

GAEBELEIN ARNO CLEMENS

STUDIES IN ZECHARIAH

Arno Gaebelein
Studies in Zechariah

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Arno Clemens Gaebelein

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FOREWORD TO THE EIGHTH EDITION

This little exposition of the Prophecies of Zechariah was written almost 15 years ago. We are thankful to God that it has been a help to so many. The sixth edition has been sold and a seventh has become necessary.

We were somewhat reluctant to print another edition. When this book was written the writer did not at all have a clear vision in the prophetic Word concerning the great predicted end events of the times of the Gentiles. Like so many others he did not distinguish between the personal Antichrist and the King of the North. He then held the view, which is still taught by many, that the first beast in Revelation xiii is the personal Antichrist. This belief led into incorrect views about that part of Revelation.

Since writing the book it has pleased the Lord to give the writer better light on these great prophetic unfoldings and for this reason some of the interpretations given, especially on pages 135, 136 and 137, are no longer looked upon by the author as being scripturally correct. In our later books "The Harmony of the Prophetic Word" "Joel," and especially "Exposition of Daniel," the truth as revealed in Prophecy concerning the two beasts and the King of the North, is given. We therefore request the reader to consider this when studying this volume.

We are sure the Lord will continue to bless the simple unfolding of the greatest Post exile Prophet. So little is written on this great book that we feel that we should not withhold this imperfect exposition from the students of the Word of Prophecy. May the Lord continue to bless it.

A. C. GAEBELEIN.

Sept. 30, 1911.

INTRODUCTION

Zechariah, the name of the prophet whose visions and prophecies we desire to study, is not an uncommon name in divine history. Its meaning is *Jehovah remembers*. He is called the son of Berachiah, *Jehovah blesses*, the son of Iddo, *the appointed time*. There is here, as in many other instances in the Bible, a great significance in the Hebrew names. The name of the grandfather of Zechariah (who probably brought him up, as his father must have died early), his father's name and his own read in English translation, *the appointed time, Jehovah blesses, Jehovah remembers*. The Holy Spirit has inspired these very names; they are in themselves a commentary to the prophecies and visions God gave to Zechariah, for they speak of an appointed time of God's blessings for Jerusalem and of His loving remembrance.

Zechariah was born in Babylon in the captivity, for when he returned to the land of his fathers he was but a child. Like some other prophets he was a priest as well as a prophet. His work as a prophet was commenced by him when he was a young man, for thus he is called in one of the visions. The time of his opening address to the people is two months after Haggai had opened his lips in Jehovah's name. Haggai received the word of the Lord in the sixth month in the second year of Darius, and Zechariah in the eighth month of the same year of the reign of that King, about 520 before Christ.

Both prophets had the same thought given, namely, to encourage the Jewish remnant in the blessed work of rebuilding the house of the Lord. This work had suffered an interruption; the Samaritans were the cause of it. They had applied to join in the work, but as the remnant considered them idolators and as not belonging to God's people, the application was rejected. These Samaritans tried after that in various ways to hinder the rebuilding, which had so blessedly begun. At last they succeeded in obtaining a decree which forbade the building of the Temple. All work had to be stopped and ceased for about fourteen years. But when the King who had forbidden the prosecution of the work had died and Darius became King, the building of the Temple was once more made possible. The leaders of the people in the enterprise were Serubbabel and the High Priest Joshua. But again they were hindered from the outside, while on the other hand the people themselves had lost much interest and possessed no longer that love and zeal for God's house, which was so prominent after their return. Thus Haggai said: *This people say, It is not the time for us to come, the time for the Lord's house to be built.. It is a time for you to dwell in your ceiled houses, while this house lieth waste*. Haggai, chapter 1.

In that critical moment these two prophets made their appearance, and God gave them visions of comfort and glad tidings to encourage the disheartened, selfish and unbelieving people.

The visions and prophecies of Zechariah, however, do not only give an assurance that there could be no failure in the work the remnant had taken up anew, but more than that in them the glorious future of Jerusalem and Zion is unfolded. They lead up to the grand finale of the history of God's ancient people, the time when Israel, redeemed and restored forever, will sing the grand and glorious Hallelujah.

It is, of course, true that Zechariah did a blessed work for the people who lived in his day; he had a special mission to perform and succeeded in it, but the Spirit of God in the message of comfort for that time gives the history of events then in a distant future. The Babylonian captivity of Israel foreshadows their greater dispersion in which they are to-day wanderers all over the earth, and the restoration which took place in the time of Zechariah is highly typical of that coming restoration for which we hope and pray.

Zechariah may therefore be fitly called the Prophet of the Restoration. Surely it is a deplorable blindness in some teachers of the Word, who see in the book of Zechariah nothing but past history, and who claim that all has been fulfilled in the return of the small Jewish remnant from the captivity, and whatever promises of mercy given to Jerusalem and the land of Judah find now their spiritual fulfilment in the church.

It will be our aim in a series of studies in Zechariah to consider mostly the relation of these visions to the end of this age, and the beginning of the next, the millennial glory. We shall find that instead of the book of Zechariah being all fulfilled prophecy, as some would have it, it is indeed mostly unfulfilled, and even some of the prophetic promises which on the surface seem to have been seen a fulfilment, were only in part realized. And how important at this time to study the book of Zechariah! We are living in the time when that greater restoration with all its events forerunning and connected with it are about to come to pass. It is needless to say that we firmly believe that Zechariah wrote all of the book which bears his name.

Several of the Jewish commentators confess an inability to explain the book. The well-known Jewish commentator Solomon Ben Jarchi (generally known by the name Rashi), says: "The prophecy (of Zechariah) is very dark, for it contains visions much like dreams, which want interpreting, and we will never succeed in finding the true meaning until *the Teacher of righteousness arrives*." Abarbanel makes a similar confession.

We praise God that the Teacher of righteousness has come, even the Spirit of Truth, who guides into all truth and reveals the things to come.

CHAPTER I

The Opening Address of the Prophet to His Nation. The Night Visions and Their Meaning. The First Night Vision.

The opening address of the prophet (chapter i: 1-6) forms an excellent introduction to the visions of comfort and warning which he had and revealed to the people. It is a very pointed and earnest call to repentance: *The Lord has been sore displeased with your fathers*. They were disobedient and stiffnecked. The former prophets, Jeremiah and Isaiah, had called them to turn from their evil ways, but they did not hear. And now, where are the fathers? They had passed away like the disobedient ones in the wilderness; God's judgment and displeasure had overtaken them. But the faithful God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, whose gifts and calling are without repentance, comes once more to His chosen people, the seed of Abraham, and the Spirit, through Zechariah, speaks a direct message to return, and utters the promise that the Lord will also return unto them. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Return unto me saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will return unto you saith the Lord of Hosts*.

