

## Book of Zechariah

### Chapter 12:1-14

<sup>1</sup>The **burden** of the word of **the LORD** concerning Israel. Thus declares **the LORD** who **stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him,**

**Burden** > (Pettersen) 'An oracle' (maśśā') is taken as a heading that introduces chs. 9–11. The same word begins Zech. 12:1 and the book of Malachi ... **Boda** contends that a maśśā' introduces the word of Yahweh that renews prophecy along the lines of earlier prophecy. As a heading, it bolsters the status of the ensuing prophecy.

**Lindsey's** comments reflect the same idea as expressed by **Boda** above > These two oracles contain numerous passages which are counterparts to major themes of the eight visions, thus giving testimony to the unity of the entire Book of Zechariah

**Swindoll** - "Zechariah is second only to Isaiah in its number of messianic passages. Among Zechariah's explicit references to Christ are the angel of the Lord (Zech 3:1-2); the righteous Branch (Zech 3:8; 6:12-13); the King-Priest (Zech 6:13); the cornerstone, tent peg, and bow of battle (Zech 10:4); the good shepherd who is sold for thirty pieces of silver (Zech 11:4-13); the pierced One (Zech 12:10); and the coming Judge and righteous King (Zech 14)."

**Pettersen** > What is envisaged in 12:1–9 is not a further battle to that of chs. 9–11, but another perspective on the ultimate battle that will bring salvation and abundance to Jerusalem and the world.

**Stretches out the heavens ...** > We need to pay a bit more attention to this phrase as the Lord uses it often:

**Isaiah 40:22** > <sup>22</sup>It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, **Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.**

**Isaiah 42:5** > <sup>5</sup>Thus says God the LORD, **Who created the heavens and stretched them out, Who spread out the earth and its offspring, Who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it,**

**Isaiah 45:12** > <sup>12</sup>"It is I who made the earth, and created man upon it. **I stretched out the heavens with My hands and I ordained all their host.**

**The LORD** > (Precept Austin) Notice that by simply observing the key words the general theme of the prophecy of Zechariah 12-14 comes into focus so that we can see that this great prophecy deals with the relationship of the **LORD GOD** with the nation of Israel, its capital **JERUSALEM** and the Gentile nations of the world **IN THAT DAY**.

1The burden of the word of **the LORD** concerning Israel. Thus declares **the LORD** who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him, 2“Behold, I am going to make **Jerusalem** a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against **Jerusalem**, it will also be against Judah. 3“It will come about **in that day** that I will make **Jerusalem** a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it. 4“**In that day**,” declares the LORD, “I will strike every horse with bewilderment and his rider with madness. But I will watch over the house of Judah, while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. 5“Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts, ‘A strong support for us are the inhabitants of **Jerusalem** through **the LORD** of hosts, their God.’ 6“**In that day** I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of **Jerusalem** again dwell on their own sites in **Jerusalem**. 7“**The LORD** also will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of **Jerusalem** will not be magnified above Judah. 8“**In that day the LORD** will defend the inhabitants of **Jerusalem**, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of **the LORD** before them. 9“And **in that day** I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against **Jerusalem**. 10“I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of **Jerusalem**, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn. 11“**In that day** there will be great mourning in **Jerusalem**, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo. 12“The land will mourn, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves; 13the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves; 14all the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves.

<sup>2</sup>***Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah.***

**Behold** > (Peterson) 'Look' (*hinnēh*) indicates the introduction of information that is new or unexpected

**Reeling** > (Strong's) a reeling (from intoxication) - trembling

**A cup that causes reeling** > (Wiersbe) The nations plan to "swallow up" Jerusalem, but when they begin to "drink the cup," its contents make them sick and drunk! History shows that every nation that has ever tried to destroy the Jews has itself been destroyed. It will be no different when the nations collectively attack God's chosen people.

**Precept Austin** > God is speaking and God is orchestrating the events in chapter 12 as emphasized by the "I am" here and the repeated use of "I will" in Zech 12:3, 4, 6, 9, 10. The sovereign God is in total control declaring that He is going to accomplish His ends

**Blayney** > "It is not difficult to perceive, that the prophecies in this and the two following chapters relate to future times, and most probably to those predicted by Ezekiel in the 38th and 39th chapters; where it is said that Israel, after their restoration and return to their own country, would be assailed by a combination of many nations.

