

Zechariah

walk-thru

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**A Voice in the Wilderness
P.O.Box 9531
Spokane, WA 99209 USA**

www.a-voice.org

The unconventional punctuation styles you will see are related to the way these studies were originally intended for the e-mail audience, using plain text to keep file sizes smaller for bulk mailing; creatively 'formatting' with punctuation, for various kinds of emphases, in the absence of formatting the actual type. You may find occasional misspellings, and the more rare cases of a Scripture reference going to a wrong passage; those will be 'typos', not intentional. With this type of POD (Print On Demand) publishing, it seems simplest, and the most prudent use of time, to not completely go through and revamp everything, but to just leave things as they are. Please accept this book, warts and all; but rather, please pay attention to, and receive God's Truth presented herein.

Zechariah

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Turn to Jehovah of Hosts (Zechariah 1)

"So says Jehovah of Hosts: Turn to Me, says Jehovah of Hosts, and I will turn to you, says Jehovah of Hosts. Be not as your fathers..." (vs3-4)

Zechariah is a most fascinating book. Being that this will become part of the 'Walk-thru' series, these studies will not be detailed, as if it were a 'book study' going verse-by-verse. We will likely not address some of those 'deep' questions or puzzles that many students of prophecy like to wrangle over. [Editor: for instance, don't expect an answer to the riddle of the "two olive trees" -4:11] One reason there are so many puzzles to the book is because it covers many aspects.

The proclamations of this book came when things were moving and shaking regarding Israel. Israel was at a time in their history, in many ways, not at all dissimilar to today. Things were bleak. Some years prior, Cyrus had allowed whoever of Israel's captivity wanted to return, to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. (Ezra1) But just as today, the nearby "enemies of Judah" (4:1) stirred things up. As Ahasuerus became king, the enemies started communicating with him to stop the building, and continued to Artaxerxes. (Ez4:6-7) You see, the whole deal with Haman, Mordecai and Esther was not just about Mordecai not bowing to Haman (Est3:2), but things were stirring back in Judah as the remnant were trying to rebuild the temple. It was a world-wide climate of anti-semitism. One of the -big- issues regarding Jerusalem today with the Arabs, is sovereignty over the Temple Mount... not allowing Israel to build a temple. And so it was back then. Just as the PLO today would like to push Israel into the ocean, as Arafat has recently reportedly said, "Let them drink the sea", so too then, Haman sought to annihilate the Jews.

And then, along comes Daniel. One faithful -individual-. What can one man do to change world events? One of the first things that happens when Darius comes to power is Daniel's faith being tested. When we observe "Daniel and the lion's den", we typically only see Daniel's faithfulness and the 'personal' -local- struggles, but we usually miss the global implications of that event. When Daniel was faithful, Darius issues a decree regarding the "God of Daniel" (Dan6:26) as he realizes that "He is the living God, and endures forever, and His kingdom is that which shall not be destroyed"

Now, this sets the stage. The work on the temple having been shut down, they are trying to get back to working on the temple. And it is in the "second year of the reign of Darius" (Ez4:24), after Daniel's night with the lions and Darius' acknowledgment of The Most High, that things start to turn around...and as a result of communications from Judah, he orders a search made, and finds the records of the prior decrees of

Cyrus (Ezra6) and orders the work to resume.

Question to ponder: If Daniel had not been faithful, what is the likelihood that Darius would have been of such a heart as to search the records, and subsequently order the work to resume? Daniel's willingness to, as far as he could have assumed, be eaten by lion's, was pivotal to having the work on the temple resumed. And so, as we see today's world stage, what single insignificant-seeming -individual's- faithfulness to God will be responsible for some major turning point in global events?

These are the kinds of times in which Zechariah was proclaiming to the remnants and returnees in the land of Israel. If we can understand the similarities between then and today, perhaps we can see that this book was not written for -just- 'way back then'. It has many things for us, 'today'. And, indeed, much of the book is prophetic, for the days that are yet 'imminently' upon the world. And, even as the Jews were prepared to defend themselves on Purim (Est8), I have been reading recently that there is a current arming of Israel's citizenry against the coming attack against them; when the neighboring countries attack from the outside, and the PLO (who have been stockpiling weapons through the 'river of arms') attacks from within.

So now, with that introduction, let's get back to the study...

Notice God's Word to Israel, "Turn to Me"... "be not as your fathers". Is God contradicting His Word where it says, "train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Pr22:6) where it also says, "hear the instruction of your father, and forsake not the law of your mother.." (Pr1:8)? How many times, as an adult, even after I was married, didn't I hear the words, "That's not how you were taught...that's not how I taught you..." from a father who, near the end of his life, several people wondered if he even really knew the Lord... many of the ways he had 'taught', being utterly abhorrent compared to where the Lord has placed me now. Had I continued in his footsteps, and had not turned, I would likely now be supportive of Billy Graham, Promise Keepers, and all the rest that is apostate.

Notice the Word says, "The fear OF THE LORD is the beginning of knowledge.." (Pr1:7) "Children, obey your parents IN THE LORD.." (Eph6:1) Ultimately before God, a person cannot rest on the parents' righteousness or evil. God also set up the law that the father should not die for the sins of the son, nor the sons for the sins of the father. (Eze18:20, Deu24:16)

Thus, notice, when a son grows up seeing his father's sin, and turns to God, instead, not being like his father, he will not die generationally (Ex20:5) for his father's sin; he will live. (Eze18:14,17)

When Hezekiah became king, he had a campaign of tearing down all the idols and high places. (2Ch29) We could likely assume from the narrative that he also destroyed the special altar his father had designed and built, in the temple, next to Jehovah's altar. (2Kg16) And he is labelled as being the most faithful king Judah ever had. (2Kg18:5) And he speaks, "...for our fathers [including his own]...did the evil in the eyes of Jehovah.." (2Ch29:6) [Even some of Hezekiah's own siblings had been burned to death, by his father, in sacrifice to pagan gods -2Kg16:3] Even though he was his father's son, he did not follow in his father's footsteps, but rather, followed God.

In the past we have noted that God -often- exhorted Israel to "remember". Remember God's works, and the works of their ancestors. When their fathers rebelled, God judged. And here God is saying, "Jehovah has been very angry with your fathers.." (vs2) Just as we have noted from other prophets like Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc. Zechariah is reminding them that "the former prophets have proclaimed to them" to repent. "But [the fathers] did not hear nor listen to Me, says Jehovah." (vs4)

Now people, Look, observe and learn! "Your fathers, where are they?" (vs5) Do you remember what your fathers did? And now look and see where everything is now, as a result. The former prophets proclaimed God's judgment against their idolatry, and see how those words "[overtook] your fathers.." (vs6) As God promised, "so He has done with us". (vs6b)

Israel today is like Israel of old. They are busy negotiating with the nations of the world. They are not nationally falling on their knees before Jehovah and "repenting in sackcloth and ashes". (Jer6:26, Dan9:3) They are busy "[calling] to Egypt, and going to Assyria" (Hos7:11)

Their primary problem? They do not "know" Jehovah, nor His Son. They are busy speaking of "G-d". If they truly knew Him, they would call to Him BY NAME. They were not to "mention another god by name" (Ex23:13), and while God knew Moses and Israel "by name" (Ex33:12,17), it is never said anywhere that Israel knew God "by name". God warned them not to take His name "in vain" (Ex20:7), but rather than taking God's name into their hearts (Deu5:29) they opted, instead, to not say His name... AT ALL; rather, referring to a title. Adonai-Lord. To them He was God "way OUT THERE someplace". Think about it even in human terms; to how many "loved" ones would you remain endeared if you never uttered their name? God's Law was intended to put God (since the "Word was God" -Jn1:1) "very near you, in your mouth and in your heart.." (Deu30:14) They didn't know Him, and as a result He was "not well please" (1Cor10:5) with most of them. They were "in unbelief". (Heb3:19)

But notice how, just as God repeats His name "I AM Jehovah" as He leads them out of Egypt (Ex6:6-7), and gives them the law (Ex20:2) [Editor:

remember the recent series "I AM.." in the Library], he does the same here. Israel, do you see the mess you are in, because your fathers rejected Jehovah? Listen to what is being said to you. This is what Jehovah says to you. Jehovah says this. If you will repent, I will turn to you SAYS JEHOVAH. Israel, understand Who your God is. It is "Jehovah", the "Existing One". See where your father's gods got them, and subsequently, you. Into this mess. As though God is re-introducing Himself to them, Listen to Me, I AM your God, I AM Jehovah, I AM THAT I AM. Remember? That is My name, that is My title from generation to generation. (Ex3:15)

You that are clinging to 'messianic/Hebrew roots' ways, note this well! What is God's "title"? "I AM that I AM" In other words, in English rendition... "Jehovah", the "Existing One". Or, if you will, "Yahweh". Not merely "Lord" or "Sir" or "Your Honor", which is what "Adonai" represents.

God calls to Israel with His -name-, not the "tatragrammaton" of "YHVH" that unbelievers cling to. It is at the "-NAME-" of Jesus Christ of Nazareth" by which we are saved. (Acts4:10,12) Later in this book if we get that far, if the Lord doesn't 'appear' (Tit2:13) to "reveal" (1Jn3:2) Himself first, to also catch away His Church (Jn14:3,1th4:17), we will see prophesied how Israel -will- recognize their Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. But notice that salvation 'to Israel' comes to "whoever shall call on the -NAME- of Jehovah...shall be saved". (Joel2:32) Because it is only "Jehovah" (I AM) who can be "my Shepherd". (Ps23:1)

Now, if it is "Jehovah" Who is my Shepherd, the One who leads me, there is an intimate relationship there. For one who 'truly' knows Jehovah there is "boldness" in His presence. (Heb4:16)

And notice, He is "Jehovah of Hosts"(vs3)... Who makes all things; Who stretches out the heavens alone; Who spreads out the earth.." (Is44:24) The One Who is "...first and I am the last; and besides Me there is no God" (Is44:6) He is God of the "hosts of the heavens"... all creation and every living being in it. He is "King of kings, and Lord of lords". (Rev19:16)

Four Horns and Four Craftsmen (Zechariah 1)

"So says Jehovah of Hosts: I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And with great anger I am angry at the nations at ease; in that I was but a little angry, and they gave help for evil."
(vs14-15)

Last lesson we noted that Zechariah proclaimed God's Word during a time when Israel's exiles were returning, and rebuilding the temple. And while we know that much of God's promise about the temple being rebuild was for 'that' time, since their "seventy years" is referenced (vs12), we also know that this passage (vs7-21) is also (mostly) prophetic.