The name Jehovah appears three times in this short exhortation. Each time the name is in another connection. Jehovah speaks, they are to return to Jehovah, and Jehovah will return to them. Surely in profane literature such a repetition would be rejected as useless and superfluous, but in the Book where every word and phrase is God-given, we cannot pass it by as having no significance. Like in many other passages in the Old Testament we have here a revelation of the one God as Father, Son and Spirit. This revelation was often made in divine history, and when the measure of Israel's apostacy was at last filled up, they had indeed rejected Jehovah in rejecting Jehovah-Jesus, and also Jehovah, the Spirit. And while this exhortation was one for Zechariah's contemporaries, it is the great exhortation to the Jewish remnant for all times. The nation having forsaken Jehovah in His revelations as Father, Son and Spirit, will have to return and listen to Jehovah who speaks, to Jehovah whom they rejected, and Jehovah in His merciful and loving manifestations will return to them as a nation and to their land.

This return of Israel to which Zechariah exhorts will take place in a set order clearly revealed throughout the word of God. We hear in Romans ii. that Paul speaks of a remnant according to the election of grace. That remnant is the remnant which turns to Jehovah now during this dispensation, and, of course, all Jews who are now turning to Jehovah-Jesus, and to whom Jehovah, the Spirit, also comes, are *members of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ*. As soon as the *church*, the witnessing body in the earth, is removed by that glorious event which is our blessed hope, another Jewish remnant is called, and that remnant will be Jewish throughout, "keeping the commandments and having the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ." Of course that remnant will have returned to Jehovah, and will be the witnessing and the *suffering* body in the great tribulation. The believing and longing cry of that remnant, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," will at last welcome Him, the Pierced One and King of Israel as well as King of Glory, to this earth, and then the remnant of the nation in all lands will turn to Him. This is the divine programme for Israel.

After these opening words, delivered probably to the assembled people, Zechariah received his wonderful night visions. They were not mere dreams, but the events which he describes passed before him in visions. He saw them all in one night. They are eight in number, and have not found many interpreters. They were not only given in one night, but just as one followed rapidly the other, so are they all closely connected, and giving events which are to follow one after the other. That we have here a revelation which may fitly be termed *the Apocalypse of Zechariah* is unquestionable. After all these visions had passed, Joshua, the High Priest, is crowned with two crowns foreshadowing Him who is to be a Priest upon His throne. This crowning is a climax in Zechariah's night visions which lead up to that coronation. Divine interference in behalf of Jerusalem and the land of Judah, God's

displeasure upon the nations for their abominations, and the overthrow of Israel's enemies are clearly depicted in the first two night visions, while in the others we see the promised prosperity returning to the land, God's glory appearing once more, the nation once more inhabiting the land and cleansed from their guilt, filled with the Spirit, wickedness judged, Babylon set up and overthrown, and the chariots of God appearing.

The first night vision is especially suited for a close study for our times, for the events and conditions in that first vision are a true picture of the peculiarities of the times in which we live. Indeed we are rapidly nearing the fulfillment of this first night vision.

This is the vision: Zechariah sees a man riding upon a red horse and he halts in a valley among myrtle trees. He is surrounded by a large army of angels upon red, sorrel and white horses, and the man upon the red horse becomes the centre of the hosts of heaven. The angels give their reports unto the man in the midst, who is also called the Angel of the Lord. These angels had walked to and fro through the earth (like the evil spirit and his demons, Job i., so the good angels walk to and fro through the earth), and they report to the Angel of the Lord, telling him that all the earth sitteth still and is at rest. Prosperity and peace seems to be what the angels saw, but over against this bright picture there is the dark scene – Jerusalem trodden down, the house of the Lord unfinished, a persecuted suffering remnant.

And now the Angel of the Lord becomes the intercessor for Jerusalem and turns to Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts sitting upon His throne. *O Lord of Hosts, how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah against which Thou hast had indignation these three score and ten years?* He receives an answer of comfortable words. God is once more jealous for Jerusalem, and very angry and sore displeased with the nations, the nations who are in greater part responsible for the condition of His inheritance – they *have helped forward their affliction*. God promises to return to the city with prosperity, and that the house shall be built in it, and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion and shall yet choose Jerusalem.

The first question which arises in the interpretation of this vision is concerning the person who leads the angelic hosts. He is called a man riding upon a red horse. This does not mean that he was nothing but a man, but it means that he appeared in the vision to Zechariah as a man, he had a human body. Later he is called the Angel of the Lord, and as such, he acts as successful intercessor for Jerusalem, and receives a loving answer from Jehovah. The leader must have been a divine person incarnate. The name Angel of the Lord is one of the Old Testament names for the *Son of God*, and there can be only one satisfactory interpretation of who the rider upon the red horse is, and that is, He must be the Son of God. There are three chief reasons for this interpretation. In the first place, the color of the horse which He rode was red; this denotes blood, and is the color of the Son of God, for He is the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world, and He is the Lion from the tribe of Judah, who will arise and slay His enemies, coming to judge the nations (Isaiah lxiii). He is the Leader as well as the Centre of the heavenly hosts, for to Him all power is given in *Heaven* and in the earth, and all things are in His hands; and in the third place, the intercession which the Angel of the Lord makes is the intercession which belongs to the Son of God. The heavenly company comes to a stop in a deep valley, and the Angel of the Lord stands there among the myrtle trees.

Jewish interpretation (in the Yalkut) says: He was staying among the myrtles which were in the *Metzullah* (depths). Now myrtles (Hadassim) mean nothing else than saints, as it is said (Esther ii: 7), and He was bringing up Hadassah (Esther), and the depths means nothing else than Babylon. We believe this as correct an interpretation as any. Myrtles denote lowliness and sweetness, and the dark, dreary valley stands for persecution, suffering, and being outcast. All this was true of the remnant, and it is true as well of the church. What a comfort it must have been to the patriotic prophet and to all true believers among the returned exiles, to learn that in that vision it was made so clear that Jehovah, the Angel of the Lord, was with them in all their lowliness and suffering. The Angel, who so wonderfully delivered their father Jacob, and whom he called the Angel the Redeemer, and who had

so often appeared in the miraculous events of the past, this same Angel, with all the army of heaven at His command, was still with them, though the cloud of glory was missing.

May we not forget that the Angel of the Lord, the Son of God, our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is still with His people Israel. He has indeed not cast them away, whom He foreknew. He is their King and their Priest, and for all we know, the mighty angels who are under His direction, may be assembled now as they were in Zechariah's vision, and He Himself ready to reveal His love and mercy to Jerusalem.

