

## Book of Zechariah

### Chapter 10:1-12

<sup>1</sup>**Ask rain from the LORD** at the time of the spring rain ... the LORD who makes the **storm** clouds; and **He will** give them showers of rain, vegetation in the field to each man.

**Cole** > (After his story about the battle of Waterloo and the fog blocking the semaphore message Cole writes ...) But the Bible is clear that someday the fog will lift and we will see that all of God's promises are yes in Christ (2 Cor. 1:20). From our limited vantage point, it may not seem so. But seen from the perspective of God's prophetic plan for history, we can see that God *always* fulfills His promises for His people. It may not be in our time or in our way. But God *always* keeps His promises. This should encourage us to pray. As we saw in our overview of Zechariah 9, the prophet encouraged the weak and fearful remnant with the truth that God helps those who are helpless who trust in Him. In chapter 10, he continues this theme by reminding the people of God's promised blessings for Israel. The words, "**I will**," or "**they will**" are repeated throughout the chapter to give assurance that God is not iffy about His plans for His people.

**Ask rain from the LORD** > Compare this passage to verse 2.

**Barnes** > He had promised in **Deuteronomy 11:13** > <sup>13</sup>*"It shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the LORD your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, <sup>14</sup>that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil.*

**Storm** > (Strong's) bright cloud, lightning (From an unused root meaning to glare; a flash of lightning -- bright cloud, lightning.)

<sup>2</sup>For the **teraphim** speak **iniquity**, and the diviners see lying visions and tell false dreams; they comfort in vain. Therefore, the people wander like sheep, they are afflicted, because there is no shepherd.

**Teraphim** > (Strong's) a healer; Teraphim (singular or plural) a family idol



This one was found by a 6-year old boy in Israel in May of this year.

It was the worship of THIS TYPE OF THING that caused the Northern Kingdom to go into captivity and the Southern into exile

**Iniquity** > (Strong's) From an unused root perhaps meaning properly, to pant (hence, to exert oneself, usually in vain; to come to naught); strictly nothingness; also trouble. Vanity, wickedness; specifically an idol

I love the paraphrase **Benson** provides for this verse > What I have said will certainly be verified when, with sincere and pious minds, you apply to God in prayer for his blessing on you and your land; but the case was quite otherwise when your fathers asked for anything of idols; the priests, who answered in the names of the idols, could only give vain answers, which were not fulfilled by the events according to their promises. *And the diviners have seen a lie* — Those who pretended to divine, or predict future things, have uttered falsehoods. *They comfort in vain* — Rather, *they comfort vainly*, or with vain words. This they certainly did, because they promised prosperity to the people though they continued in their sins. *Therefore they went their way as a flock* — They were carried into captivity, and brought into great distress, as sheep are driven away and scattered, when there is no one to guide or take care of them. *Because there was no shepherd* — No ecclesiastical or civil governors, that would faithfully do their duty.

**Utley** > For the most part, Israel did not fall into idolatry after the Babylonian exile, but that sin had been a major cause of the exile. So Zechariah warns against it here. When the Lord did not seem to answer their prayers for rain, the Jews easily could fall prey to false prophets who promised rain through idols, divination, or false dreams. Idolatry involves a reversal of our proper position before God, where instead of submitting to Him, we try to manipulate Him (or other spiritual powers) to get what we want.

<sup>3</sup>***My anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish the male goats; for the LORD of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah, and will make them like His majestic horse in battle.***

**My anger is kindled against the shepherds** > If, in verse 2, He says there are no shepherds ... what does it mean in verse 3 when He says His anger is kindled against the shepherds?

**For the LORD of hosts has visited His flock, the house of Judah** > Make sure to tie this verse to the next.

<sup>4</sup>*From **them** will come the **cornerstone**, from **them** the **tent peg**, from **them** the **bow of battle**, from **them** every **ruler**, all of them together.*

**Them** > (Utley) The pronoun “them” (10:4) is literally “him,” referring to Judah. From Judah will come the cornerstone, the tent peg, the bow of battle, and every ruler.

- *Christ is the cornerstone of His people.* The Old and New Testaments frequently use this designation for Christ
- *Christ is the tent peg of His people.* This refers to the peg in an Oriental tent on which the residents hung many valuables.
- *Christ is the bow of battle for His people.* He is the coming conqueror, who will vanquish all of God's enemies when He returns.
- *Christ is the ultimate ruler of His people.* Some commentators who take the first three terms as referring to Christ object to taking the fourth term in a similar manner, since the word usually refers to a tyrannical or oppressive ruler. They interpret it to mean that all oppressive leaders will depart from Judah when Messiah comes to reign. But the word can have the sense of a strong leader in a good sense (BDB Hebrew Lexicon takes it this way, p. 620).