Notice that the "four horns" are said to "have scattered" Israel; past tense. (vs18-19) Horns, in prophecy, are world governments or powers. "Kings" (Rev17:12) We know that this is prophetic, not for 'that' time, because they were yet just into the "2nd" horn. Nebuchadnezzar received a dream about the four kingdoms in Daniel ch2, in the form of the great image made of four sections. Daniel, himself, had visions of the four kingdoms, depicted as animals in ch7. We won't go into detail at this time, but these kingdoms are/were Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. As Babylon was overthrown by Medo-Persia the night of the "handwriting" on the wall at Belshazzar's feast, it was Darius who "took the kingdom" (Dan5:31), beginning the period of the 2nd horn. This same Darius as in Zech ch1. The one who 'threw' Daniel to the lions.

But God is proclaiming His wrath over the "four" horns. And He is promising that His temple "shall be built". (vs16) Obviously, prophetic.

Why is God wroth with the nations? They had overstepped their bounds. God had used the nations as His servant to punish His people, Israel, but they overdid it. Notice that He called Nebuchadnezzar "My servant" (Jer25:9), for the purpose of disciplining Israel. God was angry with Israel for their idolatry, and used the nations to give them a 'wood-shedding'. But "they gave help for evil". (vs15)

Yes, it was God's purpose to disperse Israel into the nations, but it was not His purpose to inflict things like the Nazi Holocaust and other various pogroms and inquisitions which various nations, entities and the catholic church inflicted upon them. It's like God gave to the nations to give Israel a good "spanking", but they took it beyond, and "abused" Israel. And so God says that in His anger (vs15) He is going to "throw down the horns of the nations who have lifted up their horn over the land of Judah..." (vs21) You see, this is part of the "sheep/goat" judgment Jesus spoke of in Mt25. Yes, Israel was scattered, but how did the world treat them? Did they care for them, or abuse them?

So... we see a couple of things about what is yet coming. First of all, the temple -WILL- be rebuilt. And notice 'who' is going to build it. "Behold the Man whose name is The BRANCH...He shall build the temple of Jehovah.." (Zech6:12-13) The Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful movement keeps saying that "G-d" wants -them- to build the temple. They keep driving around with that cornerstone in their truck, wishing -they- could lay it. But their Messiah is the One Who is going to build the temple.

Now, some people who think that God rejected Israel 'permanently' use passages like this to say that "the Church is Israel", because, after all, the Believer's body is the "temple of the Holy Spirit" (1Cor6:19) and Christ (the "Branch") said, "I will build My church". (Mt16:18) But notice that The Branch is going to use "distant ones" to "come and build in the temple of Jehovah". (6:15) Now, lest you be tempted to spiritualize this away and think that means the "gentiles" who were "afar off" (Eph2:17) [who receive salvation and reconciliation "to God" -vs16, NOT 'to Israel']; notice the terminology in the -context-, "And a line shall be stretched over Jerusalem". (1:16) That's the terminology of -physical- "surveying" preparatory to -physical- construction. When Messiah sets up His kingdom, the "wealth of the nations" (Is60:5, Zech14:14) "gold, silver and clothing, very much" will be pouring into Israel. There will then be plenty of resources for building the temple, and whatever else Israel needs after she had been plundered by her enemies.

We who know the Lord and love His Word sometimes 'wring our hands' at modern Israel, as she tries to negotiate with the world's powers. And we 'yell at' her, mentally/emotionally, "Don't be doing that! Stand up for what God has promised and given you!" But we must remember that she is yet in unbelief. But notice that just as at one time it was said, "the glory has departed from Israel" (1Sam4:21), God promises, "I have returned to Jerusalem with mercies" (vs16) Just as God scattered Israel amongst the nations, He promises, "I will shake the house of Israel among all the nations...I will raise up the booth of David that has fallen...I will build it as in the days of old...I will turn back the captivity of My people Israel...I will plant them on their land.." (~Amos9:9-15) Jehovah -GOD- is doing this. And it is so -sure- a matter that God back in Zechariah's time speaks of it as a 'past tense'... "I -HAVE- returned to Jerusalem". In God's 'mind' it is already a 'done deal'. Just as God assigned nations to give Israel a 'spanking', and it turned out to be so severe that they haven't been able to 'sit down' for awhile... He also is drawing them into His arms and will be speaking "...good words, comfortable words" (vs13) As they are settled back into their land "Jehovah shall yet comfort Zion" (vs17)

But notice the state of affairs before God bursts forth with His jealous wrath. God has His 'eyes and ears' roaming through the earth.

Here (vs8) it speaks of horses. In (6:1-8) speaks of four chariots and horses as being the "four spirits of the heavens" by which God's "Spirit" (vs8) rests in a region. In Rev5:6 it speaks of the "seven Spirits of God" which are sent into all the earth.

Dear Believer... do you realize that you are host to part of God's eyes and ears in this world? Think about how a Believer is one who is indwelt by God's Holy Spirit. (Eph1:13, Rom8:9, 1Cor6:19) Wherever you are, God's Holy Spirit is there. When you see, hear and feel what is going on in the world, that is also part of God observing those same things. When you know that things are going on "in the air" around you, you know that because we, as Believers, "have the mind of Christ". (1Cor2:16b) So you sometimes wonder why you seem to be "alone" where you are? Why is it not possible to find others of "like precious faith" (2Pt1:1) to fellowship with? He has left us wherever we are as "lights" (Mt5:14,16) to "shine" forth "the praises of Him Who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1Pt2:9) If we were all collected into one place, fellowshiping with 'each other', we would not be serving His purpose of walking "to and fro through the earth". (zech6:7) As a result, there would be places of total "darkness".

Now... returning from the spiritualized application of this... the thing we know about God is that, whatever the full extent of His messengers and Spirit (so many things we will not fully understand until we are with Him and see Him as He is, and things as they truly are), God knows what is going on throughout the earth. Whether He is seeing through the eyes of the portion of His Spirit within us, or His other messengers, the report comes back to Him, "behold, all the earth sits still and is at peace". (1:11)

Now, I'm not going to pretend to understand the full implication of that statement. But there is an observation. Notice that the report of "still & peace" is given, BUT THEN the question is raised, "how long" before things are restored as they should be? (vs12)

Jesus spoke of His coming like a "thief" for which the "steward" is on alert. (Mt24:43) Peter speaks of the "Day of the Lord" as being like a "thief in the night". (2Pt3:10) Paul speaks of the "thief in the night" and goes on to say, "when they shall say, Peace and safety! Then sudden destruction comes on them...but you, brothers, are not in darkness, that the Day should overtake you.." (1Th5:2-4) Jesus said that just like in Noah's time, life will be continuing on and the world won't have a clue as to what is about to come upon them. (Mt24:37-39) And like with Lot, the rest of the people likely didn't know he and his family had left town, and suddenly destruction came. (Lk17:26-30)

Today, the world would like to think it is on the brink of global peace. The mighty nations are downsizing their militaries, and the UN is recently talking of revamping its military structure to better play

the role as "peacekeeper". Before countries can go to war, the UN would step in and 'police' conflicts, to keep them from erupting into full-fledged war. What a "perfect" plan...! (they think) And Sept 19 was "U.N. Millennium Peace" day, and a mile-long "peace quilt" was to be "wrapped" around the US capitol on Sept 20. Peace! Peace! Peace!

Notice that, before the Lord pours forth His wrath, and subsequently restores Jerusalem and the temple, the report to the Angel of Jehovah is, "..all the earth sits still and is at peace.."(vs11)

Jehovah

Shall Choose Jerusalem Again (*Zechariah 2*)

"..and behold! A man with a measuring line in his hand. Then I said, Where are you going? And he said to me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its breadth and what is its length." (vs1-2)

Apparently God knew that in these latter times there would be quite a militant element that would not believe in Israel's -physical- restoration, even though the Scriptures are jam-packed full of such promises. In fact, for every reference that speaks of the Church being a -spiritual- kind of Israel (Gal3:29), I wonder how many dozens (or hundreds?) of references there are that speak of -PHYSICAL- Israel being restored? I've not counted.

But here we have another 'picture' to illustrate the -physical- nature of Israel's restoration; and particularly, that of Jerusalem. If we understand that the spiritual kingdom of God does not come "with observation" (Lk17:20), it would be ludicrous to speak of 'measuring' a spiritual Jerusalem with a "measuring line", wouldn't it. The spiritual is not something we can observe whispering here and there. (Jn3:8) But that's what this passage speaks of. Measuring Jerusalem for its width and length. And also notice that it will be "inhabited [with] multitude of men and cattle.." (vs4) Cows, oxen, sheep, chickens, etc is not something that is associated with the spiritual. They are -physical- entities. Things you milk, gather eggs from, and butcher for meat.

