

## DECEMBER 28

It is very interesting that both Zechariah and Revelation are zeroing in on the same battle and events surrounding the second coming of Jesus. Notice however that in both books, the Lord is showing us what will happen from two completely different perspectives. While Revelation is showing us what is happening in heaven, at the same time, Zechariah (in our reading today and tomorrow) is at ground level, in the city, showing us the carnage that will come to the Jews as they cry out for the Messiah. When they cry out He will come and the tables will be turned and then what we read today in Revelation 19:17-21 will take place.

### Zechariah 12-13

#### Zechariah 12

V. 1 This is a solemn declaration to the right of God to do what He is about to do. It makes me think of what we'll be reading about Jesus in Revelation 19. Also, this sounds like the way Paul begins some of his charges to Timothy in 1 & 2 Timothy, declaring God's majesty. God bases His right to save and to judge based on the fact that He is the author of creation and the author of the life of man. I'd say that gives Him the right, alright.

Vs. 2-3 We have seen before that God is very passionate about Jerusalem. God will make Jerusalem a sliver in the world and everyone will become totally preoccupied with trying to remove it. But the more they try to destroy it, the more they will hurt themselves.

It is hard to know what is really happening here, but it could be as follows. It seems to me that just before the mid-point of the Tribulation, the army of "Magog" will come into Israel to fight against Jerusalem and will be supernaturally destroyed. The antichrist will come upon Jerusalem, kill the two witnesses and defile the temple, declaring himself to be the Messiah or God. The Jews will flee Jerusalem, as Jesus told them to and head for the hills, literally. Toward the end of the Tribulation and very near to the time Christ returns, it looks like the Jews will slowly come back into Judah and into Jerusalem. Probably the antichrist will set up his headquarters somewhere else. While he is preoccupied with hunting and killing Jews and believers worldwide, he will also have to deal with the arrogance of "Babylon" and the other nations that do not bow to him. Somewhere in this last year of the Tribulation, and close to the end, the bowl judgments will be poured out. This would allow the Jews to come back to Jerusalem. It could also be that some revelation is given through the Spirit to draw the Jews back for the coming of Christ. It is obvious from Scripture where He is to return.

As the armies of the world begin fighting each other 75 miles north of Jerusalem, it could be that the Jews retake the city and a portion of the antichrist's army comes against Jerusalem to wipe them out. This could be the time that Christ returns to save His city and His followers. We will see tomorrow that this army will kill many and rape and pillage. It will look like extermination is certain for those in Jerusalem. Those Jews who still haven't made a decision will have their opportunity. It will be during this utter distress that they call out to the Lord, saying, "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." This is my take on things.

Notice that in these last three chapters, the phrase, *on that day*, will be used quite a bit. It would be worth underlining it.

Vs. 4-5 *On that day*, God will strike the armies around Jerusalem with terror. It might be that lightning that Jesus talked about. Those living around Jerusalem (the people in Judah) appear to be holding back and not joining those who have gone into Jerusalem. But they will see that the people who have believed and gone into the city to wait for the return of Christ are suddenly given a supernatural strength and protection.

Vs. 6-9 This is fighting. The clans of Judah will be supernaturally inspired and everyone will become a warrior. The people in Jerusalem will be like David in his fighting ability. Those descended from David will be awesome and unbeatable, like Samson. Though the main fighting is 75 miles north on the plain of Megiddo (Har-Megiddo = Armageddon), the forces that thought taking Jerusalem would be a piece of cake will be totally destroyed. When the antichrist finds out that his troops are being swept away, he will be too far north to do anything about it. Just for chuckles, look at the end of this document and you'll find the route from Megiddo to Jerusalem.

It is important to see all of the Bible together. Revelation shows us the judgments on the world that weaken the structure of the nations. Revelation shows the nations gathering to fight north of Jerusalem. Zechariah shows us God's passion for His city, and the battle going on there when Jesus arrives.

Vs. 10-14 These people in Jerusalem will see the Lord return to the Mt. of Olives. Many of them are believing, but those who are not will be cut to the heart just like the Jews were after Peter's message in Acts 2:37. They will weep and repent for the entire history of Israel. The houses of Nathan, Levi, and the Shimeites were all branches of David's descendants.

V. 10 This is quoted in John 19:37 regarding Jesus.

V. 11 This is a reference to the mourning of the people when King Josiah was killed. Josiah was killed on the plain of Megiddo. Although the word "Armageddon" only occurs in Revelation, this is a clear allusion to the place and the battle that will rage there.

### Zechariah 13

Vs. 1-6 These verses express the complete cleansing that will take place *on that day*, from sin and from all forms of deception and lies.

Vs. 7-9 This will be the devastation to Jerusalem as that army attacks. In the press of this battle, as the people are losing and dying, they will cry out, *Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord*. The lightning will come and terrify the army. The people in Jerusalem, first, will be inspired with joy and superhuman ability like Samson or one of David's three champions. The battle will turn as the Lord appears and arrives to save His city.

To see how devastating this battle at Jerusalem is, look at the first four verses of tomorrow's reading. When the Lord comes, it will look very, very bad for the Jews in Jerusalem. Then, at the moment He comes, the armies are terrified; the unbelieving Jews mourn in repentance and trust Christ, and those who had already believed are already feeling their muscles bulging and are ready to mix it up.

### Revelation 19

Meanwhile in heaven.....

Vs. 1-3 This multitude are those killed in the Tribulation as seen in Revelation 7:9. They are praising God for the coming judgment.

