

Zechariah 9:1-8

Things look different from a high vantage-point.

The prophecies of the OT provide such a view of the redemptive landscape.

Up to this point in the book, Zechariah has focused on immediate issues, mainly the building of the temple and the restoration of the nation.

Now we come to a prophecy of future events concerning God's coming wrath on the nations that opposed his people.

Summary

Zechariah 9:1–8 portrays God as a conqueror working his way methodically down from the north, overthrowing each of Israel's neighboring enemies in turn.

1. Single Authorship

The question of the authorship of the book of Zechariah has occupied great minds for several hundred years. Today, a large number of scholars consider the second half of Zechariah to have been written by a different author.

What are about the objections to a single author; Zechariah?

First, and most significant, is the citation from Matthew 27:9.

The key to understanding this is to understand that Matthew is actually citing two passages having to do with Judas's betrayal. Since Jeremiah is the more prominent of the two prophets, Matthew mentions only his name.

Secondly, the tone of the second half differs strikingly from the first.

This does not prove a different author, however, especially since the genre and purpose of the chapters are different.

Thirdly, true prophecy is impossible, since man cannot know the future.

The Bible shows men receiving revelation from God, who can and does know the future (**Isaiah 46:9-10**).

In the light of these things, the most reasonable approach is to receive this book for what it is, a prophetic word from God through the prophet Zechariah.

2. Judged Nations vv. 1-7

The first half of Zechariah began with God coming to "cast down the horns of the nations who lifted up their horns against the land of Judah to scatter it" (**Zech 1:21**), and the second half begins by showing this very judgment unfolding.

The oracle begins this conquest in the north (**Zech. 9:1**).

It is most likely that the prophet is referring to the Medo-Persian Empire.

The judgment proceeds to work its way south along the invasion route toward one Persian possession after another (**Zech. 9:2-7**).

The accuracy of these prophecies is seen in the invasion down this very route by the famous Macedonian conqueror, Alexander the Great, ~333 BC.

3. Lord's Salvation vs. 8

Zechariah's prophecy links God's judgment on the nations with salvation for Israel, consoling those who in the prophet's time were afflicted by these very cities.

This has been a constant theme in this book, that however bleak the circumstances, God's people may look to him in faith and find a sure defense.

In chapter 2, God said of Jerusalem, "I will be to her a wall of fire all around" (Zech. 2:5). Now in Zech 9:8, he says, "I will encamp at my house as a guard, so that none shall march to and fro; no oppressor shall again march over them, for now I see with my own eyes." God, Himself, will encamp as a sentry around his people. Although these mighty cities were conquered by Alexander, Jerusalem remained unharmed just as God had promised through Zechariah.

4. Doctrinal Themes

These verses present several themes that are important to Zechariah's overall message and to this second half of his book.

First, we see a doctrine that is much emphasized all through Zechariah, namely, the sovereignty of God.

Secondly, this passage reveals the certainty of judgment upon the proud and wicked. God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble" (James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5).

Tyre's example reminds Christians not to love the world or worldly things. God will judge this evil world, and though it seems so comfortable now it will not escape justice. Tyre's destruction shows the folly of pride, but when we move down to Philistia we see God's judgment on the idolaters there (Zech 9:7a).

Third, we see here that God is the defender of his people.

The coming of God always brings this double-edged sword: wrath upon the wicked and salvation for the godly. This is what the New Testament says about the second coming of Jesus Christ (2 Thess. 1:6-10)

Fourthly, God assures us that he camps before the gate of his people (Zech 9:8). What is true of our lives is also true of our souls. Rom. 8:32-39

So we have here two great truths set together.

No city set against God can stand. No wall can keep him out; no sea can hold him back.

Yet his own house stands secure, for there he stands guard before his people.

Where, then, will you take your stand?

Into whose safekeeping will you commit your soul? "Blessed is he who trusts in the LORD" (Prov. 16:20).