Now, let us notice how God is going to care for His own. "I, Jehovah, will be to her a wall of fire all around, and will be the glory in her midst." (vs5) Remember when Israel was coming out of Egypt about 3500 years ago that God in Christ (the "Angel of God") became a pillar of fire to separate between Israel and Egypt, as Egypt pursued. (Ex14:19) Notice: "Then Jehovah will create a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, over all the site of Mount Zion, and over her assemblies; for on all the glory will be a canopy." (Is4:5)

3500 years ago they did not have things like Katooshka (sp?) rockets and Scud missiles. But God knew back then, and speaks of being not only a "wall" of protection, but a "canopy". All around, God will protect Israel. There have been some reports from the 1967 war, where Israel in many cases seemed hopelessly outnumbered, and in a few cases some group expected to be overrun and killed, but the Arabs would retreat inexplicably. (I think it was the Syrians or Jordanians, I forget exactly now) And later the report would be that the Arabs had seen "troops and weapons" where Israel knew they hadn't stationed anybody. Reminiscent of when Elisha asks God to allow his servant to see the

"chariots of fire" surrounding them. (2Kg6:17) God's army!

And then note references to what we have observed recently in the Fig Leaves. "Ho! Ho! Flee then from the land of the north, says Jehovah... Ho! O Zion, escape, you who live with the daughter of Babylon." (vs6-7) Russia and Iraq. In recent years many Jews have left Russia to get to Israel. I haven't heard of it, but apparently there must still be some Jews yet in Iraq?

Why are they summoned to "escape"? Well, due to Israel's idolatry, God had "scattered" them "as the four winds". And Jesus spoke how "He shall send His angels...and they shall gather His elect from the four winds.." (Mt24:31) Again, you who insist that Israel was "done for" and that the Church is now Israel, notice the same terminology between the -physical- "measuring" of Jerusalem, and the scattering/gathering of Israel to/from the "FOUR WINDS". If God -physically- scattered Israel (which the Israel/Church people don't seem to have a problem with), He is then again also -physically- "gathering" His elect, Israel. It's the same kind of terminology. And then, what is He going to do?

"I will shake my hand over them"... the nations that "stripped you". (vs9,8) Remember that Christ is going to wrench the kingdoms of the world away from satan, as He is "King of kings and Lord of lords" (Rev11:15,17:14,19:16) And He promises here that these nations "shall be a prize for their servants". (vs9)

Think about this a moment. During the recent Olympics 'parade of nations' they showed the population of each nation at the bottom of the TV screen as their athletes entered the arena. I noticed that Israel has a population of less than 6 million. That's not even as big as New York, Los Angeles, Tokyo, etc. That is less than .1% (point one percent.. a 'thousanth') of the world's total population. When the Cold War was still raging, the military balance of power used to be considered as #1-USA, #2-Russia, #3-Israel. How does tiny little Israel manage to be so strong? -God- has been fighting for her! (Zech14:3)

But also, right now, the nations of the world are all 'telling' Israel how she must behave. She "won" Jerusalem back, but she cannot have full autonomy over it. The UN makes resolutions over Israel. Nations have attacked her, and she has triumphed and as a result won territories. But the world is ganging up on her, telling her she must give it back. Israel right now does not have total autonomy. And from prophecy we know that the nations will come against her militarily again in the near future, and this passage says that God will "shake His hand" over these nations, and give them to Israel. All their wealth of [physical] "gold, silver and clothing in great abundance" (14:14).

Why is God doing this for Israel? Because the nations have "overdone" God's discipline of Israel. (1:15) And what happens when the child of

royalty is mistreated? Royalty comes out in 'royal anger', calls out the military and every national resource at their disposal and executes vengeance. Israel is the "pupil of [God's] eye". Israel is God's "favorite". They have messed with and mistreated God's 'darling'. (vs8)

And so, notice... "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion" (vs10) Again, this expression "daughter of Zion" is a common O.T. expression, and refers here to a -physical- Zion. The actual -people- if Jerusalem. The ones living in, and who will be gathered back to that land of Abraham's "sojourning" that was promised to them as an "everlasting possession". (Gen17:8) And just as God promised Abraham, "...and I will be their God"; here, where He is promising to crush Israel's oppressors, He promises that He "...will come and I will dwell in your midst, says Jehovah". (vs10)

And then, notice that Israel will not be alone. "And many nations shall be joined to Jehovah in that day, and shall be My people.." (vs11) This expression "in that day" is one that repeats multitudinous times throughout the Scriptures... (132 times in the LITV). It refers to the time of the Day of the Lord. While the Day of the Lord, in a broad sense, actually covers a 3000 year span (Hos6:2), in the context of this passage, it is obviously referring here to the time just yet imminently ahead of us when Christ will judge the nations and then set up His kingdom. With satan bound in the "abyss" (Rev20:1-3) for a thousand years, the nations will not be under his constant assailments. Many will follow the Lord. They will be His people. And Christ will be dwelling amongst them; fulfilling the ancient Feast of Tabernacles. (14:16)

When Christ "[rises] out of His holy dwelling place" (vs13) to do all this, do we "cheer" Him on? Do we do as many apostate "churches" do when they clap (applaud) and "give God a hand"? "Yeah! Go! God! Go!?" No!! When God is to set about and do what He is promising, it will be such an awesome, fearsome day that the command is "Be silent, all flesh, before Jehovah". (vs13) When God brought Israel out of Egypt with a mighty outstretched arm, the dogs of Egypt were silent. (Ex11:7) Just before the final most horrendous judgments, John records that "...when He had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in Heaven.." (Rev8:1) before the trumpets started sounding. When all flesh sees God's power at work, all we can do is respond as Job did, "Behold, I am vile! What shall I answer You? I will put my hand to my mouth." (Job40:4) It is, after all, not our day... but the "Day of the Lord".

"But Jehovah is in His holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before Him" (Hab2:20)

Angel of Jehovah and the High Priest (Zechariah 3)

"And He showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of Jehovah, and satan standing at his right hand to accuse him." (vs1)

First of all, we should understand that this "Joshua" was a human -man-. The time frame of its writing was the return of Israel to rebuild in Jerusalem, and Joshua was high priest; and Zerubbabel, a descendant of David, was governor. (Hag1:1) Just so as not to be confused, this Joshua is not a metaphor for "Jesus Christ".

Also, we will see how this chapter contains split prophecies. Some of it was for -that- time, some was future and fulfilled later; and yet more is still to come.

Notice that satan is called "the accuser of our brothers" (Rev12:10) as he is cast out of Heaven. We have another recorded account of satan accusing before God, regarding Job. And here, the high priest Joshua is being accused before God.

Notice to Whom this accusation is made. The Angel of Jehovah. Who is this Angel? Throughout the O.T. there are many mentions of the "Angel of Jehovah". He appears to Hagar (Gen16) Abraham (Gen22) Moses (Ex3:2) Balaam and his donkey (Nu22) Samson's parents (Judg13) And notice the conclusion when they "knew that He was the Angel of Jehovah" (vs21), "Dying we shall die, because we have seen God" (vs22)

God tells Israel Who this Angel is, "Behold, I send an Angel before you, to keep you in the way...obey His voice. Do not provoke Him, for He will not pardon your transgressions. For MY NAME IS IN HIM." (Ex23:20-21) And when Samson's parents asked after His name He responds, "Why do you ask after My name in this way? Yea, it is Wonderful". (Judg13:18) One of the names of Jesus Christ is "Wonderful" (Is9:6) We are told that when the "Word was made flesh, we BEHELD His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.." (Jn1:14) Jesus is the visible "express image of [God's] essence"(Heb1:3) Jesus said, "he who has seen Me has seen the Father.." (Jn14:9)

So, notice how Jesus (the Angel of Jehovah) responds to satan. "And Jehovah said to satan, May Jehovah rebuke you, Satan!" (Zech3:2) Now, if we were to read this merely at face value, without understanding, we might be tempted to scoff at Scripture as the unregenerates do. After all, if God is talking to satan, why would He not just say, "-I rebuke you"? Because "the Word was God". (Jn1:1) God the Father and God the Son, are co-equally the I AM. The eternally existing One. Thus, they both have the designation, "Jehovah". So, Jesus is talking to satan

and saying, "The Father rebukes you". We know that the Angel of Jehovah is Christ, and Christ is Jehovah, because it labels the same individual; first, as "Angel of Jehovah"; and next, as "Jehovah". But the Angel of Jehovah does not take it upon Himself to rebuke satan. He puts that in the Father's hand. As we know the chain-of-command... God -> Christ -> man -> woman. (1Cor11:3) When Christ was on earth He said, "I do the things pleasing to Him always" (Jn8:29) And ultimately, after Christ has fulfilled all the things that have been given into His hands, He will turn all back over to the Father "so that God may be all things in all". (1Cor15:28b)

Now... if Jesus Christ, Himself, the Angel of Jehovah, did not rebuke satan personally... WHY IS IT that so many so-called "christians" are taking it upon themselves to "rebuke the devil"?? Even Michael, the chief of the angels, would not rebuke satan directly, but uses similar words, "Let the Lord rebuke you". (Jude9) We are told to "resist the devil and he will flee" (Jas4:7), but we are never given authority to rebuke him. Yes, in due time we will "judge angels" (1Cor6:3), but that is not during "this life". That is yet future. "But what things they do not know, they speak evil of these...they are corrupted.." (Jude10) We are not greater than our Master. (Jn15:20)

In this vision they get Joshua set up with ceremonial robes and a turban on his head. (vs4-5) He is cleansed. Now, while this passage refers to Joshua 'then', we also know that the coming purifying is for the "sons of Levi" (Mal3:3), the priestly tribe. In order that they can offer offerings in "righteousness to Jehovah". And notice the "charge" given to Joshua:

"If you will walk in My ways, and if you will keep My charge, then you shall also judge My house and shall also keep My courts, and I will give you places to walk among these who stand by." (vs7) Notice the requirements for "success" before God. Keeping God's commands and being faithful. He is not charged with going out and "fund raising", building programs, and all sorts of other things. His primary duty is to obey God, and follow His commandments. Jesus taught, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness..." (Mt6:33) and then, God will see to the physical things. This is the charge of God's servants, to "be found FAITHFUL" (1Cor4:2) The duty of the servant whom God has set over His household is to "give them food in due season". The one thus occupied is called "blessed". (Mt24:45-46)

Today we have a dearth of faithful shepherds. "Woe" is pronounced on them. (Jer23:1) They have been destroying and scattering the sheep. But God has "the remnant of [His] flock" (vs3). And He has (and will) set up "shepherds over them who will feed them.." (vs4) There are a few here and there who are being faithful to God's Word. If there is a group meeting that has an elder over them, his duty is not to "lead in worship songs". No. "Feed the flock of God among you..." (1Pet5:2)

Where does spiritual food come from? God's Word. "Your words were found and I ate them; and Your Word was to me the joy and gladness of my heart. For I am called by Your name, O Jehovah, God of Hosts."(Jer15:16)

Now... back to the Angel of Jehovah. This 'charge' that is given to Joshua... Where does it come from? Who gives him the exhortation?