The **Septuagint** translates this verse as > *And from **him** he looked, and from **him** he set the battle in order, and from **him** came the bow in anger, and from **him** shall come forth every oppressor together.*

**Ruler** > (Strong's) to drive (an animal, a workman, a debtor, an army); by implication, to tax, harass, tyrannize

<sup>5</sup>*“They will be as mighty men, treading down the enemy in the mire of the streets in battle; and they will fight, for the LORD will be with them; **and the riders on horses will be put to shame.***

**And the riders on horses will be put to shame** > Almost all the commentators trace this verse to the victory of the Maccabees in the 160 BC time period. **Clarke** states > The Macedonians, who opposed the Maccabees, and had much cavalry; whereas the Jews had none, and even few weapons of war; yet they overcame these horsemen.

<sup>6</sup>***I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them back, because I have had compassion on them; and they will be as though I had not rejected them, for I am the LORD their God and I will answer them.***

**I will strengthen the house of Judah** > (Benson) I will not only give courage to attempt, but also strength to go through with and finish the undertaking. This was remarkably verified in the wars of the Jews against the Seleucidæ, which wars they had wonderful difficulties, and as wonderful courage and success. (Again ... speaking of the Maccabean wars)

**I will save the house of Joseph** > Significant comment! For understanding > Who were the sons of Joseph? Where were their tribes located? The Lord is once again revealing the bringing together of ONE nation of Israel!

***I will bring them back*** > (Barnes) Zechariah seems to have condensed into one word two of Jeremiah, "I will bring them again" unto this place, and "I will cause them to dwell" safely Jeremiah 32:37. **Kimchi**. It is not a confusion of forms, but the blending of two words into one. The two ideas are here both implied, he will cause them to return to their land, and will cause them to dwell there in peace and security.

***I will bring them back, because I have had compassion on them; and they will be as though I had not rejected them*** > Do you see our salvation illustrated here? WHY is He bringing them back? Because they are now righteous? Because they are now good? Because they now deserve to be brought back? The verse simply says > *because I have had compassion on them*. As a righteous God ... how can He do that? Because, in verse 8 below, it says *for I have redeemed them*.

***<sup>7</sup>"Ephraim will be like a mighty man, and their heart will be glad as if from wine; indeed, their children will see it and be glad, their heart will rejoice in the LORD.***

***Ephraim will be like a mighty man*** > (Barnes) Prophecy, through the rest of the chapter, turns to Ephraim, which had not yet been restored.

Think about Barnes' comment above. These were the folks warned again and again from the time of the first Jeroboam. And they continued in sin until they were taken away. BUT the Lord goes after them and brings them back. That is the God of Love we are seeing in the scriptures.

***<sup>8</sup>"I will whistle for them to gather them together, for I have redeemed them; and they will be as numerous as they were before.***

***Whistle*** > (Strong's) A primitive root; properly, to be shrill, i.e. To whistle or hiss (as a call or in scorn)

***Redeemed*** > (Strong's) to sever, i.e. Ransom; gener. To release, preserve

***<sup>9</sup>"When I scatter them among the peoples, they will remember Me in far countries, and they with their children will live and come back.***

***Kaiser*** > The importance of this passage and its late postexilic date should not be lost by those who interpret the promise of the land spiritually or as a temporal blessing which has since been forfeited by a rebellious nation due to her failure to keep her part of the conditional (?) covenant. On the contrary, this hope burned brighter as Israel became more and more hopelessly scattered."

<sup>10</sup>“*I will bring them back from the land of Egypt and gather them from Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon until no room can be found for them.*”

***I will bring them back from the land of Egypt*** > (Benson) Ptolemy Philadelphus, one of the kings of Egypt, redeemed no fewer than 100,000 of the Jews, and sent them home; God, no doubt, inclining him to be thus remarkably favourable and kind to them.

***Gather them from Assyria*** > (Benson) This was done by Alexander, the son of Antiochus Epiphanes, and by both the Demetriuses, as Josephus relates

***I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon*** > (Benson) Gilead was taken by the arms of the Maccabees, and the cities of Syria, (here signified by Lebanon, a famous mountain in Syria,) by Hyrcanus and his successors.

<sup>11</sup>“*And **they** will pass through the sea of distress and He will strike the waves in the sea, so that all the depths of the Nile will dry up; and the pride of Assyria will be brought down and the scepter of Egypt will depart.*”

***They*** > Very interesting series of interpretations across the various versions. The two most prominent are “He” (18x) and “They” (8x). **Benson** has an interesting take on it that makes a lot of sense. He states > The sense might be more properly expressed, *And he* (Israel) *shall pass through the straits of the sea:* so the LXX. and the Vulgate understand the word. *And [God] shall smite the waves of the sea, &c.* — The expressions allude to the miraculous passage of the Israelites through the Red sea, and the river Jordan; and to God’s destroying the Egyptians, and the Assyrian, or Babylonian empire, in order to the deliverance of his people.

<sup>12</sup>“*And I will strengthen them in the LORD, and in His name they will walk,” declares the LORD.*”