

Restoration of Israel

Zechariah 10

By Scott Huckaby

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Zech 10:1-12

Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain.

The Lord will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone.

² *For the idols speak delusion; the diviners envision lies, and tell false dreams; They comfort in vain.*

Therefore the people wend their way like sheep;

They are in trouble because there is no shepherd.

³ *"My anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the goatherds. For the Lord of hosts will visit His flock, the house of Judah, and will make them as His royal horse in the battle.*

⁴ *From him comes the cornerstone, from him the tent peg, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler together.*

⁵ *They shall be like mighty men, who tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle.*

They shall fight because the Lord is with them,

And the riders on horses shall be put to shame.

⁶ *"I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph. I will bring them back, because I have mercy on them. They shall be as though I had not cast them aside; For I am the Lord their God, and I will hear them.*

⁷ *Those of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as if with wine. Yes, their children shall see it and be glad; Their heart shall rejoice in the Lord.*

⁸ *I will whistle for them and gather them, for I will redeem them; and they shall increase as they once increased.*

⁹ *"I will sow them among the peoples, and they shall remember Me in far countries; They shall live, together with their children, and they shall return.*

¹⁰ *I will also bring them back from the land of Egypt, And gather them from Assyria. I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon, until no more room is found for them.*

¹¹ *He shall pass through the sea with affliction, and strike the waves of the sea: All the depths of the River shall dry up. Then the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, And the scepter of Egypt shall depart.*

¹² *"So I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in His name," says the Lord.*

v1 – For what did Zechariah say that Israel should pray?

Ask the LORD for rain in the time of the latter rain:

Ancient Israel had no irrigation system, and relied on rain to water their crops. In a time of drought, nothing grew - so Israel relied on both the former rain (falling in autumn) and the latter rain (falling in spring).

How would God respond to Israel's prayer for rain?

He will give them showers of rain: The LORD challenges His people saying, "Be bold enough to ask Me, and I will answer your prayer. I will provide what only I can provide."

- The caveat to this is for them to ask in the right season.

Could this prayer for rain in the season of rain be speaking of something other than physical rain?

The language here reminds us of Joel speaking of the restoration of Israel...

Joel 2:23, 28 – *He has given you the former rain faithfully, and He will cause the rain to come down for you— The former rain, and the latter rain in the first month... And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh*

Peter quoted Joel 2 as an explanation of what had happened at Pentecost, it was God pouring out His Spirit in the former rain. The latter rain represented the pouring out of God's Spirit when Israel is restored.

What is the principle behind the promise of "grass in the field for everyone"?

In man's ideas of equality, everyone ends up equally poor. God's idea of equality means abundance for everyone. It is interesting to note that in our day even man's view of equality is being re-branded as equity...

- Equality is no longer good enough, we should take from those classes of people considered to be oppressors and given to those classes of people considered to be the oppressed. Make no mistake, Critical Race Theory is not of God, it is of the devil who seeks to stir up racial animosity.

v2 – What do the idols and diviners do?

For the idols speak delusion; the diviners envision lies, and tell false dreams; they comfort in vain: The ancient Hebrew word for idols here is teraphim, meaning common household idols. Diviners consulted the spirits of idols to predict the future. God warns His people that there is no real help from either idols or their representatives (they comfort in vain).

- The diviners do not speak the truth, they deceive people along with themselves.
2 Timothy 3:13 – *evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived*

Diviners are those who engage in divination (from Latin *divinare*, 'to foresee, to foretell, to predict, to prophesy'). Divination is the attempt to gain insight into a question or situation using an occultic process or ritual.

How would the deception of the idols and diviners impact the people?

Therefore the people wend their way like sheep; they are in trouble because there is no shepherd. The lack of godly leadership would lead the people astray... when there is not speaker of truth, there is no valid standard to measure deception against.

Do we have diviners today?

We may not have occultists “dividing” animals to inspect their liver but we do have occultists making predictions and conjuring up spells.

1 Timothy 4:1-3 – *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.*

What are some doctrines of demons of our day?

Universalism, salvation-by-works (Islam, Mormonism), CRT, global warming, evolution, supersessionism (aka replacement theology), amillennialism, etc...

What doctrine of demons forbid people to marry?

The wokeism of the LGBTQ+ advocates seek to destroy the institution of marriage through making biblical marriage meaningless.

Can a person be born with the wrong gender?