Notice it says, "The Angel of Jehovah charged Joshua saying..." (vs6) So, it would seem that the Angel of Jehovah, Jesus Christ, is exhorting him... Right? Well, what does he exhort?

"So says Jehovah of Hosts..." (vs7) Isn't this incredible! Jesus is saying to Joshua, 'The Father says...'

Well, I thought that Jesus claimed, "All authority is given to Me in Heaven and in earth" (Mt28:18)? And as Jesus taught, He would say, You have heard in the ancient Law, Blah, blah, blah... "But I say to you..." (Mt5:22, etc.)

Yes... due to Jesus' humility in taking on the sin of the world, "..God has highly exalted Him, and has given Him a name which is above every name.." (Phil2:9) But notice that this name is not one He usurped upon Himself. (vs6) It says the Father exalted Him. Obviously, the one with authority to exalt is greater than the one being exalted; just like the builder has more honor than the house. (Heb3:3) And even though He has been exalted, He is still under the Father. He is not the Father. He sits at the Father's "right hand". (Heb1:13) And just as Jesus will turn all authority back to the Father (1Cor15:28), here in Zechariah we see Jesus being subject to the Father. Jesus does not speak to Joshua, 'These are -My- words'. No. 'This is the Word of Jehovah of Hosts'. Even when Jesus was saying on earth, "But I say unto you...", He was doing so -under- the authority of the Father. "..I do nothing of Myself, but as My Father has taught Me, I speak these things...I speak what I have seen with My Father...whatever I speak, even as the Father said to Me, so I speak...the words that I speak to you I do not speak of Myself..." (Jn8:28,38; 12:50; 14:10)

And so, too, anybody who claims to be proclaiming God's Word had BETTER BE doing so with the message, "So says the Lord Jehovah" (Eze2:4) Anybody who would be God's messenger had BETTER BE God's ..MESSENGER... A messenger does not carry his own ideas and thoughts. He carries what one person is saying -to- another person. The messenger's own thoughts don't matter. Unfortunately today, there are many messengers, but God says, "The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I did not send them and I have not commanded them, nor did I speak to them. They prophesy to you a false vision, and a worthless divination, and the deceit of their heart." (Jer14:14)

But there is coming a day... "In THAT day, says Jehovah of Hosts..." (vs10) He is going to send "the Branch". He also speaks of "one stone" in which are "seven eyes". (vs9) Jesus spoke of Himself as the "Vine" (Jn15:1) In Nebuchadnezzar's vision a few years prior to this there was the large stone "cut..without hands" that crushes the kingdoms (Dan2), we know this stone is speaking of Christ, as He is "King of kings, and Lord of lords" (Rev19:11-16) when "the kingdoms of this world have become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ" (Rev11:15) Notice that the Lamb (1Pt1:19) that stands before the Throne is said to have "seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, having been sent out into all the earth." (Rev5:6b)

In the O.T. when the priest offered sacrifices and sprinkled blood, it was for the purpose of "bearing the iniquity" (Ex28:38, Num18:1), something they did continually, but which could never really take away sin. (Heb10:1-4) So, while Joshua was being cleansed to serve as high priest at the time this was written, In 'That Day' the High Priest Jesus Christ (Heb9:11) will come personally, and He will "remove the iniquity of that land IN ONE DAY" (vs9) It will be a "new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah", the -physical- northern and southern kingdoms of Israel. He will write His laws "in their hearts". (Jer31:31-34) God is going to simply take them, and make them righteous "in one day".

We know God is talking about -physical- Israel, again, because He speaks of their subsequent living in peace, "under the [physical] vine and under the [physical] fig tree." (vs10) He promises to cleanse them -spiritually- and make them "righteous". But we know He is talking about Israel, not "spiritual Israel, the Church", because He references His promises with their -PHYSICAL- living environment.

"And so all Israel SHALL BE saved; as it has been written, "There shall come out of Zion [physical Jerusalem] the Deliverer, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom11:26) The "church" is never likened to "Jacob". The Church is the "righteousness of God.." (2Cor5:21) Jacob was always the disobedient 'supplanter'.

The Angel of Jehovah, Jehovah... with the message from Jehovah.

Temple Rebuilt (*Zechariah 6*)

So says Jehovah of Hosts, saying, Behold! The Man whose name is THE BRANCH! And He shall spring up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of Jehovah. Even He shall build the temple of Jehovah; and He shall bear the majesty, and shall sit and rule on His throne. And He shall be a priest on His throne...and the distant ones shall come and build in the temple of Jehovah." (Zech6:12-13,15)

"And the Lord whom you are seeking shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Angel of the Covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He comes, says Jehovah of Hosts. But who can endure the day of His coming? And who will stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap." (Mal3:1-2)

"..and behold, a man... and a line of flax in his hand and, a measuring reed.." (Ez40:3) "And a reed like a rod was given to me. And the angel stood, saying, Rise up and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and those who worship in it." (Rev11:1)

With these last terms, "measuring", we know that an actual -physical- temple will be built in Jerusalem. Many Bible scholars believe and teach that the temple in Jerusalem must/will be built prior to the time of Wrath, the 70th week. They point to Dan9:27 where the one who "confirms a covenant" for seven years, in the middle of that time "enters the temple" [they say] to "cause the sacrifice and the offering to cease". However, that passage doesn't mention the "temple". They assume it, because they equate "temple" with "sacrifice".

In that verse KJV uses the word "overspreading". LITV/NKJV uses "wing". And MKJV uses "corner". The Hebrew word carries definitions: wing, extremity, border, corner. Now, in the context of it being a sacrifice, the LITV/MKJV have added italicized words "of the altar" "..wing/corner of the altar". Now... it's a bit hard to imagine how he will do something abominable to merely the "corner" of the altar, unless, as we observed a few months ago in a FigLeaf, that for the -morning- sacrifice, and -evening- offering to be offered, the temple -building- is not necessary. All they need is a -stone- that has not had "any iron tool" wielded on it. (Deu27:5) And if such a context is correct, the MKJV's use of "corner" might be the most accurate. And instead of adding "of the altar", perhaps it should read, "corner [stone]"..? Which, by the way, the Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful movement has been attempting to do.

Notice that the "food offering" was made, "half of it in the morning and half of it at night" (Lev6:20) And notice that the "offering in righteousness to Jehovah" when the "sons of Levi" are purified, is the "food offering". (Mal3:3-4)

This little bit of introduction is offered to suggest that perhaps it is not necessary for the temple to be built, yet, for the 70th week to commence and become fulfilled..? As we now investigate, briefly, what the Word says about the next temple, we might come away thinking there are contradictions. Some Scriptures seem to indicate that the next temple is in place during Wrath, but others seem to indicate that it is not built until -after- Wrath, when Christ has come and is ruling. This dissertation will not seek to answer the question once-and-for-all. We will just observe what Scripture says, and in a couple of places suggest some possibilities. This is not a critical Salvation doctrine, whose understanding is necessary to get us to Heaven. As the coming days and years progress, the truth of it all will become clearly manifest.

Notice that our opening passage says that "He shall build the temple of Jehovah". (6:12) If we jump ahead to 8:7-9, it appears that the laying of the foundation (vs11) occurs in the context of when "they shall be My people, and I will be their God". (vs8) Which is what the result of the Day of Wrath is. (Jer31:31-34, Mal3:3, etc) And now they are in peace, and the rest of the remnant are coming in to Israel/Jerusalem.

"And I will shake all the nations; and the desire of all nations shall come...the silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine...the glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former." (Hag2:7-9) Now, we know Haggai is not speaking of the 2nd temple, because many of the people wept when they saw how much -less- it was, than Solomon's temple. (Ez3:12) We know that -after- the time of Wrath, the gold and silver "shall be gathered" into Israel. (Zech14:14)

When Herod the Great rebuilt the 2nd temple, it took 46 years to build. (Jn2:20) Solomon's temple took seven years to build (1Kg6:38); however, not without much design work and pre-planning and preparation by his father David. (2Chr22:1-5) It certainly doesn't seem to me that there is the kind of preparations in place, yet, for a temple to be built, grander than Solomon's. And even if they did build a temple, what would happen to it when those huge earthquakes come, like the one that splits the Mount of Olives in two. (Zech14:4)

The passage says, "He shall build..." (6:12) And when He comes, He is going to "sit and rule". In the same time context, God asks, "Heaven is My throne, and earth My footstool. Where, then, is the house that you build for Me? And where is the place of My rest?" (Is66:1) There is another interesting statement, "Who has heard a thing like this? ..will the earth be brought forth in one day? Or will a nation be born at once?" (Is66:6-9)

And then, also notice, after Ezekiel is made to see the dimensions of new the temple, he is told, "This gate shall be shut; it shall not be

opened, and no man shall enter in by it. Because Jehovah, the God of Israel, has entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut. It is for the ruler; the ruler shall sit in it..." (Eze44:2-3) This is the east gate. And notice when Jesus returns, He says, "For as the lightning comes out of the east and shines even to the west, so also will be the coming of the Son of Man." (Mt24:27) Notice how the image of lightning coincides with Him "springing" out of His place (Zech6:12) and "suddenly" coming to His temple. (Mal3:1)

The question was asked, is the earth made in a day? Well, from Genesis, we know that it was. Now, if THE BRANCH is going to -build- the temple, but when He comes, He comes -to- His temple... how does it get there? When God spoke to Zerubbabel, the encouragement for getting the work done was "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, says Jehovah of Hosts" (Zech4:6)

Is it possible that a fantastic 'miracle' will happen in establishing the next temple? Is it possible that God will have built the temple, and will suddenly place it on its location just as Jesus Christ is about to return to earth? It would not be the first time God had done such a thing... remember that the first tablets of the Law were engraved by God's "finger". (Ex31:18) If God is miraculously giving Israel a new heart (Jer31:31-34) "in one day" (Is66:8, Zech3:9), there is no reason why He couldn't also establish the new temple instantly. In fact, if it is His rule, somehow a man-made temple would not seem to be adequate for His glory.

