

BOOK OF ZECHARIAH
THE VISION OF THE COMINGS OF MESSIAH
PART 1a-MESSIAH'S FIRST ADVENT
ZECHARIAH 9:8-9

Introduction

The prophets often foretold Jesus' **First and Second Comings in one vision**. They did not see the valley separating these two events.

History records the **partial fulfillment** of two specific prophecies when Alexander's forces arrived at Jerusalem. Even the partial fulfillment of this verse is amazing because it states that during the invasion of Alexander, Jerusalem would be spared. Alexander did spare Jerusalem, and he treated the Jews with great favor. (See Unger, p. 157, Boice p. 194 or Baron, p. 300ff for Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XI, 8:3).

[The Jewish historian Josephus said that the **high priest**, through instructions given in a **supernatural revelation**, put on his holy garments and, with a large company of people who were dressed in white, went outside the city to greet the Greek general. Alexander immediately prostrated himself before the high priest, explaining that in a dream he had been told that he would meet a man of God in this exact garb (*Antiquities*, XI, pp.317-339).]

There in **verse 8**, the word “**encamp**” is translated from a Hebrew military term denoting “**the settling down of an army.**” The reference to “**mine house**” refers to **those belonging to the family of God or God's house which was the temple at that time**. The **temple** is a symbol of the LORD's presence with His people! The LORD God Jehovah (YHWH) would **encamp** around His people with an invisible host. In fact, all gracious protection of God's people throughout their history can be attributed to His watchful care! Amen!

The phrase “**because of the army**” is referring to the army of **Alexander the Great** as a partial fulfillment. The two phrases “**because of him**”.... refers to Alexander. The Jews were not oppressed either on the army's march to or from Egypt despite their defiance of him.

Notice the phrase “**and no oppressor shall pass through them any more.**”

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At this point **the prophecy looks off into the future** to Christ's millennial reign! The adverb “**anymore**” expresses continuance—i.e. **never again!** This moves beyond dual fulfillment and portrays **the final future for God's people!**

Think about a traveler who views a whole mountain range at a distance as single mountain without discerning the different peaks with long valleys between. That is the way that the Old Testament prophets often **beheld the Messiah's person and mission!** They did not see from their distant point of view the interval between **His suffering and the glory of His two advents**. So, His **deliverance of His people from their sin** and His final **physical deliverance of them in glory** are often woven together side by side!

The language here points forward to the **final security** of the people of God. This can only apply to the 2nd coming of the Messiah! For at that time, “**no oppressor**” (**literally, slave drivers**) such as Egypt, Syria, Babylon, Persia, or Greece and Rome, will EVER over run God's people again!

Looking to that time, the prophet Isaiah records:
Isaiah 60:18—“Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.”

The prophet Ezekiel records:
Ezekiel 28:24—“And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor any grieving thorn of all that are round about them, that despised them; and they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.”

God's protection of His people at the time of Alexander was a **foreshadowing of the protection that God will extend to His people Israel as the world rises up against them in the Battle of Armageddon!**

The last phrase in **verse 8**—“*For now I have seen with Mine eyes*”—indicates

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that God will **one day see it happen in real time!**

God has always known in His foreknowledge that Israel would return to the land and be delivered, but at that time He will see it with His own eyes!

So, why all this hoopla over the conquests of Alexander the Great? **His conquests helped to prepare the world for the coming of the Messiah!**

By building Greek cities, encouraging his soldiers to marry women from conquered nations, and spreading Greek culture and the Greek language, he unified the then known world.

When the Romans took over, they found an empire all prepared for them. Greek was the language of literature and commerce. Our New Testament was written in the common Greek language of the people of that day. The combination of Greek culture and Roman government, roads, and laws was what the early Church needed for rapidly spreading the Gospel.

IN VERSE 9 WE SEE THE MESSIAH'S FIRST ADVENT!

We completely turn from the victorious conquests of the great Gentile world conqueror with his mighty army **to the truly great Deliverer!—The Deliverer whose strength does not rest in the power of armies of flesh!**

These two world conquerors are as different as night is from day! Alexander conquered by the mightiest war machine the world had seen up to that time! **Jesus conquered by dying on a cross to make atonement for human sin!**

Here against the background prophecy related to the armies of Alexander the Great emerges **the Messiah—the King of kings and Lord of lords!**

He came the first time, **not to slay His foes, but to provide salvation for them by dying for them!** He came the first time in meekness—not riding a warrior's steed, but riding upon a humble donkey!

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He was unmistakably different from that of all other conquerors!

As Israel recognizes the One for whom they have been waiting for so long, their response is to have no bounds!

“Rejoice” means *“go round and round, be ecstatically joyous.”* It is even reinforced by the adverb *“greatly”* meaning *“exceedingly.”*

The second imperative is **“shout”**, which means *“to raise a shout, a triumphant shout with zealous inspiration.”*

Those commanded to **rejoice and shout** are called the *“daughter of Zion”* and *“daughter of Jerusalem”*—**This is the LORD's people!**

In the third line of **verse 9**, the prophet speaks as if he was actually viewing the scene. The phrase **“behold thy King cometh unto thee”** asks them to **center their attention upon the person of the coming King!** Jesus the Messiah deserves to be the center of attention! Amen!