We live in a confused and fallen world, so that even a basic question, like “what gender am I?” becomes difficult for some people to answer. But those who view gender distinctions as nothing more than a “social construct” are actively rejecting God’s design in creation.

- Fundamental to our understanding of human sexuality is that God created only two genders.

Genesis 1:27 – *Male and female He created them*
The crowd who would lecture us about following the science forget that essentially all are born with either XX or XY chromosomes determining their sex.

What should we think of school programs that teach about transgenderism to children?

It is child abuse! Children growing up in this confused world are bombarded with messages of confusion. It’s little wonder that some people grow up struggling with their sexual identity. But our Lord warned against leading children astray:

Luke 17:2 – *It would be better for them to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around their neck than to cause one of these little ones to stumble*

What should we recommend to a person who thinks they were born with the wrong gender?

An overwhelming majority will grow out of it. The answer is certainly not gender-reassignment surgery, hormone therapy, cross-dressing, etc. Those are simply worldly ways of acquiescing to the devil’s lies. “*Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth*” (1 Cor 13:6). And God does not make mistakes. The one who feels he or she was born in the wrong body needs to experience the transformative power of Christ who has...

2 Peter 1:4 – *given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

What doctrine of demons seeks to get people to abstain from foods which God created?

The global warming faithful have latched on to the idea that meat production (and especially beef) results in “harmful green house gasses” and is out to drive up the price so much that people cannot afford it. We are living in the *latter times* of the 1 Timothy 4 prophecy.

Why did God authorize the eating of meat after the flood?

Genesis 9:3 – *Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.*

We live in a fallen world and after the flood conditions on earth were such that it was no longer possible to get the right kind of protein the human body needs without meat. This was a huge factor in people no longer living the hundreds of years that they did prior to the flood.

- The pre-flood earth’s atmosphere was like a hyperbaric chamber and harmful solar radiation was filtered out.

v3 – What would God do about those who acted like they represented Him but did not?

My anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the goatherds (or leaders): God will pour out His wrath on those who say they represent Him but do not.

What would Israel be like when the Lord restores them?

Will make them as His royal horse in the battle: In mercy God will take His people and transform them from a flock of sheep to a herd of war horses, ready for battle. All of them shall be like mighty men and defeat their enemies.

v4 – What is the cornerstone, tent peg and battle bow?

Though God is displeased with Israel's shepherds, He will raise up the perfect shepherd from and for Judah.

- Jesus is the cornerstone: the foundation, measure, and standard (Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22-23, Matthew 21:42, Acts 4:11, 1 Peter 2:4-5).
- Jesus is the tent peg: holding all things securely (Isaiah 22:23-24).
- Jesus is the battle bow: a strong fighter for good (Isaiah 63:1-4, Revelation 19:11-16).
- Jesus is the leader over every ruler of His people (Revelation 19:16).

v5 – What would be the impact of God's intervention on behalf of Israel?

They shall be like mighty men, who tread down their enemies: They would be invincible against their enemies who would seek to do them harm. Even those who used horses which represented at that time the most capable military forces. They would be successful because *the Lord is with them*.

When would Israel be invincible?

Now, in their being re-established in the land in preparation for the time of Jacob's Trouble...

Zechariah 12:6 – In that day I will make the governors of Judah like a firepan in the woodpile, and like a fiery torch in the sheaves; they shall devour all the surrounding peoples on the right hand and on the left, but Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place—Jerusalem.

This has been seen in all of Israel's wars:

- 1948 Arab-Israeli War (Nov 1947 – July 1949)
- Palestinian Fedayeen insurgency (1950s–1960s)
- Suez Crisis (October 1956)
- Six-Day War (June 1967)
- War of Attrition (1967–1970)
- Yom Kippur War (October 1973)
- Palestinian insurgency in Lebanon (1971–1982)

- Lebanon War (1982)
- South Lebanon conflict (1985–2000)
- First Intifada (1987–1993)
- Second Intifada (2000–2005)
- Lebanon War (summer 2006)
- Gaza War (December 2008 – January 2009)
- Gaza Strip (November 2012)
- Gaza War (July–August 2014)
- Israel–Palestine crisis (May 2021)

v6 – What would be the impact of God's mercy for Israel?

I will strengthen the house of Judah: The promise from the preceding passage is repeated more intensely. God will bless Israel with the strength to overcome their enemies.

- God would *save* them, *bring them back* to their land, it will be *like God had never cast them aside* and He would *hear* their prayers.

What is the distinction that is made between the houses of Judah and Joseph here?