Now, on the flip-side of this is the possibility that the passage means that He will come -to- "where the temple will be built", and as He establishes His rule, that He will also begin building the temple at that time.

So... what about the couple of passages that seem to indicate 'man' building the temple?

"And the distant ones shall come and build in the temple of Jehovah" (Zech6:15a) Notice carefully the little word (the NKJV leaves out), "in". The perVersions leave it out, too. Although, the margin of the NASB says, "Lit 'in'." That tiny little word can make all the difference in the world, between man being the builders of the temple; or building -in- the temple. If the temple is already in place, and "distant ones" are coming, perhaps the word "build" means something else in this context? The word "build" can mean, to construct. But it can also mean, "establish, cause to continue, restore, make permanent"

Notice that it will be a requirement when Christ is ruling, that "everyone who is left of all the nations..shall go up from year to year to worship the King.." (Zech14:16) And those who don't, will have drought..no rain. (vs17) In those days the whole "earth shall be full

of the knowledge of Jehovah.." (Is11:9) "And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house of the God of Jacob. And He will teach us from His ways, and we will walk in His paths. For the law shall go forth out of Zion, and the Word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." (Mic4:2) What "builds/establishes" the Lord's rule better than -everybody- coming to worship? And where do they come to worship? "in" the temple. "Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it [set it up] and establish it [build it up and make it continue].." (Is9:7 -kjv)

And on the other hand, if Christ begins building the temple after He comes, His "building" of it might be the same way Solomon "built" the temple... where Christ is the Ruler, and He commands men to build it. There were thousands of people involved in building, but Solomon was 'over' the project, thus, it was said that he "built" it. (1Kg6:1)

Then, there is Rev11:1-2. In his vision John is instructed to "measure the temple of God.." This is similar to Ezekiel's vision where the temple area is all measured out, and details given. (Ez40-43) But does it necessarily mean the temple is standing during the time of Wrath? We must remember that Revelation contains both history and prophecy. And we also know that prophecy is often sandwiched into little nooks and crannies. For instance, where God is talking about Israel, in mid-sentence is the little bit, "..and called My Son out of Egypt.." (Hos11:1) We know it speaks of how God brought Israel out of Egypt, but we are also told it is prophetic of Joseph and Mary taking baby Jesus into Egypt away from Herod's threats. (Mt2:15) Thus, considering everything else we have seen, is it possible that little bit is tucked in there as a reminder of the future, even though for "forty-two months" the "court..outside the temple" is "trampled" by the gentiles? He is only told to "measure" it, like in Ezekiel's vision; but it doesn't say that anything 'happens' in the temple. In other words, possibly, as though to say, "See where the temple is going to be, but UNTIL THEN, the gentiles will be in control for a short period of time" ..??

And finally, there is the one "who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, setting himself forth, that he is God." (2Th2:4) The trouble with taking that verse by itself, is that it removes the verse from its context. It is part of the sentence which begins in vs3, speaking of the "falling away", or apostasy.

If the context is speaking of the apostasy, then, perhaps this "temple" is the "church"? The Believer is the "temple of the living God" (2Cor6:16) Our body is "a temple of the Holy Spirit". (1Cor6:19) Even Jesus spoke of the "temple of His body". (Jn2:21)

What do we see today? "..signs and lying wonders" (vs9) The apostasy

has taken it upon themselves to have dreams, visions and prophesies of "new things" which are not in the Scriptures "once delivered" (Jude3) They say that God's power is tied in to their "prayer". They "release God's power" through prayer. In actuality, such boasting makes them like little gods. They presume to usurp God's sovereignty by doling out His power. And they busily "rebuke the devil"... something that even Jesus Christ, the Angel of Jehovah, did not do. (Zech3:2) Their 'ruler' has not yet been "revealed" (2Th2:8) because the Church and its resident Holy Spirit are not yet "out of the midst" (vs7). But this apostasy (falling away) is already in full-swing. So, it is quite possible that this "temple" is not the one Ezekiel and John "measured" in Jerusalem.

As Stephen is about to be the first Christian martyr, he reminds the Jewish leadership of Solomon's temple, but that "the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands.." (Acts7:47-48) While they had humanly built temples in the O.T., they were also keeping a Law that was etched in stone, whose heart was fulfilled in evidence with human efforts. When Christ comes again, -HE- is going to -implant- Israel with a "new heart" (Jer31:33) It will be a "new covenant", not like the old one. It would only seem to make sense that the temple that goes along with that new covenant would be a new kind of temple. If He implants them with new hearts, He can also cause the new -physical- temple to appear.

So, it should become obvious that there are many different ways that these Scriptures can be seen at this time. And until Christ comes and fulfills what has been written, it would be fool-hardy to proclaim certainties about things where there are questions.

However, there are some certainties that we can know now. There -will- be a new temple. And Christ will build it, and rule from it. And it will be the place to which the nations of the world stream to worship and learn God's laws.

There is "the vengeance of Jehovah our God, the vengeance of His temple...come and let us declare in Zion the work of Jehovah our God... because it is the vengeance of Jehovah, the vengeance of His temple." (Jer50:28, 51:11)

God is working a work. And He spoke of it in the past as though it were already past tense. "I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury... I have returned to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth, and the mountain of Jehovah of Hosts, the Holy Mountain" (Zech8:2-3)

"And many nations shall come and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, and to the house [temple] of the God of Jacob. And

He will teach us from His ways, and we will walk in His paths. For the law shall go forth out of Zion, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem." (Mic4:2)

See Also Addendum:

Why is the new Temple Necessary?

The Temple is Not Necessary

They Called, I Did Not Listen (Zechariah 7)

Speak to all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months, even those seventy years, did you truly fast to Me, even to Me? And when you ate, and when you drank, was it not for those eating, and for those drinking? Are not these the words which Jehovah proclaimed by the former prophets...? (vs5-7)

The message of this lesson is simple, plain, and direct. What was said then to the "people of the land" and "priests", today is the message to the 'congregations' and 'pastors'.

Judah has been in exile for 70 years. Apparently many of them have been maintaining their worship rituals. But God says, essentially, Were you really worshipping Me? Were you not, rather, satisfying your own pleasures? To the carnal assembly Paul wrote, "Therefore when you come together into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry, and another drunken...do you despise the church of God, and shame those who do not have? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? I do not praise you!" (1Cor11:20-22) This is the same "church" that had problems with charismania. ch12,14 Today's "church" is just like this. Their "worship" is for self-indulgence. They do not worship God. They seek "experiential" -feelings-.

Before the exile into Babylon God had sent His prophets, "...rising early and sending.." (2Ch36:15) but the people "...despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets until the wrath of Jehovah went up against His people, until there was no healing." (vs16) Even after the exile, the remnant that was left in the land rebelled and went to Egypt, and rebelled against God's Words through Jeremiah, "As for the word that you have spoken to us in the name of Jehovah, we will not listen to you. But we will certainly do whatever thing goes out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings to her, as we have done, we and our fathers, our kings, and our rulers," (Jer44:16-17) And Ezekiel was sent to those in exile, "Turn [repent], Turn [repent], from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?" (Eze33:11)

Zechariah summarizes, "But they refused to listen, and gave a stubborn shoulder, and they made their ears heavy from hearing. And they made their heart adamant from hearing the Law and the Words which Jehovah of Hosts has sent by the former prophets through His Spirit. And great wrath was from Jehovah of Hosts." (Zec7:11-12)

This is what we have today. You readers who know the Lord realize this is not written to you. Sorry that we have to say these kinds of things

so often. I know you would like more things to help you "grow" in the Lord. But I know you have God's Word, and we will soon be in our Savior's presence. In these days, this message from the Lord is necessary, because the time is short. There may yet be a few hold-outs whose hearts God knows, who -may- be softened to humble themselves before Him. While you are growing as you read God's Word, the rebellious ones typically do not read God's Word. They look to man, because they have itching ears wanting "tickling". (2Tm4:3) So, if they are reading these writings, the message to them from God is God's Word, as is appropriate to their spiritual blight. These messages are, "Thus says the Lord".

Notice that vs12b speaks of "great wrath from Jehovah of Hosts". This wrath was aimed at those with the -label- of "Israel". Those who are -nominally- (by name) Israel. But we must remember that "...not all those of Israel are Israel". (Rom9:6) Those that are not of Israel are unregenerate. When they were turning a deaf ear to God, by definition, they were demonstrating ungodliness. And we know that "...the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold [suppress] the truth in unrighteousness." (Rom1:18) Much of the coming Wrath of God is going to be aimed squarely at what carries the label, "the church".