And what is the report of the angels to their leader? They have walked to and fro through the earth, they have found nothing but prosperity. All the earth sitteth still and is at rest, the nations at ease, a perfect picture of prosperity. The nations are seen in a flourishing state, but His nation is in trouble and His inheritance laid waste, the nations having like wild beasts trampled it into the dust. While the large cities of the nations are increased and have plenty, the city of a great King is forsaken. History shows that indeed at that time there was no war, but peace everywhere and prosperity enjoyed selfishly by the nations. Should not these nations have an interest in that land and in that people? But they were living for their own ease and comfort. What does it matter if there is yonder a poor and suffering people?

Prosperity, universal prosperity, and with it universal peace, is the cry at the close of another century, and will be more so as we advance towards the end of this age. Civilization, world conquest, commercial extension and a universal peace, seem to be the leading thoughts among the nations of our times. Truly it is realized by some that our boasted civilization, liberty and prosperity is nothing but a smouldering volcano which may burst open at any moment and make an end of all boasting, but the majority of the people even in Christendom are sadly deluding themselves with idle dreams. And what of God's thoughts and His eternal purposes? What of His oath-bound covenant promises? They are being misinterpreted, set aside and forgotten. Thus it will continue till the climax is reached, so clearly foretold in the second Psalm,

“Why do the nations rage
And the peoples imagine a vain thing?
The kings of the earth set themselves
And the rulers take counsel together,
Against the Lord and against His anointed.
Let us break their bands asunder
And cast away from us their cords.”

This is a true picture of the nations as the King of Kings at last will find them when He returns with and in His glory. The great sin of the nations, which is *Anti-Semitism*, will be considered later.

The nations at ease, prosperous and increased, and Jerusalem trodden down, the land waste and desolate, in the hands of the enemy, is the mark of this age up to its end.

But now comes the interference of Him who sitteth in the heavens. The angel of the Lord intercedes and cries to the Lord of Hosts, “How long?” It has been so much overlooked that He who is our Intercessor, the Great High Priest in the Heavens, is, according to the flesh, of the seed of Abraham, and He stands there in His place in His glorified humanity. If the High Priest in the Old Testament carried upon a breast-plate nearest to his heart the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, may we not assume that the true High Priest, who is the King of Israel as well, has them just as near to His loving heart? He loves His own, and longs for the time when they will crown Him Lord of all. And is it not very significant that the Spirit at this present time teaches so many children of God to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, that He may establish and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth? The Spirit and the Bride say “Come,” and surely the dearest thought in the Saviour's heart is being laid upon the hearts of His children, in whom the Spirit dwells, to pray and intercede with Him for the

peace of Jerusalem. This prayer, heard from so many lips to-day in the church waiting for her Lord, is but an echo of His “How long?” and prayer for His people.

The interceding angel of the Lord is not left without an answer from the Lord of Hosts whom he has addressed in behalf of Jerusalem. It must be noticed that the answer is not the one which Jehovah gives to the angel of the Lord, but the answer is transmitted by the Lord through another angel who talked with the prophet. *So the angel that talked with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts: I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy.* Then follows the message in its details. *And I am very sore displeased with the nations that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction. Therefore thus saith the Lord: I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies; my house shall be built in it, saith the Lord of Hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth over Jerusalem. Cry yet again, saying, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.* We desire to take up separately some of these comfortable words. We firmly believe that the time of their fulfillment is not only at hand, but that we are really living in the days when God once more remembers His suffering people and is about to rise in judgment upon His and their enemies, and turn in mercy to Zion.

First then stands the declaration that God is jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. The word used in the original for jealous means burning, and is correctly translated with that word, for jealousy is a burning emotion. Men are jealous of that which is their own when it is in the hands of another or in danger of being taken away and misused. In this sense God is likewise jealous of His own. Jerusalem is His city, the city of a great king; Zion is His holy hill, and Israel His own people. All has fallen into the hands of the Gentiles and is injured by them. His people scattered and dispersed, the holy hill desecrated and Jerusalem trodden down by the Gentiles. True, God has permitted it all, prophets have spoken of it, and their prophecies concerning Jerusalem's desolation have all been literally fulfilled, but now God is seen to rise and to claim once more in great jealousy that which is His Own. We look away from the partial fulfillment of this prophecy in Zechariah's time. God looked down from heaven then, and His eyes beheld the sad picture of the desolate land, the unfinished temple and the disheartened and punished people. At the end of our dispensation, God looks down from heaven, and while the nations are prosperous and at ease, He sees His city controlled by His enemies. The holy hill of Zion, where Jehovah revealed Himself so often, has become the place of idolatry. His name is not honored but dishonored. Indeed, the Land and Jerusalem attracts once more the attention of the world. Nations are desirous of owning the Land and gaining a foothold there. The visit to Palestine of the German Emperor, the representative of Lutheranism and the avowed friend of one of the darkest characters of our times, the man whose throne seems almost unshakable, and who holds the Land in the grasp of his bloody hands, is highly significant. All the other nations have watched this visit, and Zionism especially rejoices in the fact of the friendship of the Protestant Emperor with the Sultan and hopes much from it for the realization of its well planned schemes. It is to be expected that as the end draws nearer, Palestine will become the great centre around which the nations gather. Scheming nations, religious and political ambitions for world rule and world power, and connected with it Commercialism, which seems to become more and more the god of this world, are the programme for the near future, and upon the entire scene are the eyes of the covenant-keeping God of Abraham, and with His burning eyes He looks on with jealousy for Jerusalem and very great jealousy for Zion. (Joel ii: 18.)

These are only the opening words of the revelation which is given to Zechariah. It is God's attitude. Zechariah hears now a very plain and important statement from the lips of the interpreting angel. The statement is threefold.

1. *I was but a little displeased.* Jehovah is speaking concerning His inheritance that He was, on account of their apostasy and idolatry, but a little displeased. This was primarily true of the Babylonian captivity. It was but for a moment God was angry. It is so now, though the children of Israel have

been in dispersion for well-nigh twenty centuries, but still it is true even now. *For a small moment have I forgotten thee. In overflowing wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer.* His displeasure with His people is never final, it is only temporary. This is clearly seen in the entire Word of God. If it were final, if God would be displeased forever with Israel, we might just as well close the Bible, join the higher critics and end in unbelief, apostasy and perdition. *I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee with judgment and will in no wise leave thee unpunished.* (Jeremiah xxx: 11.)

