

A Student's Companion To



The Book Of **ZECHARIAH**

by

Roderick Graciano

Copyright Notices

Holman Christian Standard Bible, © 2003 by Holman Bible Publishers.

The Holy Bible English Standard Version, © 2001 by Crossway Bibles.

The Holy Bible: New International Version, © 1984 by International Bible Society.

Holy Bible, New Living Translation, second edition, © 2004 by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

King James Version of the English Bible, © 1997 by the Online Bible Foundation and Woodside Fellowship of Ontario, Canada.

The New American Standard Bible, © 1995 by The Lockman Foundation.

The New King James Version, © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament: English Translation by Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton, © 1870 by Samuel Bagster and Sons.

Septuaginta: With Morphology, Electronic ed. © 1979 by Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.

Abbreviations

ENG	English
ESV	<i>English Standard Version</i>
HALOT	<i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
HB	Hebrew Bible
KJV	<i>King James Version of the English Bible</i>
LXX	The Septuagint (Ancient Greek Translation of the Hebrew Bible)
NAU	<i>The New American Standard Bible</i> , © 1995
NIVO	<i>The Holy Bible: New International Version</i> , © 1984
TLOT	<i>Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>

Permission

Permission is hereby given to copy and distribute all or a portion of **A Student's Companion To The Book Of Zechariah** so long as no portion of it is sold nor used in a work that is for sale, and so long as the author is credited along with www.timothyministries.info as the source, and 2010-2018 is indicated as the date. Any use of this work involving a monetary charge requires the express permission of the author who can be contacted at roderick@tmin.org.

Preface

Thank you to my fellow students of the Word for providing or prompting many of the insights recorded in this commentary. I am grateful, beyond my ability to express here, for the privilege of studying the original-language Scriptures in community.

I begin each section of the commentary proper with an idiosyncratic translation. These translations are idiosyncratic, in that I:

- do not always bring subjects and verbs into numerical agreement but sometimes retain the Hebrew inconsistency,
- sometimes retain the Hebrew word order, and in other instances I render in better English,
- I sometimes over-translate perfect consecutive verbs to express the idea of completed action in the future.

I hope that these study notes will excite your heart with longing for the coming of King YHVH!

Zechariah 14

*** Zec 14.0: A Difficult Passage To Allegorize.**

David Baron pointed out the absurdities of those who attempt to allegorize this final chapter of Zechariah:

Perhaps in connection with no other scripture do the contradictions and absurdities of the allegorising commentators appear so clearly as in their interpretations of this 14th chapter of Zechariah. Thus, according to Hengstenberg, Keil, and others of the older German expositors, who are followed by such English scholars as Pusey and C. H. H. Wright, to whose works I have so often referred in this exposition, "Israel," in this last section of Zechariah, "denotes the people of God in contradistinction to the peoples of the world; the inhabitants of Jerusalem with the house of David, and Judah with its princes, as the representatives of Israel, are typical epithets applied to the representatives and members of the new-covenant people, namely, the Christian Church; and Jerusalem and Judah, as the inheritance of Israel, are types of the seats and territories of Christendom."

And yet, when it is a question of judgment, as, for instance, the statement that "two thirds shall be cut off and die in the land," then, of course, they are agreed that those "cut off" are literal Jews, and "the land" Palestine.

Or again, when it is a prediction which has already been fulfilled, such as the piercing of the Messiah in chap. xii. 10, or the smiting of the shepherd and the scattering of the flock in chap. xiii. 7, then it is to be understood literally; but when the prophet speaks of things of which no fulfilment can yet be found in history, then the words, however definite and particular, must be spiritualised, and "Jerusalem" is no longer the capital of the Promised Land, but "the Church," and "Israel" no longer the literal descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but "the people of God," by which, as is seen in the quotation given above, is meant "Christendom."¹

In agreement with David Baron, I reject such inconsistent spiritualizing, and insist on the Israel-centric and Jerusalem-centric nature of biblical

¹ David Baron, *The Visions and Prophecies of Zechariah: "the prophet of hope and of glory,"* Kindle Edition.

² The consecutive perfect verb envisions a completed event in the future.

eschatology. If we disconnect our interpretation of these passages from their plain references to real people and places, confusion ensues.