This is a reference to the Southern and Northern kingdoms. When they return to the land, they will be united, no longer to be separate kingdoms. This was fulfilled because there are many references to people from the northern tribes being in Jerusalem from Ezra's day and even during the time of Jesus.

What is the principle here that applies to us?

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might...

Ephesians 6:10-11 – be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Putting on the whole armor of God is simply a matter of remembering His promises to us regarding the *truth* of His Word, the imputation of His *righteousness*, the *gospel of peace*, our *faith* He gives us, and our *salvation*.

- The availability of God's strength means there will be opportunities for us to use it. The Lord does not say, 'I will take you away from your labors,' but 'I will strengthen you, so that you will be able to perform them.'

v7 – Who are those of Ephraim that would be like mighty men?

Ephraim represented the northern tribes of Israel because they were the dominate one prior to Assyria conquering them. The use of this term emphasizes it is not just Judah who would benefit from God's mercy but all Israel.

What would bring joy to Israel?

The strengthening of Israel by the Lord in the time of their being brought back to the land. Now in unbelief by some but even more following the Tribulation in belief.

Who are the children who will be glad?

The children of those who would return to the land of Israel would be glad because they would be experience the blessings of God. This has to be a reference to the Millennial Kingdom.

How is it the heart that would rejoice in the Lord?

The rejoicing would be in their innermost part... their soul; seat of their emotions, intellect, personality, etc.

v8 – What would happen as a result of God whistling for Israel?

I will whistle for them and gather them: God would call them to return to their land even in unbelief to set the stage for when all Israel would recognize Jesus as the Messiah.

- The promise to gather Israel is repeated often in the prophecies of New Covenant (Deuteronomy 30:1-6, Jeremiah 23:1-8, Jeremiah 32:37-41, Ezekiel 11:16-20, Ezekiel 36:16-28).

What would characterize Israel when God calls them back to their land?

They would increase as they once did when they were together in the land.

v9 – When would God sow Israel among the peoples?

This happened as a result of the Romans sacking Jerusalem and destroying the temple in 70 AD.

Who are those who remember God in the far countries?

They are the remnant, the Messianic (or Completed) Jews who recognize Jesus as the Messiah during the Church Age. These are the ones who live (eternally) along with their children who also believe.

v10 – From where would Israel be regathered?

Only local nations are mentioned here so this sounds like a near term prophecy which was being fulfilled but it also says *until no more room is found for them*. That sounds a little like today when the “Palestinians” and Iranians want to erase Israel as a nation.

v11 – When will Israel pass through the sea with affliction?

This has to be a reference to the Tribulation, the time of Jacob’s Trouble (Jeremiah 30:7). As the land is symbolic of Israel, the sea is symbolic of the Gentile nations. And the language here is reminiscent of when God delivered Israel from Egypt...

Jeremiah 23:7-8 – *behold, the days are coming,” says the Lord, “that they shall no longer say, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ but, ‘As the Lord lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the north country and from all the countries where I had driven them*

Why would the return of Israel to the land be remembered more than deliverance from Egypt?

It is in conjunction with the Lord establishing the Millennial Kingdom. It is also likely that this regathering in belief is supernatural... a horizontal rapture so to speak like Philip...

Acts 8:39-40 – *Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.*

What does “the scepter of Egypt shall depart” refer to?

As the Gentile rule of Egypt over Israel came to an end, so would the Times of the Gentiles come to an end when the Lord returns to establish His Millennial Kingdom.

v12 – What else would characterize the restoration of Israel?

So I will strengthen them in the LORD, and they shall walk up and down in His name: When God gathers Israel and defeats their enemies they shall walk in freedom and liberty again. It will be like a new exodus from Egypt, complete with exodus-like miracles (*He shall pass through the sea with affliction, and strike the waves of the sea: All the depths of the River shall dry up*).

What applications do we see from our discussion today?

- Prayer is effective when we ask according to God’s will, in the right season.
- God’s view of equality is true equality, not man’s corruption of equality. We’ll be judged on God’s view, not men.
- The more we know God and His Word, the less susceptible we’ll be to being deceived by doctrines of demons.
- Marriage and meat-eating trends indicate that we are in the latter times about which Paul warned Timothy.
- Israel has been returning to their land in our day setting the stage for Jacob’s Trouble... the rapture is close!
- The invincibility of Israel points to our day... more indication that the Church Age is soon to end!
- Israel will be restored soon... people in the Church Age need to live ready to be taken home.