truth. Christ *is* coming; He *will be* King. Let that certainty transform your troubles into joy. The trouble will end; His day will begin, and there will only be joy for you there.

Benediction (Rob): Philippians 2:9-11