It is hard to grasp that the destruction and judgment of "Babylon" is such an important event. It reminds me of Genesis 15:16 where God told Abraham that He wouldn't give him the land yet because the *iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete*. Apparently the full measure of the saints was finally martyred in Babylon and now the sin of mankind and the full measure of guilt were complete. With the judgment of Babylon, the full righteous wrath of God could now roll. But it isn't only judgment that is complete.

Vs. 4-5 This worship of the elders and creatures is because of this pivotal event.

Vs. 6-10 Now, I'm not sure how all of this worked toward the announcing of *the marriage supper of the Lamb* at this point, but it did. That is, I think the order of events is important. The marriage supper has to occur after the Tribulation is over. Something in what has just happened

also opened the door for the announcement of the marriage supper celebration of the Lamb and the church, His Bride. The destruction of Babylon and the vengeance on the blood of the saints was important.

V. 6-7 This multitude is the church and they are announcing the marriage.

V. 8 These *righteous deeds* didn't make her pure, but were a symbol of her redemption in Christ. This is our work in the harvest. *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.* (Eph. 2:10)

V. 9 So, we see the Lamb and there is the Bride, the church. The church is given this special honor. It is important to realize that God has special things planned for different groups of believers. Also, there is a difference in rewards and position. For example, the 24 elders are limited to 24. That position and those rewards are granted only to them. There are those who believed in the OT, before Christ; most of whom will not be resurrected until the end of the Tribulation/ the beginning of the Millennium. So, who is invited to this marriage feast? It seems that this feast will be on the earth, and those invited will be all who are resurrected at the coming of Christ, as well as those who enter into the Millennial Kingdom of Christ.

V. 10 John was overcome by all of this and fell down to worship the messenger, but the angel gently corrected him. Earlier when John fell down to worship, it was Jesus, so that was OK.

So what does it mean, *the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*? If prophecy means, "the telling of things to come," then inherent in talking about Jesus is the revealing of God's past, present and future program of redemption and judgment.

Vs. 11-21 Now in very quick order we have the second coming of Christ. Apparently the stage was fully set with the destruction of Babylon. It really is interesting that in Zechariah we've been reading what will be happening in Jerusalem, in growing detail, while this is going on in heaven.

Vs. 11-16 Now the King is coming to fight.

This army with the Lord might be angels, but who knows. Just to keep things in perspective, this battle will result in the deaths of all of the opposing soldiers. This then is not Jesus sending out His angels to separate the wicked from the righteous. That will happen once Jesus is established on His throne. That is the judgment Jesus referred to as the separation of the sheep and the goats. On the other hand, those who are unbelieving and die here will be sent to Hades where they will sit in punishment to be resurrected to judgment before the white throne at the end of the Millennium. Then they will be sent to hell, the lake of fire.

V. 15 That Jesus will rule *with a rod of iron* is simply saying it will be with unbending truth. No one will be able to tell Jesus He doesn't know their hearts or that He is misjudging their motives.

Vs. 17-21 Putting everything together, Jesus first returns to Jerusalem, to the Mount of Olives and saves Jerusalem. This is visible to everyone, including the armies to the north who now turn all of their fire power (if they have any) on Jesus. I suppose that since Jesus shows up with an army, they think they can fight against Him. Obviously one angel could decimate a human army, but so could anyone with the Lord who was empowered by the Spirit. In Zechariah we have already heard that the believers will be given superhuman ability. The appearance of a human army could inspire arrogance on the part of the armies gathered. They probably think they can put up a fight and win. That might be the human side of the fight. It could also be that on the spiritual side of things, another battle is raging between Satan's angels and Michael and his angels.

V. 20 There is not a lot of drama or fanfare here. The antichrist and the prophet are captured and they are immediately thrown into the *lake of fire*. They become the first official inhabitants of hell. What a great honor.

V. 21 Everyone else who is killed goes to Hades, that place of waiting, in punishment until they stand before Christ for judgment.

This is all coming. Knowing Jesus means we know these events are certain. The same blood that saves is the same blood that judges the sin of the world. Now is the time to work in the harvest, reaching the lost and making disciples, who will make disciples until the time when Jesus comes.

### **Psalm 147**

This is a great psalm. Underline or make a list of the things God does. Once you see this pattern, you also see when the pattern is broken, like in vs. 5 and 10-11.

Vs. 1-6 It is interesting reading this immediately after Zechariah and Revelation.

Vs. 7-11 In my Bible v. 9 of this psalm is immediately to the right of Revelation 19:17-18. That, too, is pretty interesting. Verse 11 says it all.

Vs. 12-20 The Lord's interest in Jerusalem/Zion is something we are used to by now. God will call all nations there during the Millennium for blessing.

Vs. 15-19 It is interesting to me that suddenly we have all of these references to the Word. Didn't we just see the Word on a white horse?

V. 20 is meant here to be a privilege, but in Israel's history, knowing God's decrees, and disobeying them, has also been what has led to judgment. But here, having the Word is their joy.

### **Proverbs 31:1-7**

The words of King Lemuel are vs. 1-9. We know nothing about this guy. No king of Israel ever had this name. God knew who he was and here are a few words Lemuel's mother taught him.

V. 2 I read this and laugh. How often do parents look at their sons and say *what are you doing?* Here, she has to ask him three times. I wonder what he was doing. ☺ Obviously the repetition emphasizes her love and concern for him.

V. 3 This is immorality, adultery or sexual excess. We saw what it did to both David and Solomon.

Vs. 4-5 This caution is toward drunkenness and excess, not drinking within bounds. Jesus drank wine.

Vs. 6-7 Excess in drinking is OK for those who are on their deathbed or those who have suffered a great tragedy, probably to get them to sleep.