*** Zec 14.1-3 §1: A Coming Day Of The Lord.**

Behold, a coming day for YHVH when *the* goods plundered *from you* will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to the battle, and the city will be captured, and the houses will be plundered, and the women will be violated, and half the city will go out in exile, but a remnant of the people will not be cut off from the city. Then YHVH will have come out and fought those nations, as *on the* day of His fight in *the* day of battle.

The Spirit of God has already been speaking about the Day in Zechariah's prophecies (Zec 2.11; 3.9-10; 9.16), and extensively so in the final oracle which begins at Zec 12.1 (Zec 12.4,8; 13.2), but only now does He refer to the Day explicitly as a Day of the LORD. The Day will bring many blessings to the nation of Israel and to the world, but the Day is *for* the LORD, and it is first and foremost His day, the day when He reigns and His name alone is exalted (Zec 14.9).

Nevertheless, the coming Day involves Israel directly, and we must not lose sight of the implications of this verse (and its context) for God's continuing agenda for ethnic Israelites. There is no way we can make Zec 14.1 about the Church: "the spoil taken from you will be divided in your midst" ^(ESV). Nor can the preceding context about national chastening, humbling and repentance be explained as about the Church that has replaced Israel. On the contrary, these precious chapters tell us how God will finally bring to fulfillment all His best promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

*** Zec 14.1-3 §2: Orthography Of The Name *Jerusalem*.**

As in most of its OT occurrences, the name Jerusalem is spelled (in transliteration of the Heb) *Yerushalaim*. The *hiriq*, however, appears under the final *mem*, implying to the Hebrew beginner that the name should be transliterated *Yerushalami* and pronounced to rhyme with *salami*. Instead, the *hiriq* is sounded before the *mem* and the city name rhymes with *you shall eye 'im*. Scholars believe that this orthographic anomaly derives from the fact

that the city name was originally a dual noun, referring to both the lower and upper city at once. Remember that the Heb dual ending (for nouns that refer to a pair of items) is ׁ ׁ , i.e., *patach, yod, hiriq, mem*. The spelling *Yerushalaim* that we have in Zec has this dual ending, minus the *yod*. We do find *Jerusalem* spelled with the *yod* a few times in the OT, as in Jer 26.18: *Yerushalayim*. In modern Hebrew, *Jerusalem* is now consistently spelled with the *yod* in its ending. However, the city name was originally spelled without the *yod*. When the Masoretic scholars (c. AD 700-1000) added the vowel points to the Heb text, they knew that the city name was pronounced *as though* it had the *yod* in its ending, but they were not about to add a consonant to the sacred text, so they put the *hiriq* under the final *mem*. In effect this makes the *hiriq* in יְרוּשָׁלַיִם the one and only instance of a *furtive hiriq!*

*** Zec 14.1-3 §3: The Battle.**

In our Eng versions, the LORD says, “I will gather all the nations ... to battle,” but the Heb attaches the article to the word *battle*, “I will gather all the nations ... to **the** battle.” Here we have an instance of an “anaphoric article,” an article referring to something previously mentioned in the context, in this case referring to the battle mentioned antecedently in Zec 12. This battle had been long prophesied, however (in passages like Isa 13; 42.13; Eze 7; Joe 3), so we also have here an instance of the “well known article” referring to something very familiar to Zechariah’s audience. Indeed, the sieges of Jerusalem by Assyria, Babylon and (after Zechariah’s time) Rome, have foreshadowed this final battle. It is truly *the* battle in that it is the decisive one, ending the day of the serpent, and beginning the Day of the LORD, and so we have here also an “article *par excellence*,” an article whose referent is the ultimate in its class, i.e., the ultimate battle.

There will be another *attempt* to bring a military confrontation when Gog and Magog invade the holy land at the end of the Millennium. However, the LORD will destroy the invaders before any real battle occurs (Eze 38-39; Rev 20.7-10). The battle of Zec 14 is **the** climax of the age-old war; Gog and Magog is only a final skirmish.

*** Zec 14.1-3 §4: “The Nations” In Zechariah.**

The book of Zechariah tells us much about God’s dealings with the Gentile nations. The book opens with God declaring that while He was only “a little angry” with the nations (after all, they were His agents in chastening Israel and Judah for their persistent idolatry, Zec 7.14), “they furthered the disaster” (Zec 1.15) by harassing Israel beyond God’s intent, and by resisting the rebuilding of the temple. In time, God will see that the “horns of the nations” who scattered Judah will themselves be thrown down (Zec 1.21/HB 2.4), since he who touches Zion, “touches the apple of His eye” (Zec 2.8/HB 2.12).

