

PROPHECY IN THE LATTER PROPHETS

The chronological order followed here is approximately that of Unger in his *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament*.

Obadiah (ca. 840 BC)

Joel (ca. 800 BC)

Jonah (ca. 763 BC [or 800 BC])

Amos (ca. 760 BC)

Hosea (ca. 750-715 BC)

Micah (ca. 740-700 BC)

Isaiah (ca. 740-695 BC)

Nahum (ca. 660-650 BC)

Habakkuk (ca. 609-605 BC)

Zephaniah ca. 640-612 BC

Jeremiah (ca. 626-585 BC)

Ezekiel (ca. 593-571 BC)

Daniel (ca. 603-538 BC)

Haggai (ca. 520 BC)

Today: **Zechariah, cont'd.**

The Post-Exilic Prophets

- Haggai** Both Haggai and Zechariah have an immediate concern: the rebuilding of the temple
- Zechariah** rebuilding of the temple
- Malachi** Malachi has a spiritual concern: the rebuilding of the people

I. Zechariah 13.1-9

- A. In that day the Lord will open a fountain of cleansing for Israel (1)
 - 1. God will remove sin from them (Rm 11.27)
 - 2. Amillennialists sometimes think that we believe all Jews, converted or not, will enter the Millennial Kingdom
 - 3. However, other prophecies show that God will purge out rebels by judgement (Ezek 20.33-38)
 - 4. The Lord will also cut off idols from the land so that they no one remembers them again (2)
- B. The Lord will also remove false prophets from the land (2-6)
 - 1. God will remove the cause of false prophecy, the unclean spirit, out of the land
 - a. This removal could refer to the binding of Satan (Rev 20.2-3)
 - b. It is likely that God will restrain all the rest of the evil spirits as well

2. The Jewish people will have great zeal against the false prophets (3-6)
 - a. Even parents of such will deliver them over to judgement (3)
 - 1) This shocks us, but was a provision of the Law (Dt 13.6-9)
 - 2) The shock underscores the Lord's antagonism to false prophets and false prophecy

Dt 13.6-9 ¶ "If your brother, your mother's son, or your son or daughter, or the wife you cherish, or your friend who is as your own soul, entice you secretly, saying, 'Let us go and serve other gods ' (whom neither you nor your fathers have known,⁷ of the gods of the peoples who are around you, near you or far from you, from one end of the earth to the other end),⁸ you shall not yield to him or listen to him; and your eye shall not pity him, nor shall you spare or conceal him.⁹ "But you shall surely kill him; your hand shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterwards the hand of all the people.

- b. Those who formerly prophesied will seek to cover their former activity (4-5)
- c. The people will subject false prophets to questioning (6)

C. Note: The meaning of verse 6 is controversial

1. Some say the wounds between the hands are marks on a false prophet (Feinberg)
2. Others say that this is a reference to the marks of crucifixion on the Messiah (Unger)

"Though some expositors believed this verse describes Messiah and His wounds, the preceding context and lack of any New Testament citation of the verse in relation to Messiah argue against this view."¹

¹ Constable, Zech 13.6.

Note: The purging of false prophets is part of the purging that ensures only believers will inaugurate the Millennial Kingdom.

D. The prophecy clearly moves to a word about the Messiah in his first coming (7)

1. The Word of the Lord calls to action unnamed enemies against the Messiah
 - a. The Lord names him “My Shepherd” and “My Associate” (“my fellow” kjv)
 - b. This status means that He is equal to or a companion of the Lord
 - c. Thus, the verse is another support to the deity of the Messiah
2. The unnamed enemies attack the Shepherd (see Mt 26.31)

Mt 26.31 Then Jesus said to them, “You will all fall away because of Me this night, for it is written, ‘I will strike down The Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.’”

3. The consequence of the attack: the sheep scatter

E. The rest of the prophecy in this chapter looks to the Remnant (8-9)

1. The tribulations of Israel will end with two thirds of the nation destroyed (8)
2. The remnant (remaining third) will go through the fire, but only to refine them as precious metals are (9)
3. The purging and refining produce people who have a genuine relationship with the Lord (9)
4. Interpretation:
 - a. The language seems to see the purging of the nation in the end times by the antagonism of the antichrist
 - b. But it also sees the survival of the believing remnant who enter a permanent faith relationship with the Lord
 - c. There is once again a close mixture of prophecies dealing with the first coming and prophecies dealing with the second coming in this passage.