The pretend "christians" today are just like Israel was. They pretend to "worship" God, but they do not do so according to God's Word. They rely on their experiences that make them "feel" good. And when God's present-day prophets repeatedly expose their works of darkness, rather than heeding God's clear Word, they blaspheme and harden their hearts.

Notice God's attitude, as a result: "And it will be, just as He called, and they did not listen; so they called, and I did not listen, says Jehovah of Hosts." (vs13)

This message to you is with URGENCY!! You who continually rebel, the time is close-at-hand when the Lord is going to "rise up and..shut the door". And if your heart was still hardened at that time, when reality finally hits you between the eyes, you will "begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us. And answering, He will say to you, I do not know you, from where you are." (Lk13:25) As you try to persuade Him that you are -REALLY- a "Christian" you will try to -remind- Him how you had been "spirit-filled" and had prophesied and performed all sorts of wonderful deeds of miracles and worshipped "in His name". And He is going to declare [formally, officially, announce authoritatively, emphatically]...

"I NEVER KNEW YOU!
DEPART FROM ME, [YOU] WORKING LAWLESSNESS" (Mt7:22-23)

But Looooord!!! Whyyyyyy???

Well, how many times did you hear God's warnings to you to REPENT? But you refused to hear? To God's messengers you retorted, "How DARE you accuse me!?! " ..or.. "Just who do you think you are, telling me I'm not saved? ...that I'm in error?!?"

And it will be...

"..just as He [Holy Spirit -vs12] called, and [you] did not listen; so [you will call], and I [will not] listen, says Jehovah of Hosts" (vs13)

God returns to Zion in Truth (Zechariah 8)

"So says Jehovah of Hosts: I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury. So says Jehovah: I have returned to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth, and the mountain of Jehovah of Hosts, the holy mountain." (vs2-3)

It really amazes me at times... the militancy with which some people who label themselves as "Christian" will go to great lengths to discredit Israel. They do not receive Romans ch 9-11. They apparently have not read much of the O.T. While people become angry with me and unsubscribe over other things like tongues, KJV-only-ism, OSAS, etc. (those I have come to expect), I have been amazed at the ANGER of some who, otherwise seem to be "solid Christians" and seem to have otherwise moral conservative values. When confronted with God's Word which says that Israel (the nation) will be restored in God's plan, they go ballistic. They -INSIST- that "the Church" now is Israel. Anything prophesied about Israel, they insist is written to the Church. And it almost seems, at times, that this doctrine is more important to them than anything else. And this baffles me. How can a person who names the name of Christ, be angry at the concept of God restoring Israel? If a person claims to love Christ, would they not also love those whom Christ loves? Perhaps they don't truly love Christ? (1Jn3:14)

Well, before we get into this passage, notice that there is a -country- over in the middle east called, "Israel". They don't seem to notice that while the Palestinians are attempting to "march to Jerusalem", they are fulfilling God's Word regarding Jerusalem being "a cup of trembling to all the peoples all around..." (12:2) Thing is, just as the Palestinians refuse to label "Israel" on their maps, Christendom has been doing the same thing for years, too. If you have a Bible with maps in the back, you will notice that most of them will label things like "PALESTINE in the time of Christ". Not "Israel". What the Palestinians are doing is nothing new. Christendom has been doing it for centuries.

Notice the language God uses: "There shall yet be old men and old women living in the streets of Jerusalem.." (vs4) And again, "...the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets." (vs5) These are actual -people-. Old people. Children people. And notice where these -people- are coming from... from the "east" and from the west. (vs7) From all the places to which they had been scattered, God will collect them up and bring them into the land with a -physical- "Jerusalem" with -physical- streets. This is not 'spiritual' Jerusalem, the Church.

A foundation is going to be laid, and a temple will be built. (vs9) If

this was the Church, this passage would not be speaking in future tense, because the Foundation of the Church has -already- been laid, Jesus Christ. (1Cor3:11)

And notice the verbage regarding planting, harvesting and the necessary moisture to make it grow. (vs12) God is going to bless -physical- Israel, living in their land, in Jerusalem... that physical geographic location.

Now... HOW is Israel going to be established? In TRUTH. This is the opposite of Jacob, the supplanter. This will be a rule with Jesus Christ. Again, we know this is not those who call themselves "the Church" because that body of people is not possessed with Truth. Statistics show that the divorce rate is highest amongst church people. They are not being faithful (truthful) to their vows. How many pastors and leaders are caught in scandal? The underlying cause is dishonesty. Who is the father of lies? Satan. (Jn8:44) Most of what is called "the Church" ...is NOT.

When Christ returns to Zion, Jerusalem will be "a city of truth". (vs3) As His rule is established, the rule of law will be, "each man speak the truth to his neighbor. Judge with truth and justice. (vs16) When they worship at their Feasts, they will "love truth and peace". (vs19b)

Why will this be so? What is Jesus' characteristic? When Israel was led by Moses, they were given the Law. "...but grace and TRUTH came through Jesus Christ.." (Jn1:17) It came -thru- Christ because, as Jesus said, "I AM...TRUTH" (Jn14:6)

When face-to-face with Jesus, Pilate asked, "what is truth?" (Jn18:38) Jesus had described it as "To this end I was born, and for this cause I came into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." (vs37) What is truth? Jesus with whom you [Pilate] were conversing.

And so, a new thing will exist in Israel, out of Jerusalem. A flowing out of Truth. And what will be the result? People from all nations will latch themselves onto Jews and follow them to the "face of Jehovah" (vs21-23) Rather than being a nation that other people desire to destroy, Israel will be an outpouring of God's blessing, bringing people to a knowledge of the Lord. How? Through Truth.

Why was Clinton not able to make peace in the middle east? He is not a man of truth? Everything about his life is one-big-lie. Gore is no better... anytime he opens his mouth, based on the track record, one must wonder if he is telling the truth, or not. Jesus said, "Let your word be Yes, Yes; No, No. For whatever is more than these is from evil" (Mt5:37)

Why does the Church not grow like it did in Acts? The "church" has been busy conning people. Manipulating, devising schemes and programs to get big crowds. Pretending to give the world some of its own entertainment, with the hopes of "slipping in" the Gospel while they have them thus-lured. Just like lying salesmen! They don't preach the whole Gospel of repentance; after all, we don't want to chase them away. People make "decisions", but are not saved. They were lied to when they were conned into coming to the meetings. They were lied to when they were not given the complete Gospel. And they were lied to when they were told that they were now "Christians".

Question: How does lying beget truth?? The same way wolves beget lambs. THEY DON'T!!

In that day the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth, "as the waters cover the sea" (Hab2:14) What does the world need to see in Christ's Believers? "..Christ IN YOU, the hope of glory.." (Col1:27) If they see Christ, what do they see...?

T-R-U-T-H

In That Day (Zechariah 12 & 13)

"The burden of the Word of Jehovah for Israel, says Jehovah, who stretches forth the heavens, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man in his midst. Behold! I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all the peoples all around, and it shall also be against Judah in the siege against Jerusalem." (vs1-2)

Chapters 9-11 talk about a lot of different things. They speak of the nations around Israel. And tucked in there are prophecies which were fulfilled when Christ came to earth the first time. "...your King comes to you..meek and riding on a donkey, even on a colt, the son of a donkey" (9:9) And again, "...so they weighed My price thirty pieces of silver. And I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of Jehovah." (~11:12-13) But now in ch12, the book concentrates on the very last events for Israel. While the previous chapters have contained a combination of 'current' events of the days in which they were proclaimed, prophetic events which have now been fulfilled, as well as some as-yet future events; now we are getting down to the nitty gritty of future prophecy REGARDING ISRAEL. As we have observed from time to time the expression "in that day", we will find a heavy concentration of that phrase in this next section.

As we see how God proclaims the work He will accomplish, notice how He introduces Himself. He is Jehovah, the 'God Who exists', Who created the heavens and the earth and put man on it and gave man life. (vs1) How is God going to prove Himself? In many ways. One thing man scoffs at God about is the authenticity of the Scriptures. Many taunt that Scriptural accounts of Noah and the flood is mere 'legend'. Well, there is currently renewed interest, with the aid of satellite photography, in a structure located near the 17,000 ft summit of Mt.Ararat. It was first "discovered" in 1949 by the US Air Force, and all that data has been "classified". There have been various attempts to get to it. If it wasn't located on the border between Turkey and Iran and the politics of the region, perhaps a successful excavation would have happened. So, what do you suppose one of the results of "...every mountain and hill shall be made low" (Is40:4) will be? That which has been preserved for thousands of years in the cold, and out-of-reach of vandalism, will be brought down to -show- the world the truth. And you see God's sovereignty over global politics in "[ruling] in the kingdom of men, and [giving] it to whomever He will." (Dan4:25b) The political strife of the region has aided in preventing "free" people from accessing it, to subsequently destroy the 'evidence', until God says so in "That Day"

In addition, there have been recent discoveries in the Black Sea about 300 ft below the water surface of ancient civilizations. Houses and foundations. Of course, they speculate the find to be 7000 years old. But what they are seeing points them to a "flood". So, when "every

valley shall be exalted" (Is40:4), more evidence of the pre-deluvian civilization...? Proof of the authenticity of God's Word, Who "[declares] the end from the beginning" (Is46:10)

This is the Jehovah Who is speaking this Word for Israel.