2. *They have helped forward their affliction.* The Lord is now speaking of the nations who are at ease. He holds them responsible for a greater affliction than He really had designed to come upon His people. By their attitude towards chastised Israel they have made their affliction much worse than God meant it to be. Of course, it was true during the seventy years God's people spent in Babylon, but how much more true is it in the dispersion which has been their lot for so many sad centuries.

Where shall we begin in treating the awful truth which is put here in such simple language? Where shall we find words earnest enough to picture the terrible facts in connection with it and sound a warning for our times? Some time ago a person said, "The Jews are to-day more stiff-necked and blinder than ever before." Who has made them thus? Surely judicial blindness and hardness of heart; ears which do not hear are given by God, but, alas, the nations, or so-called Christendom, have helped forward their affliction; they have made matters worse a thousand times, and Satan, who hates Israel, has been the author of all things calculated to increase the affliction of poor down trodden Israel. Surely the increased stiff-neckedness and the increased blindness is one which is traceable to the nations. Every reader knows something of the history of the Jews, what it has been since they left the home land – a long, long tale of suffering, tears and blood. Most unjust outrages have been committed against them; torture upon torture; the stake and worse than that; and all in the name of Jesus. It is a shameful history. Many a time Jews, after hearing the Word preached, have stood up and opened in answer this awful book of history with its blood-stained pages, asking the question, "Can He be our Redeemer, whose followers have treated us thus in His name?" And not a few can tell us of their own sufferings in being banished from foreign lands. Hardly a month passes without some new outrage upon the generally harmless and innocent people in Eastern Europe. Cruelty, injustice, wickedness and crime are practiced against them, and thus their affliction has been increased.

The same is true of the counterfeits of the Christian religion. Is it a wonder that the Jew turns away in disgust from religions which demand worship of pictures, statues, holy places, etc.? Satan has used it all to keep Israel from a true knowledge of Him, who is the King of Israel. And in Protestant lands the Jew does so rarely see that pure and true love of Him who came to fulfil the law and in whom God as love has been manifested. Instead of treating the Jew as a brother, beloved for the Father's sake – nay, for Jesus' sake, who was a Jew according to the flesh – he has been despised, ridiculed, ostracized and treated as inferior to Gentiles. Still there are worse days coming yet. The nations of Christendom in the past have helped forward their affliction, but Satan, through these very nations, will once more afflict Israel – once more stretch out his hand to touch the nation of destiny. As never before in the history of the world, God's own chosen people – the Jews – make themselves felt, and correspondingly as never before the Gentile nations are getting ready to rise up against the Jew to down him if it were possible. The enemy, thus prophecy tells us, will try to exterminate the wonderful nation through nations who are doomed to destruction. This is still future. However, these coming events are rapidly approaching. Anti-Semitism is increasing all over the world, and only God's Spirit and the prayer of the Church keeps back the outbreak which will mark the beginning of Jacob's trouble. (Jeremiah xxx: 7.)

3. —*I am very sore displeased.* This is God's anger with the nations who have sinned against His people. The crowning sin of the nations is Anti-Semitism, which means anti-Bible, anti-Christ and anti-God. If Christendom would believe the Word of God it could never be the enemy of Israel. Our

age will end in the judgment of nations, and that judgment will be on account of the sins committed against His people. For behold in those days and in that time when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will gather all nations and will bring them down into the valley of Jehosaphat, and I will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage, Israel, when they have scattered among the nations and parted my land. (Joel iii: 1-3.) Haste ye and come all ye nations round about and gather yourselves together thither; cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord; let the nations bestir themselves and come up to the valley of Jehosaphat; for there will I sit to judge all nations round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe; come, get ye down, for the wine-press is full, the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon are darkened, the stars withdraw their shining, and the Lord shall roar from Zion and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake; but the Lord will be a refuge unto His people and a stronghold to the children of Israel. (Joel iii: 17, etc.) For behold the Lord will come with fire, and His chariots shall be like the whirlwind, to render His anger with fury and His rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire will the Lord plead and by His sword with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many. (Isaiah lxvi: 15.) This judgment of nations is likewise referred to in Matthew xxv. by the lips of our Lord. Generally the last part of that chapter is taken to mean the universal judgment, the great white throne. This is an error. *The Son of Man shall come in His glory and all the angels with Him.* Thus the passage reads: *Then shall He sit on the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all the nations, and He shall separate them one from another as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats.* The judgment takes place and nations are punished and rewarded according to their treatment of the brethren of the Son of Man, the King of Glory.

At that time, when the enemies of Israel are overcome and punished for their wickedness, Israel, once more miraculously saved, will break forth in praise of the Lord and sing the glorious psalms of victory which to-day are still prophetic. If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they would have swallowed us up alive when their wrath was kindled against us; then the waters would have overwhelmed us, a stream would have gone over our soul; then the proud waters would have gone over our soul. Praise to Jehovah! who has not given us as prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler! The snare is broken and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of Jehovah, who has made heaven and earth. (Psalm cxxiv.)

The words which follow, and which are really the good and comfortable words, contain the divine programme of the restoration of His people Israel. What is mentioned here in a few sentences is given in detail in the fourth and fifth night vision as well as in the closing chapters of the prophet. *I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies.* This does not mean a spiritual return or a return of God's mercies to Jerusalem only, but it means likewise His literal return when He appears the second time; and connected with this second appearing of the great Jehovah in Jesus Christ will be seen the Shekinah cloud as Israel had it in the wilderness and the first temple. This is seen in the second chapter. The Lord had withdrawn from His people. *I will go away and return to my place.* (Hosea v: 15.) *For behold your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.* (Matthew xxiii: 38, 39.) The Lord being absent in His person from His people, Israel is forsaken, the land desolate. There can be no true restoration of Israel till He has come whose right it is.

So many good people think that the present Zionistic movement of the Jews is that promised salvation for the scattered nation. This is not so. It is an attempted restoration. Here in the good and comfortable words Zechariah hears, the return of the Lord stands first. Then His house is to be built. While it meant in the prophet's time the building of the second temple, it means in connection with the coming restoration the building of that great millennial temple which Ezekiel saw in visions and describes in detail – the temple which will be indeed a house of prayer to all nations, and the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former. The rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem is next

in order. A line is to be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. The city is enlarged, for from henceforth Jerusalem is to be the centre of the earth. (Ezekiel xxxviii: 12.) *My cities in prosperity shall overflow.* The blessing will not be confined to the Temple and to Jerusalem, but there will be an overflow, and all the cities in the land will flow over with prosperity. *For the Lord shall comfort Zion; He will comfort all her waste places, and He will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.* (Isaiah li: 3.)