**Cole** > - If all that we had to go on was Zechariah 12:2-9, we might conclude that the battle will not be too bad for Israel. These verses show how God will strengthen the nation for battle so that her enemies will be defeated. But Zech 13:7-9 and Zech 14:2-3 reveal that things will get pretty desperate for Israel before the Lord intervenes. The city will be captured, houses plundered, women raped, and half of the city exiled before the Lord fights against the nations. Two parts of the land will be cut off and perish and the third part will be brought through the fire. Only after this will Israel be delivered. God will make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the nations (Zech 12:2).

<sup>3</sup>***It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.***

**Baron** > "The phrase *that day* which is mentioned no less than 14 times in these last three chapters, is indeed "*the day of the Messiah*," but it is the day not of His first advent in humiliation, but of His manifestation in glory. It is, therefore, pre-eminently called *a day for Jehovah* the day set apart and appointed by Him not only for the display of His majesty and vindication of the holiness and righteousness of His character and ways, but it is the day of the manifestation of His Divine might and glory in the destruction of Israel's enemies, and the salvation of His own people.

**I will** > (Precept Austin) > there are 6 "I will" statements by God in Zechariah 12, signifying the omnipotent power of God Almighty, the LORD of armies, will bring the incredible events of this chapter to fruition.

**Severely injured** > (Strong's) A primitive root; to gash -- cut in pieces, make (cuttings) pieces.

<sup>4</sup>"**In that day,**" declares the LORD, "I will **strike** every horse with bewilderment and his rider with madness. But I will **watch over** the house of Judah, while I **strike** every horse of the peoples with blindness.

**Strike** > (Precept Austin) The verb *strike* is used twice in this passage and both times in the Septuagint is translated with the Greek verb *patasso*, which is the very verb used by John in His description of the returning victorious Messiah writing that "From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He *may strike (patasso)* down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty

**Watch over** > (Precept Austin) *Watch over* is *paqach* (Strong's > to open the senses, especially the eyes) which means that Messiah will open His eyes upon the Jews! This is a Hebrew idiom for care and attentiveness.

**Benson** relaying a comment from **Newcome** > This prophecy therefore, he thinks, remains to be accomplished. And many commentators, who are of the same opinion, consider it as a prediction of victories that will be obtained over Gog and Magog by the Jews, upon their restoration to their own land. One circumstance in favour of this interpretation is, that Gog and Magog are represented, Ezekiel 38:15, as riders on horses.

<sup>5</sup>"**Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts, 'A strong support for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through the LORD of hosts, their God.'**

**Feinberg** explains it this way - God brings about victory in a twofold way: first, He overpowers and deprives the enemies of their strength, and then He empowers and fortifies His people to resist and conquer their foes. The prophet makes it plain that the victory will be supernatural. The Lord will work in the hearts of the leaders of His people, so that they will realize and acknowledge that the support given them from the inhabitants of the land is effective only because the Lord is sustaining and supporting His people. They will not assume that they are responsible for the success of their resistance of the vicious attack of the nations against them. The miraculous intervention of God on their behalf will convince the leaders of God's power exerted for their sake.

<sup>6</sup>***In that day*** I will make the clans of Judah like a ***firepot*** among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem.

**Firepot** > **Wikipedia** explains a *firepot* - Given the time-consuming nature of early fire starting, humans eventually began to use earthenware vessels, or fire pots, in which slow-burning fires could be kept alight indefinitely by using small quantities of fuel.

<sup>7</sup>***The LORD also will save the tents of Judah first***, so that the ***glory*** of the house of David and the ***glory*** of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not be magnified above Judah.

**The LORD also will save the tents of Judah first** > (Precept Austin) While the previous passage would suggest the outcome of the battle was dependent on Israel and her leaders, this passage shows that it is Jehovah Who gives deliverance.

**Glory** > (Strong's) beautiful, brave, comely, fair, glorious, honor, majesty

<sup>8</sup>***In that day*** the LORD will ***defend*** the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is ***feeble*** among them ***in that day*** will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them.