II. Zechariah 14.1-21 “In that day... a unique day...”

A. The Lord announces a coming great and terrible day (1-3)

1. The day is one that sees great distribution of the spoil — this is the Day of the Lord (1)
 - a. It is impossible to make this scene fit with any historical battle
 - b. It must be the concluding violence of the Tribulation
 - c. Custer: “the last phase of Armageddon”
2. All nations will gather against Jerusalem for battle (2)
 - a. The nations will succeed in destroying the Jewish nation as an entity in that time
 - b. The city will be taken and sacked, with half the residents captured
 - c. Yet the rest will remain in the city, hoping for deliverance

“This eschatological verse alone—with its statement that ‘the city will be captured’—is sufficient to refute the notion popular in certain circles that ‘the times of the Gentiles’ (Luke 21:24) were fulfilled as of the rebirth of the modern state of Israel. According to Lucan theology, after ‘the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled,’ Jerusalem will be trampled on no more. Since Zechariah 14:2 clearly indicates that Jerusalem will be ‘trampled on’ again in the future, the ‘times of the Gentiles’ would seem to extend to the Messiah’s second advent, when those ‘times’ will be replaced by the final, universal, everlasting kingdom of Daniel 2:35, 44–45.”²

3. At the height of the battle, the Lord will enter the fray to do battle with the nations (3)

² Kenneth L. Barker, “Zechariah,” in *Daniel-Minor Prophets*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelien, vol. 7, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 689 cited in Constable, *Zech 14.2*.

- B. The Lord's intervention will bring dramatic change (this is the Second Coming in glory) (4-7)
1. His feet will stand in that day on the Mount of Olives (4)
 - a. This is the dramatic, visible, personal return of the Lord in glory
 - b. The prophecy says the Mount of Olives will split east and west, forming a great valley between the halves of the mountain
 - c. The people on the ground will flee before the cataclysmic earthquake accompanying the return (5)
 2. The prophecy announces the Lord's return, with all His saints with Him (5)
 3. The whole environment will be changed by the glory of His appearing (6-7)
 - a. The sun and moon will fade away, overpowered by his glory (6)
 - b. As day passes to night, the light from the Lord will continue to shine (7)
- C. The rest of the chapter describes the changes that will come with the Millennial Kingdom (8-21)
1. The living waters flowing from Jerusalem (8)
 - a. One portion of the waters will flow toward the Mediterranean (western) while the other portion towards the Dead Sea (eastern)
 - b. Jerusalem will be the high point, so the living waters will flow in both directions
 - c. The waters will flow in all seasons, not just in winter
 2. The Lord will reign as King over all the earth (9)
 - a. This means the whole globe, not just Palestine
 - b. The NT predicts this reign as well (Rev 11.15)

Rev 11.15 ¶ Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever."

3. Geography will dramatically change in the Kingdom period (10-11)
 - a. The place names regarding the city represent its widest boundaries
 - b. Those who live in Jerusalem will live in safety
 - c. There will no longer be utter destruction
4. The Lord will destroy all the enemies of Israel (12-15)
 - a. Chronologically, these verses return to follow the return of the Lord in verse 3
 - b. In the day of the Lord they will consume away as if dead men standing (12)
 - c. In their terror to escape, they will fight against one another (13)
 - d. Israel will gather the wealth of all the besieging nations (14)
5. All the nations that remain will join to go up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord at the feast of tabernacles (Booths) (16-19)
 - a. Whoever refuses to worship will suffer without rain for their lands (17)
 - b. The Lord will smite the rebellious with plague, specifically mentioning Egypt in this passage (18-19)
 - c. This prophecy reflects what elsewhere is called the Messiah's rule with a rod of iron (Ps 2.8-12, Rev 19.15)
6. Every common item of life will be "Holiness to Jehovah" (20-21)
 - a. The people will devote everything in life to the Lord
 - b. There will remain no unbelievers (Canaanites) in the house of the Lord

For more help on Zechariah see:

- David Baron, *The Visions and Prophecies of Zechariah*
- Charles Feinberg, *God Remembers*
- Merrill Unger, *Zechariah*