Oh, happy time! when wilt thou come? Even so come, Lord Jesus, our Lord and Israel's King! Other visions will show us that Jerusalem will then indeed be a praise in the earth, for many nations will then be joined to the Lord, and the streams of living waters will overflow and bring joy, salvation and healing to the nations around who join in the Hallelujah chorus of Jeshurun.

CHAPTER II

The second night vision. The four horns and the four smiths. The third vision. The man measuring Jerusalem. Restoration and glory of Jerusalem foretold.

The second night vision of Zechariah is closely connected with the first. In the first vision the time is given when the Lord will turn in mercy to Jerusalem – the time when the nations are at ease, and, having helped forward the affliction of His people, are ripe for judgment. The scenes have passed away, and now the prophet lifts his eyes again and he sees *four horns*. The question he asks of the angel is answered by him, that *these are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem*. Then *four smiths* appear, and the angel informs the prophet that *these are come to fray them* (the four horns), *to cast down the horns of the nations which lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter it* (chapter i: 18-21.) The four horns are the powerful and proud enemies of the people of God. Why four horns? Some have said because the enemies of Israel have come against the land and Jerusalem from all four cardinal points of the compass, and have scattered the people east and west, north and south. Others mention different nations who were at Zechariah's time in existence and instrumental in scattering Israel. The horn is a symbol of power and pride, and in prophecy stands for a kingdom and for political world power. The ten horns which Daniel saw on the terrible fourth beast rising from the sea denote ten kingdoms, and in Revelation xvii: 12 we read, "The ten horns that thou sawest are ten kings." The four horns in this second vision must be therefore kingdoms – world powers. The number four, as it is well known to every student of the prophetic Word, is found twice in the book of Daniel. Nebuchadnezzar's great image was divided into four parts, each standing for a world power, namely: the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Graeco-Macedonian and the Roman power. The latter is still in existence and will be till the stone smites the image at its feet and pulverizes it. Daniel's vision (chapter vii) brings before him four mighty beasts, the last having ten horns, just as the limbs of the image ended in feet with ten toes. With such a revelation in the book of Daniel it is very easy to understand that the four horns can mean nothing else than the same powers of Gentile rule and supremacy existing during the entire time when the kingdom has been taken from Israel. These four world powers are horns. They unite strength and pride, and are bent upon scattering Israel. They are the enemies of Israel, and therefore the enemies of God. And now the four smiths appear on the scene to fray them – to cast down the horns of the nations. Four horns are overcome and broken down completely by four smiths. It does not follow that the four smiths must be four other powers. The vision seems to teach two facts: first, the horns will be broken and cast down; and in the second place, God has for every hostile power which has sinned and sins against his people a corresponding greater power to overcome it, break it into pieces and cast it down. However, we believe the vision will have its fulfillment in the time of Jacob's trouble. The elements of all the four world powers will then in some way be concerned in the onslaught on Jerusalem – a confederacy of nations; representatives of many nations will come up against Jerusalem, and it will be then that the four horns are broken by the four smiths and the casting down will be done.

The third night vision is one of the most interesting and instructive. As the third one, it forms the climax of the good and comfortable words which were spoken concerning Jerusalem. The number three stands in the Word of God for resurrection, life from the dead. Thus in Hosea, concerning Israel, "After two days Thou wilt revive us, and on the third day Thou wilt raise us up" (Hosea vi: 2). In this third vision Zechariah sees the glorious restoration of Israel, which has been the burden of so many prophecies, and the glory which is connected with that restoration. In this night vision Zechariah hears of a restoration and of a glory which has never yet been fulfilled in the history of God's people. Those teachers of the Word who see in Zechariah's night visions nothing but fulfilled prophecy, cannot answer certain questions satisfactorily, and their only refuge must be a spiritualizing of this restoration. Another thought before we take up this third vision. The vision of restoration comes

after the enemies of Israel have been cast down. That prophecy might be fulfilled; prophecy about a believing, suffering Jewish remnant; prophecy concerning Jacob's trouble, etc., a mock restoration, generally termed a restoration in unbelief, is to take place. There can be no doubt whatever that we are privileged to see the beginning of this restoration of part of the Jewish nation to the land of the fathers in unbelief: It is one of the signs of the nearness of that event for which the Church hopes, prays and waits – "our gathering together unto Him." The world and the lukewarm Christian does not see it, but he who loves the Word and lives in the Word, has eyes to see and a hearing ear and knows what is soon coming. The true restoration, however, will only come as it is seen so clearly in these night visions after the enemies have been overcome, the horns cast down, the image smashed – in other words, after the Lord has come.

We may divide the third night vision into two parts. In the first part a man is seen with a measuring line measuring Jerusalem, and the restoration of the city and its enlargement is promised; and in the other part promises of blessings are given as well as glimpses of the glory which will attend the restoration.

Zechariah sees a man with a measuring line in his hand. The prophet asks him, *Whither goest thou?* And he answers, *To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof and what is the length thereof.* There is nothing here which indicates that the man who starts out to measure the city is identical with the man on the red horse of the first vision. This man here seems to be only a person appearing to impress the coming enlargement of Jerusalem upon the prophet's mind. Similar visions where measuring takes place are found in Ezekiel xli, where the temple of the Millennium is measured, and in Revelation xi, where a reed is given to John to measure the temple of God, which is the temple standing in Jerusalem during the time of Jacob's trouble. Here in Zechariah's vision it is the measuring of Jerusalem. What Jerusalem is it? Of course, the Jerusalem in Palestine, which will, in its restoration, become the centre of the earth. In the new earth, after the thousand years, there will be another Jerusalem in the earth, the new Jerusalem come down out of heaven from God (Rev. xxi: 2). Of this new Jerusalem we read, "And the city lieth four square, and the length thereof is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with a reed twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal" (Rev. xxi: 16). Here is the measurement of the new Jerusalem: As long as it is broad and extending upward into the air. What a wonderful city that will be, the glorious centre of a new heaven and a new earth, our home for all eternity! The man in Zechariah's third vision measures only the length and the breadth of the city because in the coming restoration of Jerusalem there is no height to be measured.