The showdown will come at the onset of the Day of the LORD, when “all the nations of the earth will be gathered against” Jerusalem (Zec 12.3). The LORD “will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem” (Zec 12.9). The LORD Himself “will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle,” and will allow them an initial victory and plundering of the city (Zec 14.2). Then, however, He “will go forth and fight against those nations” (Zec 14.3), bringing utter destruction upon the besiegers. In the end, the plunderers will be plundered (Zec 14.14).

The defeat of the besieging nations will become the salvation not only of Israel, but of the surviving Gentiles. Those “who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts” (Zec 14.16). “Many nations will join themselves to the LORD in that day and will become [His] people” (Zec 2.11/HB 2.15). Israel will become a blessing among those nations (Zec 8.13), so that “many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the LORD” (Zec 8.22). Indeed, groups of people from all the nations will beg Jewish persons for the privilege of accompanying them to Jerusalem. As a result, Zion’s king who first came humbly, mounted on a donkey, will finally rule to the ends of the earth, forever ending war for Israel and speaking “peace to the nations” (Zec 9.9-10).

*** Zec 14.1-3 §5: YHVH Will Go Forth And Fight.**

That YHVH will have come forth² to fight “as ... on a day of battle,” will not surprise anyone who knows that “YHVH is a man of war” (Ex 15.3). In this and the following verse, Zechariah confirms what Isaiah had predicted (Isa 31.4-5),

So will the LORD of hosts come down to wage war on Mount Zion and on its hill. Like flying birds so the LORD of hosts will protect Jerusalem. He will protect and deliver *it*; He will pass over and rescue *it*.

The verb *to fight* in Zec 14.3, is the niph'al, נִלָּחֵם. The niph'al is the usual form of this verb, and we must not press the passive sense. It can mean *be embattled* and probably conveys the idea that YHVH fights and is *also* fought against. The infinitive construct, לִלָּחֵם, translated *he fights/he fought* in our versions, is instead a verbal noun with the masc. sing. suffix: *His fight*. The Spirit speaking through Zechariah is making a comparison to one or more previous battles in which YHVH engaged; He will fight again as He did before in *His* earlier *fight*. So, whereas the NAU and other versions translate “on a day of battle,” accurately reflecting the lack of a definite article in the final phrase, the NIVO and KJV seem to have recognized the implied definiteness and translate with “**the** day of battle.” YHVH will fight again as He did before in *His* earlier *fight* in **the** day of battle (that you all remember). If, indeed, a specific earlier day of battle is in view, it is the battle to bring Israel out of Egypt, when YHVH brought His supernatural power to bear against Israel’s enemies. In that battle at the Red Sea, as in the siege of Jerusalem described by Zechariah, Gentiles consciously waged war against God made manifest!

*** Zec 14.4 §1: YHVH’s Two Feet.**

And His two feet will stand, in that Day, upon *the* Mountain of Olives, which *is* before Jerusalem eastwards, and the Mountain of Olives will be split from its middle eastward and seaward, *forming* a very great valley, for half the mountain will remove *to the* north, and half of it *toward the* Negev.

² The consecutive perfect verb envisions a completed event in the future.