**Defend** > (Strong's) A primitive root; to hedge about, i.e. (generally) protect

**Feeble** > (Strong's) bereave, cast down, be decayed, cause to fail, make to fall down feeble, be the ruined

<sup>9</sup>***And in that day*** I will ***set about*** to ***destroy*** all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

**Set about** > (Strong's) A primitive root; to search out (by any method, specifically in worship or prayer); by implication, to strive after

**Destroy** > (Swanson) *shamad* is a verb meaning "be destroyed, decimated, perished, overthrown, exterminated, i.e., pertaining to being in a totally ruined state, which can include death of a person or extinction of an entity."

**Feinberg** > We place the entire passage in the time of the Great Tribulation and more specifically in the War of Armageddon, when the nations of the earth will make their last frantic effort to blot Israel out of existence, only to be met by crushing defeat at the hands of the LORD of hosts Himself."

**Cole** takes us to ***Zechariah 14:2*** to help us understand an extremely important fact.

First the verse > *<sup>2</sup>For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.*

**Cole's** comments > Before God saves the Jews spiritually, He will take them through the awful events of the Tribulation, culminating in the horrifying campaign of Armageddon. Lest you think that God is merely describing what will happen in the future, apart from His causation, in **14:2**, He states, "*For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle...*" Those nations will be accountable for their hatred against the Jews, but behind all events is God, "*who works all things after the counsel of His will*" (Eph. 1:11). When you encounter trials, you are prone to doubt either God's love or His sovereign power ... The Bible is clear that God sometimes uses Satan to carry out His will, but Satan can go no farther than God permits (Job 1-2). It brings far more comfort to know that even severe trials are under God's sovereign will, than to think that somehow they are not.

<sup>10</sup>***I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.***

**Precept Austin** > Now we move from the previous nine verses which emphasized Israel's *physical deliverance* to this most wonderful passage which gives God's promise of Israel's *spiritual deliverance*. (SO very important comment!)

***So that they will look on Me whom they have pierced*** > (Smith) The idea is that they will humble themselves and recognize that they were saved by another whom they pierced.

**Acts 2:36, 37** > <sup>36</sup>*Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ — this Jesus whom you crucified.* <sup>37</sup>*Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"*

**Revelation 1:7** > <sup>7</sup>*Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen.*

***They will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son*** > (Chambers) It is a picture of penitence as vivid and accurate as any found anywhere in the Scriptures.

**They will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn** > (Benson) True repentance will bitterly lament the sins that brought sorrows and pain upon the Son of God.

**MacArthur** > It's strange, isn't it?" Here they are, having just won the battle of the ages! The greatest victory has just been won and their reaction is national mourning. Why? Because they recognize that the very one who came back as their deliverer, was the same one they killed and they pierced when He came the first time.

<sup>11</sup>**In that day** there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of **Hadadrimmon** in the plain of Megiddo.

**Hadadrimmon** > (Institute for Creation Research) Hadadrimmon was a town in the valley of Megiddo (same as Armageddon). The last of the godly kings of Israel and Judah, good King Josiah, was slain by the Egyptian army at Megiddo (II Chronicles 35:20-25), and there was great mourning.

**II Kings 23:29** > <sup>29</sup> While Josiah was king, Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt went up to the Euphrates River to help the king of Assyria. King Josiah marched out to meet him in battle, but Necho faced him and killed him at Megiddo.

**II Chronicles 35:24, 25** > <sup>24</sup> So his servants took him out of the chariot and carried him on the second chariot which he had and brought him to Jerusalem where he died and was buried in the tombs of his fathers. All Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah. <sup>25</sup> Then Jeremiah chanted a song of mourning for Josiah. And all the male and female singers speak about Josiah in their songs of mourning to this day. And they made them an ordinance in Israel; behold, they are also written in the Lamentations.

<sup>12</sup>**The land will mourn, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves; <sup>13</sup>the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves; <sup>14</sup>all the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves.**

**By itself** > (Strong's) From *badad*; properly, separation; by implication, a part of the body, branch of a tree, bar for carrying

**David ... Nathan ... Levi** > (Warren Wiersbe) Note the specific groups of people who will repent (12:12–14): David (royalty), Nathan (the prophets), Levi (the priests). Throughout Israel's history, it has been the prophets, priests, and kings who often led the people astray.