Now follows the appearing of another angel who meets with the one who had been speaking to Zechariah, and he brings from the throne of God a message for the prophet. He said, *Run, speak to this young man saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, by reason of the multitude of men and cattle therein.* The influx of men and cattle to Jerusalem will be so enormous that the city must be enlarged and it will spread out into the plain. Another prophet, the seer of Israel's glorious future, Isaiah, has spoken likewise of this enlargement in the following beautiful words: "As for thy waste and desolate places, and thy land which has been destroyed, surely now shalt thou be too strait for the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away. The children of thy bereavement shall yet say in thine ears, The place is too strait for me, give place to me that I may dwell" (Isaiah xlix: 19, 20). Notice the city is to be inhabited as villages. This denotes the peace which Jerusalem will then enjoy. A blessed security for the city which for so long a time was trodden down by the Gentiles. There will be no walls. No need of walls to shelter men and cattle, for the enemies of Israel have been scattered and broken down, the warfare of Jerusalem is accomplished. At the end of the Millennium, which will have been a thousand years of unbroken peace for the land which for thousands of years knew no peace, Satan, with Gog and Magog, will come against the land and its inhabitants. This last final struggle the Holy Spirit revealed through the prophet Ezekiel (chapters xxxviii and xxxix). It is interesting to notice there the condition of the land and the people as the

enemy who comes up against the land finds them: Thus says the Lord God: It shall come to pass in that day, that things shall come into thy (enemy) mind, and thou shalt devise an evil device: and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwallled villages. I will go to them that are quiet, that dwell securely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates: to take the spoil and to take the prey: to turn thine hand against the waste places that are now inhabited, and against the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the centre of the earth (Ezekiel xxxviii: 10-12). What a wonderful Word our God has given us! How everything is harmony! Zechariah's vision shows what Jerusalem will be in the beginning of the Millennium, and Ezekiel, by the Spirit of God, puts before us the same conditions at the end of the thousand years.

The reason of Jerusalem's peace, security and prosperity will be the glory of the Lord. This glory will be in the midst of the city, and will also form a wall of fire around the city. For I, saith the Lord, will be unto her a wall of fire round about the city, and I will be the glory in the midst of her. Glory and defence are here combined. They always go together. This has been in a degree already the happy lot of Israel in the past, for He guided them with His glory. It was a cloud by day and a fire at night by which the Lord had revealed Himself to His people, and out of that glory cloud He protected them and punished their enemies. How much greater will that glory and defence be in that time of fullness when Israel is no longer a disobedient, stiff-necked people, but the holy people, the kingly nation. What a glory that will be when the King comes back with His kingly glory, attended by the many, many brethren who have suffered with Him and now share His glory! What a glory that will be when He, who is our life, will be manifested, and we with Him in His glory! It will be unspeakable glory. Cry aloud and shout thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee. And it shall come to pass, that He that is left in Zion and he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the blast of judgment and burning. And the Lord will create over the whole habitation of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, for over all the glory shall be spread a canopy. There shall be a pavilion for a shadow in the day time from the heat, and for a refuge and for a covert from storm and from rain. (Isaiah iv.) This glory during the Millennium will no doubt not only hover over the land, but will be visible over the entire earth, and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord will cover the earth as the waters the sea.

It is interesting to see how Talmudical literature falls in with these thoughts. A few quotations from these old writings of the Jews will no doubt be acceptable to the reader. Rabbi Isaac Napcha says: The Holy One said, I kindled a fire in Jerusalem (in wrath) Lament. iv: 11, and I am going to build her up again with fire, as it is said, "I will be unto her, saith the Lord, a wall of fire round about. He that kindled the fire shall surely make restitution." The Pesikta Rabethi has this: What is this: "And for a Glory I am in the midst of her." Is it not the case that the glory of the Holy One is none other than on high, as it is said, "His glory is above the heavens." The glory is in order to show every creature in the universe the superior excellence of Israel, since it is on their account that the Holy One brings down the Shekinah from the highest heaven and lets it dwell in the earth.

We have now in the vision a continued description of that happy condition of Jerusalem and all that is connected with it. First, we notice the summons for the Jews who are then still in dispersion. *Ho, ho, flee from the land of the North, saith the Lord, for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the Lord. Ho, Zion, escape that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon.*

It is not to be expected that when the glory appears and the King of Glory comes again and His feet stand there on the Mount of Olives, that the entire Jewish nation will then live in the land. This will not be the case; only a part of the nation was restored in unbelief, and in the midst of them a believing remnant, whose faith, suffering and salvation we hope to describe later. Two-thirds of all the inhabitants of the land will be swept away in the great tribulation. After the Lord has come,

the others will be restored. It is significant that the land of the North is mentioned here, Late; in the eighth chapter, we read: "I will save my people from the East country and from the West country," but those living in the land of the North come first. Of course, Babylon was meant as far as this vision had anything to do with the restoration which had taken place in part from the Babylonian captivity. The North country, which figures in the coming restoration, is not Babylon, but another land. Russia is directly north of Palestine, and in this northern land, the territory once inhabited by Gog and Magog, about one half of the Jews now living have their homes. About six millions of Jews are living to-day in European and Asiatic Russia. Their deplorable condition in that land of the North is well known, and there, likewise, the national awakening has been the most marked and Zionism has its most ardent advocates. A large multitude is getting ready in the North country for a mighty exodus. Like their forefathers in Egypt, they will flee from the land of the North, and thus prophecy is literally to be fulfilled.

Zion is to separate from the daughter of Babylon. What is Babylon? We hope to answer this question and give a description of her when we come to consider the seventh night vision, the woman in the Ephah. In this third vision of restoration we hear next what is to take place after the glory. The expression "after the glory" means undoubtedly the glorious appearing of the Lord coming with all His saints, sitting upon the throne of His glory, and His glory thus manifested. *After the glory hath He sent Me to the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye.* Who is the one who is being sent to the nations? It is without a question He, whom the Father sent. He sent Him once, the only begotten, into the world in the form of a servant, when He made Himself of no reputation, but Jehovah will send Him again. And when He again bringeth in the Firstborn into the inhabited earth He saith, And let all the angels worship Him. (Heb. i: 6, 7.) The Father sends Him again to establish His glory, and after the manifestation He is sent to the nations which spoiled Israel. All Scripture speaks of this. While He will in His coming overcome the armies of nations who are gathered in that day against Jerusalem, He will likewise continue, after His glory, to judge nations. He will rule in the midst of His enemies. He will do that among the nations what the second psalm declares, thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. *For, behold I will shake Mine hand over them, and they shall be a spoil to those that served them.* In this rule and judgment the Lord of glory will be assisted by the saints. Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? (1 Cor. vi: 2.) Israel will likewise be used in that judgment. While He is the lion of the tribe of Judah who now roars to the dismay of all His enemies, Israel, His people, becomes the lioness. "Behold the people riseth up as a lioness, and as a lion does he lift himself up. He shall not lie down till he eat the prey and drink the blood of the slain." (Numbers xxiii: 24.) Israel will then no longer be the tail but has become the head. The true form of government for the earth has been restored, a Theocracy through His chosen and restored people, the seed of Abraham. Things will then be changed completely. The nations shall take them (the children of Abraham) and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel shall possess them in the land of the Lord for servants and for handmaids, and they shall take them captive whose captives they were, and they shall rule over their oppressors. (Isaiah xiv: 2.) Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks and aliens shall be your vine dressers. (Isaiah lxi: 5.)