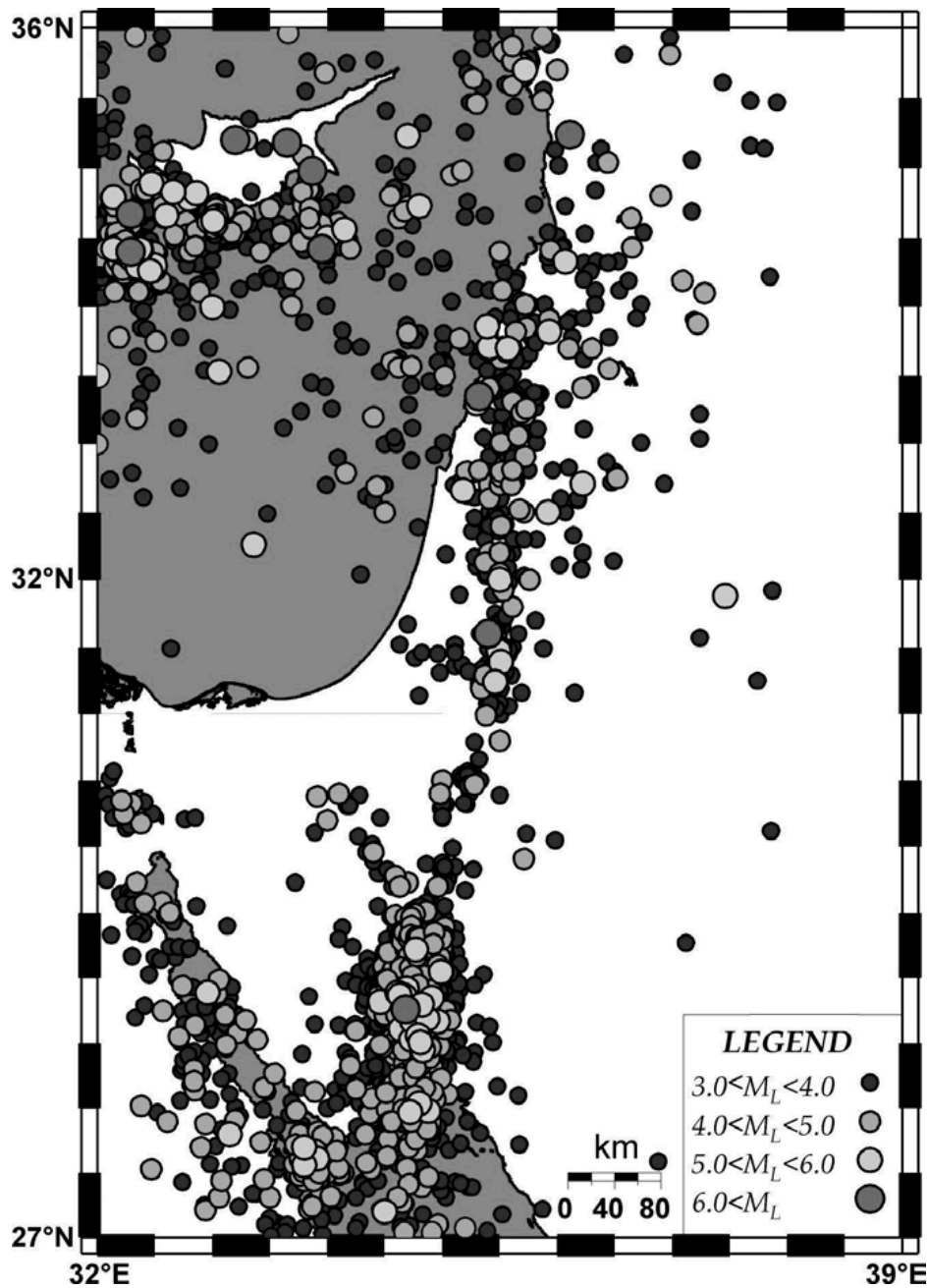
This verse of Zec is the one that the angels in Act 1.11 might have quoted to the disciples — had they been rabbis in need of a proof text instead of angels with divine authority. Being angels, though, they simply declared, “This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come **in just the same way** as you have watched Him go into heaven.” Indeed, one moment Jesus was standing with the disciples on the Mount of Olives (Act 1.12), and the next they saw His feet lifting off from the ground (Act 1.9), and His whole body rising into the sky as a cloud surrounded Him. Just as Jesus ascended, so Zec 14.4 assures us He will descend. As the Heb text says (with my over-translation of the dual noun for feet), “And His two feet will stand, in that Day, upon *the* Mountain of Olives”

Before Zechariah, Ezekiel had seen the pre-incarnate Son of God, surrounded by the radiant glory of Holy Spirit. Ezekiel saw the *Shekinah* stand momentarily upon the Mount of Olives, as the LORD departed from Jerusalem in judgment for Judah’s abominations (Eze 11.14-23). Happily, Ezekiel also saw a vision of the LORD returning from east of Jerusalem, again surrounded by the radiant glory of the Spirit, even as He had departed (Eze 43.1-4). The departure of Jesus from the Mount of Olives, was not a departure in judgment, but like the departure that Ezekiel saw, it held the promise of a future and final restoration for Israel. The return of Jesus will fulfill not only the promise to His disciples, but also the latter vision of Ezekiel. Jesus will return to sit on His throne as King, and the *Shekinah*, the fiery manifestation of the Holy Spirit, He will accompany Him and once again fill the temple.