In That Day: (12:3)

Jerusalem will become a "burdensome stone for all peoples". And it says "all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it". Are we not living "in that day" now! As warfare continues in Israel, and antisemitism expands and explodes world-wide wherever Jews live, Israel's 'friends' are abandoning her, the UN composes resolutions of condemnation against her for defending herself. The UN represents -all- the nations of the world. Leaders of the US, even, are beginning to lean in the direction of suggesting UN "peace keepers" to "protect" the Palestinians. What is the battle cry of the PA/PLO? "March to Jerusalem!" What did the pope and Arafat meet last spring about? The autonomy of Jerusalem. The PLO, UN and Vatican, all, want a -piece- of this city. They don't want God's people, Israel, to have it. They are plotting "together, against the LORD and against His anointed.." (Ps2:2)

In That Day: (12:4)

"I will strike every horse with terror, and his rider with madness..and every horse with blindness". Of course, back when this was written, they did not have computerized GPS guidance systems, radar, night vision technology. They did not have tanks or fighter jets. Their ultimate fighting 'machine' was horses and chariots. (Ps20:7a) So, it was written in the language of that day.

What do we see today? There is a growing unanimous concensus in the Arab world that "Israel must be destroyed". You won't see this from the liberal leftist media. And the Clinton administration is still operating in fantasy-land that a "peace" agreement is still possible. But the Arab mentality is one of UN-reason. They are single-mindedly, like a 'mad' attack dog, going for the jugular.

But notice what is going to happen to them. Their "horses" will lose their ability to "see". Satellite intelligence will be disabled. Guidance systems on those many rockets they want to fire at Israel will go bonkers. Ezek 38-39 give a picture of chaos amongst the attacking forces, with equipment malfunctioning, and them attacking each other.

And notice how the people of Israel will begin to trust the Lord. "..my strength in Jehovah of Hosts their God" (vs5) While the nations rely on their great technology, Israel will begin saying, "..but we will make mention in the name of Jehovah our God." (Ps20:7b)

In That Day: (12:6)

"..I will make the governors of Judah like a hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire among cut grain. And they shall devour all the peoples all around..." If I remember correctly, I think it was the 1967 war where Israel's forces totally demolished the air forces of the surrounding nations within a space of 45 minutes. The rate of accuracy of their missiles in hitting their targets was unprecedented in modern warfare. Was that "American technology"? Or was that God fighting for His people, "like the day He fought in the day of battle"? (Zech14:3)

In That Day: (12:7)

In many ways, Israel's plight is beginning to look rather formidable. The enemy from within is armed to-the-teeth. And the neighbors from the outside are making their plans, and rallying a consensus against Israel. So, as God promises victory for Israel, "...Jehovah shall defend around the people of Jerusalem.." Whoever is a weakling will be like David. And those who are strong, will be "like the Angel of Jehovah". Why..??

In That Day: (12:9)

"..I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." And why is this? What is the battle cry of the Arabs? "Allah Akbar" And as I read recently, it means more than merely "Allah is great". It means "Allah is great-ER-". The Arab world is so militant regarding Jerusalem and the Temple Mount because they are trying to prove a point... that Allah is "greater". They are greater than God's people, Israel. And their "god" is greater than the Most High.

The reason God has brought Israel back to the land is so that they "shall know that I am Jehovah.." (Eze20:42) As God works with Israel, it is "..for My name's sake.." (Eze20:44) That which God does with Israel is for His "name's sake that it should not be profaned in the eyes of the nations.." (Eze20:9) And when He is finished destroying them, "And I will not let them profane My holy name any more. And the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One in Israel."(Eze39:7)

[We'll come back to vs10-14 in the next lesson.]

In That Day: (13:1)

"..there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the people of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." "Living waters shall go out from Jerusalem.." (14:8) Two rivers will spring up from the temple area, and flow out. A torrent in which a person can swim. (Eze47:1-10) They will be healing waters. We already observed not long

ago how there is a spring of water which has sprung to life in recent months under the Temple Mount area.

We are living in the times preparatory for "in that day".

In That Day: (13:2)

"..I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, and they shall be remembered no more. And also I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land." And notice what will be the fate of any false prophet who seeks to do that which proliferates today: "..his father and his mother who gave him birth shall thrust him through when he prophesies.." (vs3)

Do you see what we keep proclaiming about the modern false prophets and their idolatrous manifestations? They are of "unclean spirits". In other words, "demons". That which passes for "great works of God" is of satan. And In That Day, all of that is going to be eradicated! No more!

In That Day: (13:4)

Those who have been used to engaging in such activity will "be ashamed" of their activities. In a recent Q/A we shared the note from someone who had been saved out of charismania, who was feeling "stupid" for their past in the "praise music" to which she used to "dance". These people will put away their "hairy garments" (that which made them APPEAR to be like prophets) by which they used to "deceive".

Dear Reader: note this well. These prophecies and manifestations are DECEPTION. They are NOT of God. God did not send them. "The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I did not send them and I have not commanded them, nor did I speak to them." They prophesy from the "deceit of their heart" (Jer14:14)

A recent taunting retort blasted VW for labelling charismania as being (as they were interpreting VW writings) -TOTALLY- corrupt... as having -NOTHING- good to it. EXACTLY! I couldn't have said it any better myself. It is impossible for a person to be a charismatic IN THEIR HEART OF HEARTS, and get to Heaven. (Mt7:21-23)

There is going to be a mass-exodus from the "churches". A lot of preachers and worship leaders are going to leave the 'ministry' and become "farmers". (vs5) They are going to realize that the large "PC" they -saw- in their 'vision' did not mean "Preach Christ" but rather, "Plant Corn". Praise be to God... Charismania will no longer exist!

In That Day.

Messiah and King (Zechariah 12 & 14)

When Christ returns, as He is destroying the nations surrounding Israel, He will also be doing a work in their hearts. It will be a time when the "sons of Levi" are "purified" (Mal3:3) 2/3 of Israel will be killed when all is said and done. (13:8) And God is going to bring that remaining "third..through the fire" to refine them. (vs9) Where they presently are not nationally seeking God's face, then, they will. "They shall call on My name, and I will answer them; I will say, It is My people; and they shall say, Jehovah is my God"

But notice what will happen in that process. When Christ returns, they will see the One Whom they, 2000 years previously, condemned to death as they shouted out "Crucify Him! ..let His blood be on us and on our children!" (Mt27:23,25) "They shall look on Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for his only son, and shall be bitter over Him, as the bitterness over the first-born" (12:10)

You know... God's ways are rather interesting. When my un-equal yoke left almost 10 years ago, I was at about the lowest point in my whole life. I was suffering utter despair, the likes of which I could not understand how the unregenerate can handle it. (Maybe that's why they drink and do drugs?? to drown it out!?) For as low as I was feeling (and I lost 15 lbs that first week), at least, I knew the Lord. But, while I was suffering from emotional marital rejection, the Lord was also doing a work in my life where my relationship with Him was concerned. At least, I had truly loved the Lord. But my heart was not perfect before Him. He needed to work on that. And He used the backdrop of spousal abandonment to get my attention.

Notice how He will work with Israel. Notice the circumstances that will be in place when they are in "bitterness" because of their hearts toward their Messiah. It will be in "the valley of Megiddo" (12:11) This will be the occasion where God gathers all the nations to pronounce judgment. This will be a gathering of "the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that day, the great day of God Almighty." (Rev16:14) And notice what is said of this day... "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision; for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision!" (Joel3:14)

While God is judging the world, such a horrendous battle that the "winepress is trodden" and the blood comes to the "horses bridles" (Rev14:20), God is using this seemingly ultimately hopeless scenario for Israel, completely surrounded with no hope, to turn their hearts back to Himself. And the One Who comes to deliver them, their Messiah: when He appears, they will suddenly recognize Him as the One they rejected 2000 years ago. Recall that it was at Peter's finger-pointing about "..this same Jesus WHOM YOU CRUCIFIED.." (Acts2:36) that the

people at Pentecost were "stabbed in the heart" (vs37). When Jesus comes again, they will recognize that it is Jesus "WHOM THEY CRUCIFIED". And they will again be "stabbed" in their hearts. They will be in humility and mourning and weeping. (Jas4:8-10)

Why will everybody be separated "apart" from family members? (12:12-14) Only speculation here... but, what happens when the battle becomes hopelessly intense? Wherever they were when the attack begins, there they are hiding. If they were to seek to "run" to join family members, they will get "picked off"... just like the chicken that gets run over while trying to cross the road to get back to the "safety" of home. So, they "stay put". Huddled in little corners, with everything around them thundering and shaking as the battle rages, and the earthquakes rumble.

So, here we have everybody, off by themselves... ALONE. -THIS- is PRECISELY where God speaks to the heart. Not the large gatherings of the multitudes that have just been entertained and hypnotized. When God assured Elijah that there were yet "seven thousand" who had not bowed to Baal, Elijah was "alone". (1Kg19:14) When my ex left... I was "alone". But I heard God's voice that night like I had never before heard it. He had my -full- attention!

Now, as God is getting Israel's attention in their hearts; notice that He "[goes] out" to "fight against those nations, like the day He fought in the day of battle" (14:3) As we have seen from other places, God destroys His enemies.

And as He comes, He comes -physically-...to the Mount of Olives. (14:4) Remember that this is what the angel promised the gazing disciples, "This same Jesus who is taken up from you into Heaven, will come in the way you have seen Him going into Heaven" (Acts1:11) And Jesus describes His return as "lightning comes out of the east and shines even to the west" (Mt24:27) He will return in a blaze of glory!

As He does so, the Mt of Olives will split in two, forming a large valley. Half of it moving north, and the other half, south. What sort of event will cause such a thing? "And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from the heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken" (Mt24:29) "And it will be in that day, there shall not be light; and glorious ones shall shrink. And it will be one day which shall be known to Jehovah, neither day nor night; but it will happen that at evening time it shall be light." (14:6-7)

We have considered this in the recent past. Likely such a cataclysmic astrological event as has not been imagined. There will be meteorites and/or asteroids falling to earth. Some sort of large planetoid body will come close enough to earth to cause gravitational interactions

which flex the earth's crust to "shake the heavens and the earth" (Is13:13) and this verse goes on to say "...the earth shall move out of its place, in the wrath of Jehovah of Hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger". Like we observed in another writing not long ago, put these two together, the earth "moves" out of its place, and the sun appears to "shrink" (14:6). We are looking at a flinging of the earth out of its present orbit farther away from the sun. And this event will mess up what man perceives as "day and night" (vs7). The clocks will have to be reset. Perhaps, even, new clocks will need to be designed to accommodate the new calendar?