We must not overlook the loving words concerning Israel, He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye. Israel is the apple of the eye of God. Through Moses God declared the same truth. He kept him as the apple of His eye. (Deut xxxii: 10.) In Hebrew the pupil of the eye is called the gate, because through it enters the light. Thus Israel is the pupil, the gate, through which the light has come and comes, for salvation is of the Jews. And what is so sensitive, so delicate and easily injured as the apple of the eye? And against this apple of the eye of God the nations and Christendom have sinned. May we believing Gentiles understand more fully that Israel is the beloved one and may we be kept from doing harm to His people.

The overcoming of the enemies of Israel, the spoiling of these nations which spoiled Israel, and all that is connected with it by the sent One of God, the Son of God will be the evidence for Israel that Jehovah has sent Him. *And ye shall know that the Lord of Hosts has sent Me.* The same statement is repeated in this vision, but we shall see in another connection. It is, so to speak, constitutional with the Jew that he wishes to see and then believe, and surely he will see and believe, or rather know, when the Lord comes.

In the tenth verse of the second chapter of Zechariah we read now that the daughter of Zion will sing and rejoice. The reason of her song and joy is, *For lo, I come and I will dwell in the midst of thee.* To-day orthodox Jews are chanting in Hebrew the magnificent psalms which speak of a coming deliverance and manifestation of God's glory, but it is only with their lips, and the heart is still hardened and the eye blinded. The dark night is rapidly approaching, the night in which a believing remnant of Jews will fulfill much of that suffering, waiting, and blessed assurance of salvation which is so clearly outlined in the psalms. And after that, the whole nation will break out in mighty songs of joy, and while there, in the Father's house, the blood-bought hosts will sing their hallelujah, a delivered, cleansed and spirit-filled nation in the earth will shout her hallelujah, in which nation after nation will join, till at last it has been done what seer after seer saw and heard, the earth as well as the heavens filled with His glory, the Kingdom come, and His will done in the earth as it is done in Heaven.

Again, the promise is given that the Lord will dwell in the midst of her. How is this to be understood? Will the Lord dwell continually in person, after his second coming, in Jerusalem? Will He be seen there in His Holy Temple by all who come up to Jerusalem? Some Scriptures indicate that He will be present in His blessed person at different seasons. The strongest statement in this direction is Zechariah xiv: 16. In this passage we have the fact of a yearly coming up to Jerusalem of nations (probably representatives of nations) to worship the King, and that at the feast of tabernacles. His throne, no longer His Father's throne, upon which He sits now, but his own throne during the Millennium, will no doubt be in the New Jerusalem which, as a bright and glorious vision, will be seen then by all who live in the earth way up in the firmament, and the angels of God *ascending* and descending upon the Son of Man. A vice-regent, a Son of David, will occupy David's throne in Jerusalem. The Glory of the Lord will appear in the Holy City, and the new name of Jerusalem will be Jehovah Shamah, the Lord is there. It is impossible to give the details of these glories, for they are not clearly revealed. It is enough to know that the Church, His Body, shall truly be united with her glorified head, and meet her Beloved, her Bridegroom and her Lord. It is enough to know that Israel will surely see the King in His beauty and crown Him Lord of all. Even our brightest imaginations will not reach the glories of that day. Indeed, not half has been told.

The Lord cometh to dwell in Zion. *Many nations shall join themselves to the Lord in that day and shall be My people.* This promise is likewise followed that this will be evidence from which the people will know that the Lord of Hosts has sent Him. How often the orthodox Jew has come to us and told us that when Messiah comes all their enemies will be cast down – there will be peace for Jerusalem and the nation Israel; and then saying, Ah, where is that peace? – behold our enemies! When Messiah comes we shall know Him by what He does for us in overcoming our enemies. Likewise the orthodox Jew will say, Where are the many nations who join themselves to the Lord, the nations who worship the Lord of Hosts? When Messiah has come, he will say, We will know Him by the fact that nations shall join themselves unto the Lord. It will hardly do to tell the well informed Hebrew that there are now Christian nations in existence. Thus the Jew waits for the fulfillment of these prophecies at some future time, and seeing them accomplished he hopes to know then his Messiah and King. Only the small remnant, according to the election of grace, sees Him now by the eyes of faith – Him who is altogether lovely, and in whom alone these prophecies can find their fulfillment. To-day individuals from Jews and Gentiles are joining themselves to the Lord, but in that day of His appearing and manifestation nations will be converted, and many nations shall go and say, "Come ye and let us go

up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths.” “Lift up thine eyes and see: they all gather themselves together – they come to Thee. Thy sons shall come from far and thy daughters shall be carried in the arms. Then thou shalt see and be lightened, and thine heart shalt tremble and be enlarged, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned unto thee. The wealth of the nations shall come unto thee, the multitudes of camels shall cover thee – the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah, they all shall come from Sheba; they shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praises of the Lord.” (Isaiah lx:4-7.) Only then will India and China, South America and Africa be won to Christ and the world converted to God. But the land of Judah is to be the portion of the Lord (verse 12).

This vision of restoration and the coming of glory ends with one of the sublimest exhortations in the Word of God. *Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord, for He is waked up out of His holy habitation.* The exhortation does not belong really to the restoration. It is an appeal to all flesh to be silent before the One who is raised up – the coming One. Now is the time when God is silent. He is silent to the wicked deeds of men. He is silent in regard to the nations who are treading down Jerusalem and who are scattering Israel. The flesh speaks now and is not silent, and the language it speaks is rebellion against God and against His Anointed. And louder and louder speaks all flesh, and in the midst of a boasted civilization, at the dawn of a new century, the days of Noah and the days of Lot are at hand. Gain, pride, possession, expansion, is the universal cry – a mad hunt after Mammon is seen in individuals and in nations; and while the flesh speaks thus, and its language becomes more and more defiant, God keeps silence. But our God shall come and keep silence no longer. Rapidly His day – the terrible day of the Lord – is approaching; the day in which He will roar out of Zion. Oh, what a hush there will come upon those that dwell in the earth when the darkened sun and the falling stars will herald the approach of a God who will keep silence no longer. Oh, dear reader, Jew or Gentile, listen! The signs of the times truly tell us that the Lord who is to come must have already *risen* from His holy habitation. He is coming. Soon He will gather His saints unto Himself before the day of wrath breaks, when neither gold nor silver will deliver. Wilt thou not become silent before Him, the coming One? Will not every reader yield himself to that wooing spirit of Him, whose power does silence the flesh? Be silent all flesh! He is waked up out of His holy habitation!