This brings to mind the admonition of John the Baptist regarding Jesus found in *John 1:29—“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”* And *John 1:36—“Behold the Lamb of God.”*

So, Zechariah reveals that the promised Messiah and the long expected King is coming!

He, who when Israel had their Kings, was promised as the King!

He who is above all other Kings is coming!

He whose kingdom is over all other Kingdoms is coming!

He who is King of kings and LORD of lords is coming!

He is coming to do for His people what they can't do for themselves!

Notice the three characteristics of the coming King:

I. THE MESSIAH-KING IS JUST! (i.e. Righteous!)

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Alexander was not so! In fact, no other king is fully so! Alexander was often **violently unjust** with those **who offended his ego**.

But Israel's coming King is **"just" both in character and in conduct! He is perfect in judgment and sinless in deed!**

Isaiah 11:4—"But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."

The prime prerequisite in any ruler is that he be JUST!

In some of King David's last words, he said:

2 Samuel 23:3—"The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God."

All ruling functions are distorted when justice is absent!

All we have to do is look at the current administration in our own country to see this is the case!

II. THE MESSIAH-KING IS SALVATION!

Man's greatest need for deliverance, is the deliverance from sin!

Messiah came the first time showing Himself as Savior in the spiritual realm by becoming the Savior of the World!

John 3:16—"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Israel, by-and-large, missed the Messiah-King the first time!

They were looking for a King to lead them and deliver them!

But the first time He came it was to bring salvation!

What good does physical deliverance do if you die and go to hell?

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When Messiah comes the second time, He will show Himself as Savior in the spiritual and physical realm by saving and delivering His people and then ruling and reigning the world! History records that Alexander butchered and slaughtered tens of thousands and sold hundreds of thousands into slavery.

Other worldly rulers have bloody hands of destruction, and God's people have been at the forefront of that destruction!

The Bible shows a coming world leader, the Anti-Christ, who will make Alexander and all other wicked, worldly despots of history look weak! He will kill and destroy on a broad scale!

But, when the armies of the world come against God's chosen people at the battle of Armageddon, the Messiah will come again! *Revelation 19:11—"And in righteousness He will judge, and make war"*

Revelation 19:15—"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

THE MESSIAH-KING IS JUST...IS SALVATION...

III. THE MESSIAH-KING IS LOWLY! (i.e. humble, poor, afflicted, submissive to another!)

What a contrast to the proud, dashing, rich, and highly acclaimed world conqueror Alexander. Jesus was in poverty and need and **was rejected and afflicted by evil men!**

An illustration of the Messiah's lowliness is that He would appear *"riding on an ass"* (i.e. donkey)! Not very kingly!

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He presents Himself to His people NOT in outward pomp NOR with a display of worldly power!

(From Solomon's time on no other distinguished person is presented as riding on a donkey!)

What a contrast to Alexander the Great's war horse!

The next phrase more precisely defines the kind of donkey which the Messiah would ride upon. Notice, it will be *“upon a colt the foal of an ass.”* This would be **a young animal, not yet ridden on**, still accustomed to running behind mature donkeys.

Just as a **horse is certainly an emblem of war** so **a donkey foal represents the peaceful character** of the Messiah's first mission of deliverance!

At times we are tempted to seek success through greatness— through demonstrating our personal abilities and power. Instead, our model should be our Savior, who like John the Baptist, demonstrated greatness through humility!

If Jesus had ridden a **war horse** into Jerusalem, He definitely would have **looked more kingly!** If the message He had wanted to convey to the crowds was that He was a valiant conqueror ready to overturn the Roman Empire, He likely would have chosen **a strong horse and brandished a sword!**

But, He had other truths to convey, truths described here in Zechariah's prophecy.
Philippians 2:7-8—“But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and

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became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”

He humbly entered the city on the back of a lowly beast of burden. By doing so, He proclaimed **that He had no interest in earthly political priorities!**

His first coming was to provide salvation for all! His success could only be achieved once He had made salvation possible through His death on the cross!

The multitudes, however, didn't understand this! They were thinking only in terms of **earthly prosperity** and in **freedom from the tyranny of Rome**, so they enthusiastically welcomed Him!

Yet, only a few days later some of these same people were in the crowd that was shouting; *“Crucify Him! Crucify Him!”*

Many people today admire Jesus but do not recognize Him as the Savior of sinners! But, man's deepest need cannot be met until the sin problem is faced and overcome!

For this reason, Christ rode into Jerusalem on a donkey with His face set like a flint toward the cross of Calvary, knowing full well the painful death He would have to suffer there!

Having paid the price for human sin, He was buried in a borrowed tomb. But three days later He arose victoriously from the grave! And 40 days later He ascended on high!

He now is highly exalted at God's right hand and will come again as King of kings and Lord of lords. But the cross had to precede the crown! Without the cross, there could be no crown!

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Conclusion

He wants to be the just Lord and King of your life! But first, He wants to be the Savior of your life! Is He?