But this will be the series of events during which the Lord returns to set up His kingdom, and destroy His enemies. And notice it says, "And Jehovah my God shall come, and all the saints with you." (14:5b)

Who are the saints? "...the saints and faithful brothers in Christ" (Col1:2) "...all the saints in Christ.." (Phil1:1) "...to the saints in Ephesus.." (Eph1:1) The saints are the Church. And then... "And the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised" (Mt27:52). This was the occasion of Jesus' resurrection; so these were O.T. saints. A "saint" is a "holy one". One who is "undefiled". In other words, a Believer. Believers are the "righteousness of God". (2Cor5:21) So, when Christ comes, and the saints "with" Him, this means the saints are -already- "with" Him, in order to be able to come at this time "with" Him. This is obviously NOT the occasion where the "dead in Christ rise first" and "we who are alive and remain" are "caught up together with them" (1Th4:16-17) That occasion has happened some time -PRIOR- to this one in Zech 14:5. Thus, it is obvious that the Rapture of the Church is NOT at this time called the "Second Coming". The Second Coming sees Jesus putting "His feet" (vs4) on the Mount of Olives. The Rapture sees the Believers being "caught up...in the clouds" to "meet the Lord". The Rapture is where we "meet" the Lord and for the first time see Him face to face. (1Jn3:2) Up until now we have only known Christ through the indwelling Holy Spirit. (Jn16:13,Rom8:9) Our Faith has been one of believing in Him whom we have "not seen" and yet, we "love". (1Pt1:8) As Jesus called those "blessed" who would believe, "who have not seen" Him. (Jn20:29) So... obviously, the "post-tribulation" view of the Rapture is in error, isn't it.

[Editor: And if you've noticed and wondered... many false teachers who proclaim this error were also saying that the Tribulation started on September 15,1993, which means it should have been over and the Lord should have come this past September. Since they missed that one 'big time', we can't trust them on this one, either. can we. Don't let them deceive you!]

It appears that the neutron bomb may likely see use in this final

battle. This is a bomb which leaves physical objects standing, but disintegrates the flesh off of living beings. Notice how Zechariah calls it a "plague". "Their flesh shall rot while they stand on their feet.." (14:12) And this will also be the same plague on animals. (vs15) There will be such devastation that it speaks in terms of, "And it shall be, everyone WHO IS LEFT of all the nations..." (vs16) As Jesus proclaimed, unless the days were shortened, "no flesh would be saved". In other words, if God didn't care about His people, Israel, His "elect", the ultimate "doom's day device" would wipe out all living things. They will likely actually be on the brink of that happening, but Christ will swoop in like lightning, and rescue His people.

And so, notice. For all the fighting the nations are doing regarding Jerusalem, see Who wins in the end. The Lord Jehovah. Islam proclaims "Allah Akbar" (Allah is greater). But God will prove Himself to be the "Most High". "And the nations shall know that I am Jehovah, the Holy One in Israel" (Eze39:7)

As Christ sets up and rules, the whole world will go to Jerusalem to worship. The final annual Jewish feast will be celebrated year by year, the Feast of Tabernacles (14:16), celebrating "God with us". And instead of IBM, GM, Acme, BMW, Microsoft being the company logos plastered all over on billboards, it will be "HOLY TO THE LORD".(14:20)

Notice how the book closes. "And in that day there shall no longer be a trader in the house of Jehovah of Hosts." (14:21) As Jesus chased the traders out with a whip, He quoted, "My house is a house of prayer" (Lk19:46) but it had become a "den of robbers".

In That Day it will be "...even them I will bring to My holy mount and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted on My altar, for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the peoples," (Is56:7)

"For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea." (Is11:9) "And Jehovah shall be King over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Jehovah, and His name shall be one." (14:9)

Amen!

Addendum:

Why is the new temple necessary? © 2000

QUESTION:

What would the significance be of Israel rebuilding the temple for the worship of God. Since God does not want that kind of worship, since the veil has been rent to signify that the dispensation for that kind of rudimentary worship is no longer meaningful, since type and shadow have been replaced by real worship in spirit and in truth?

ANSWER:

The short answer: I don't know.

After all, Paul says, "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness for everyone who believes" (Rom10:4) Jesus said, "I came...to fulfill the Law" (Mt5:17) And when Christ instituted the Lord's Supper, He proclaims His "blood of the -NEW- covenant" (Mt26:28) And thus, it is no longer necessary to go behind the veil yearly to sprinkle blood in the Holy of Holies. (Heb9-10)

However, there is also going to be a new covenant with Israel, not like the old one. God is going to write His Law on their hearts. It will not be necessary for them to teach each other to "know the Lord". (Jer31:31-34) This is obviously a different covenant than the one for the Church, because we, still, speak to one another to reason with people to 'know the Lord', to get them saved. The command today is to "repent" for the remission of sins. (Lk24:47) God is going to perform something special and new with Israel in that day. Thus, it would not be surprising that the worship ritual would also become revised.

While I don't know "why", we do know from Scripture that it -will- be so. For instance, Passover was given to Israel as "a law forever". (Ex12:14) And as Ezekiel is shown the plans for the new temple, he is also told how they will keep the annual feasts: Passover (Eze45:21, Atonement (45:25)

And then, for ALL NATIONS, it will be required to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. (Zech14:16-19) Now, of course, at that time the world will be living the fulfillment of Tabernacles, "God with us".

As Israel observed a -foreshadowing- of Christ's crucifixion in the O.T. when they observed Passover, is it possible that they will be celebrating it in -retrospection- during the Millennium? Remember that one of the features of Christ's second coming is that Israel will at long last recognize "Me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns for his only son..." (Zech12:10) While the Church (made of

believing Jews and Gentiles) remember Jesus' blood in the Lord's Supper, the national -entity- called "Israel" has not yet acknowledged their Messiah. So, it is a "New Covenant" that will be coming about for them.

I expect the details of what the temple worship will be will become manifest when Christ actually comes and has set up His rule from the temple in Jerusalem. Typically, God has not given out the details of a new era until that era arrived. I don't see why the details of the Millennium should be any different. We are given hints. We know there will be a temple. We know that present Believers will be reigning with Him during that time. (Rev20:4) But even those details we don't know. We have not yet stood before the "judgment seat of Christ" (Rom14:10) and we have not yet heard the Master's summation of our stewardship regarding the talents He gave us to work with. (Mt25, etc) The rewards and duties given to us then, will be based on our faithfulness now.

Temple Not Necessary (Ezra 3:3-6) © 2002

"And he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week. And in the middle of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the offering to cease. And on a corner will be abominations that cause horror, even until the end. And that which was decreed shall be poured out on the desolate." (Dan9:27)

This is one of the pivotal verses that people look at with regards to future prophecy. Jesus speaks of many things, and then says, "...when you see these things happening, know that it is near; at the doors!" (Mr13:29) And so, they carry that concept to Dan9:27, looking for indications that this passage is "near". When they see "sacrifice and offering", they automatically think in their minds, "Temple". So, they keep watching for signs that the temple will be rebuilt. If they see or hear of events that might suggest that the Dome of the Rock is about to be blown up, thus making way for the temple to be built there, they get excited. If the Temple Mount & Faithful group makes plans, and shares their desires to lay the corner stone, thus, ushering the possibility of starting to rebuild the temple, people get excited. They are looking for Christ's coming and the rapture, based on whatever 'progress' they think they see regarding the rebuilding of-the-temple.

I was reminded of something we have addressed in the past, as I was working my way through Ezra recently. Some of the exiles have returned to Jerusalem from Babylon, and notice: "Though fear had come upon them because of the people of those lands, they set the altar on its bases; and they offered burnt offerings on it to Jehovah, both the morning and evening burnt offerings." (Ezra3:3) Very similar circumstances which Israel finds itself in today. The enemy surrounding them, continually attacking them and making life miserable, so that the people were afraid. But they were performing the "morning and evening burnt offerings". That's the same offerings Dan9:27 indicates when it says, "sacrifice" and "offering". This was the 'daily' set of offerings. The "continual burnt offering", "day-by-day", "one..in the morning", and "the other..at twilight". (Ex29:38-42)

These exiles also, it goes on to say, kept the Feast of Booths, and did all the other offerings, and new moons, etc. (vs4-6) And then notice what vs6 says, "...although the foundation of the temple of Jehovah had not been laid."

Now, if the foundation hadn't yet been laid, obviously, the temple was not yet rebuilt, either.

Now, let's add to our proper prophetic understanding... "who" is going to build the next temple? This, too, we have addressed in the past: "Thus says Jehovah of Hosts, saying, Behold! The Man whose name

is THE BRANCH! And He shall spring up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of Jehovah. Even He shall build the temple of Jehovah; and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule on His throne. And He shall be a priest on His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between the two of them." (Zech6:12-13)

No, the Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful group will not be building it. No, we do not need to wait for the Al Aksa mosque to be bombed. The temple will not be rebuilt until Christ comes to establish His kingdom.

So, while we are busy -seeing- "all these things", in anticipation of the Lord's coming for the resurrection and rapture of the Church, let's be sure we are looking for the -right- things. If we continue on through, on this earth, to the time we see the temple being rebuild, it means we missed out. Such a person was not saved; was not a Christian. The Christian will not see the building of the temple during this 'present' sojourn on this earth. We will be first meeting the Lord "in the air" on the occasion of the "shouted command" and the "voice of the archangel" and the "trumpet of God". (1Th4:16)

Amen!