CHAPTER III

The fourth vision. – Joshua the high priest accused by Satan, but cleansed by the angel of the Lord – The branch. – The stone and the sewn eyes upon it. – The coming peace.

The fourth vision is like the first and second, closely connected with the foregoing one. It gives the crowning event of Israel's restoration. The prophet recognizes in the figure which is seen by him Joshua the high priest, who is standing before the angel of the Lord, while at his right hand stands Satan to oppose him. Joshua was not clothed with his clean, priestly robes, but he wears filthy garments. Jehovah rebukes Satan and terms Jerusalem a brand plucked from the fire. After the accuser is rebuked, the filthy garments of the high priest are removed, his iniquity is forgiven, and he is clothed with festal raiment. The prophet is so carried away with the vision that he asks that a clean mitre is to be put upon his head. And now, after the high priest is thus clothed, the angel of the Lord charges him with an important message: If thou wilt walk in My ways and keep My charge, thou shalt judge my house and also keep my courts. I will give thee access among those standing here, etc. The servant – the branch – is promised, and the stone which is laid before Joshua is to have seven eyes. The iniquity of this land is to be removed in one day, and the vision closes with the peaceful scene, every man inviting his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree.

The authorized version has a superscription for this chapter. "Under the type of Joshua the restoration of the *church* is promised." This is not alone very misleading but also erroneous. No restoration of the church is necessary, and as far as fallen, apostate Christendom is concerned, there is no promise of restoration, but the Lord will spew her out of His mouth. Others speak of this vision as a type of the justification of the sinner, but we need not spiritualize Old Testament visions to get assurance of our justification. The Epistle to the Romans is sufficient for that. The High Priest Joshua stands here for Jerusalem and for the sinful nation Israel. The calling of Israel to be a nation of priests is too well known, so we need not to enlarge on it. But it is a nation stiff-necked, disobedient, unclean and defiled. Disobedience and sin have been the cause of Israel's misfortune and Jerusalem's ruin. What would be a restoration of Israel to the land without a healing of their sins and a regeneration of the nation? It is this divine forgiveness and cleansing of the nation, which so many prophets uttered in Jehovah's name, which is here so wonderfully shown in this vision. Like the priests in the temple, standing before Jehovah, thus Joshua and Israel is before the Lord. Though Joshua is standing before the Lord in filthy garments, yet he is still the High Priest. The filthy garments do not change the office to which God had called him. Oh, wondrous truth, which we meet all through the Word! Israel, though in dispersion and in sin, is still the priest, called by Him who is a covenant-keeping God! And is it not a perfect picture of Israel as it is yet to-day? A priest, but defiled and unclean. In Isaiah lxiv we have part of that wonderful prayer which the remnant of Israel is yet to utter. It begins with that sublime prayer, Oh, that Thou wouldest rend the heavens, that Thou wouldest come, that the mountains might flow down at Thy presence. And then follows the confession: We are all become as one that is unclean, and all our righteousness is as a polluted garment. Alas, how little Israel knows at this present time of such a confession. On the day of atonement the lips confess sin and unrighteousness in similar words, but it is still the lips and not the heart. But at last Israel will confess her guilt and the bloodguiltiness like David did.

In the vision Satan is seen. This is not the enemy who at Zechariah's time tried to hinder the rebuilding of the temple, but it is Satan, the old serpent, the accuser of the brethren, the adversary. He is the enemy of Israel. He has tried in the past to hurt and to destroy the nation of destiny. He knows the purposes of God concerning Israel better than many a learned doctor of divinity, and therefore, he has opposed that people and opposes them still. His opposition has been mostly through nations. How much could be said on this topic! The end of this age will reveal the enemy of Israel, the adversary, as never before in the history of the world. There is to be war in heaven; Michael and his angels going

forth to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred, and his angels, and they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast down, the old Serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the Deceiver of the whole world, he was cast down to the earth and his angels were cast down with him. (Rev. xii: 7-9.) His wrath will be directed against Israel and Jerusalem. It is the time of which Daniel spoke. And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time. (Daniel xii: 1.) Once more Satan will try to destroy the people, but the Lord shall rebuke him. Israel will be again, as so often before, like a brand plucked out of the fire. So it has been in the past. Way back when Israel was in Egypt and God was about to send the deliverer, He called Moses from out of the burning bush – Israel's true type, burning, but never consumed. Oh, how the fire of persecution and adversity has been raging, but again and again the hand of God snatched the burning brand out of the fire at the right moment. The Lord who hath chosen Jerusalem will rebuke Satan. This has not yet come. The coming Lord will commission an angel out of heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he will lay hold on the dragon – the old Serpent which is the Devil and Satan – and bind him for a thousand years, and cast him into the abyss and shut it and seal it over him. (Rev. xx: 1, 2.) Then follows the cleansing of Israel and the new charge, all so clearly given in this vision.

The filthy garments are removed by those that stand before the angel of the Lord. The iniquity is taken away, and in place of the filthy garments there is the rich apparel and the fair mitre upon the head. How blessedly all this is waiting for its fulfillment in Israel's regeneration! When He appears after the times of overturning, He whose right it is, His people Israel will be found by Him in true penitence, acknowledging their offence. It will be a national repentance, a mourning on account of Him, which Zechariah describes in detail in the twelfth chapter.

This will be followed by national cleansing, forgiveness of sin for the entire remnant which is left, and the new birth of the nation by the outpouring of the Spirit. Israel is the nation to be born in a day (Isa. lxvi: 8). This great miracle of divine grace, the regeneration of Israel by the blood of the once rejected King, is spoken of again and again in the Word. The Church has taken it all for herself or spiritualized these promises. We can refer only to a few: "He will turn again and have compassion upon us; He will tread our iniquities under foot; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah vii: 19). "I will take you from among the nations and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. (How *ridiculous* that teachers and preachers refer to this text in defence of *sprinkling* as a mode of baptism.) From all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh" (Ezek. xxxvi: 24-26). "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and I will not remember thy sins" (Isa. xliii: 25). "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto Me for I have redeemed thee. Sing, oh ye heavens, for the Lord has done it; shout ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing ye mountains, oh forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord has redeemed Jacob and will glorify Himself in Israel" (Isa. xlv: 22, 23). And this is Israel's triumphant song: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a priest decketh himself with a garland, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels" (Isa. lxi: 10).

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