*** Zec 14.4 §2: The Formation Of The New Valley.**

As the graphic below reminds us, the long fault line of the Jordan Rift valley runs through the Holy Land. The region has always been seismically active, as it was “in the days of Uzziah king of Judah (Zec 14.5). Near the midpoint of the seven-year End Time, “a great earthquake” will level a tenth of Jerusalem, killing seven thousand people (Rev 11.13). This earthquake will begin to turn the hearts of the Israelite people back “to the God of heaven.” Then, at the very end of our age, the greatest earthquake of all time will split

Jerusalem into three parts, and level many cities of the surrounding nations (Rev 16.17-19). Towers will fall, signaling the culmination of “the day of great slaughter,” and the beginning of the new day when “YHVH binds up the fracture of His people and heals the bruise He [Himself] has inflicted” (Isa 30.24).



Epicenters distribution map of earthquakes with $M_L > 3$ in the eastern Mediterranean between 1900-2000 (Geophysical Institute of Israel, 2002)

This ultimate, city-splitting earthquake will probably occur when the Lord's feet touch down on the Mount of Olives, as though the earth is unable to bear the weight, for "then the glory [כְּבוֹדָ = weight, splendor, magnificence] of the LORD will be revealed, And all flesh will see *it* together" (Isa 40.5). As the city splits, so will the Mount of Olives, forming an east-west corridor. The besieged Judeans, making their last stand on the temple mount fortress, will exit the city and escape eastward through this new valley, away from the judgment about to fall upon their enemies.

*** Zec 14.5: Escape Through The Mountains.**

Then you will escape *by* the valley of My mountain, for the valley of the mountains will reach unto Azel, and you will flee just as you fled before the quaking in the days of Uzziah,³ king of Judah; then YHVH my God will come, *and all His* holy ones *will be* alongside you [, Jerusalem].⁴

Zec 14.4 states clearly that the Mount of Olives will split in half from east to west, with half of the mountain moving northward and half moving southward, opening a very great valley. The next verse, Zec 14.5, has presented some difficulties. The initial verb, נִסַּ , means *to flee, escape* or *flow away*. However, the translators of the LXX understood the verb to be סָתַם , meaning *to stop up*. This produced the dramatically different translations of the verse:

³ The earthquake "in the days of Uzziah" is mentioned in Amo 1.1. The Amos prophecy is also about YHVH bringing judgment upon the nations surrounding Israel, as well as upon unfaithful Israel. When earthquakes struck in the ancient world, people often had to flee to hiding places because the collapse of infrastructure rendered them vulnerable to enemies. In the Day of YHVH, Jerusalemites will once again flee from their enemies, but they will be saved by YHVH. The Lord, touching down on the mountain from whence He ascended (Luke 24.50-53; Acts 1.9-12), will cause an earthquake that will prepare a way of escape for the Jewish remnant, and perhaps will create the stream bed for the Temple river of Ezekiel 47, a river that will flow into the Jordan valley and bring life to the Dead Sea!

⁴ The final pronoun at the end of this verse is second-person feminine singular (*you*), rather than third-person masculine singular (*Him*) as in our Eng versions. The feminine pronoun presumably refers to the city of Jerusalem.

NAU: You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah.

LES: And the ravine of my mountains will be shut up, and the ravine of the mountains will be joined to Azal, and it will be blocked up just as it was blocked in the days of the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah.



Paul H. Wright, *Rose Then and Now Bible Map Atlas with Biblical Background and Culture*, (Torrance, CA: Rose Publishing, 2012).

Azel, or Azal, is associated today with Nahal Azal, a streambed situated below the next hill south of the Valley of Hinnom. If the splitting of the Mount of Olives forms a valley pathway exiting the Temple Mount eastward, it doesn't make sense that the valley would reach to this modern

location of Azal which is due south from the Old City, unless it is the *width* of the valley that is meant.

Isaiah 14.24-25 referred to the demise of Antichrist and his forces at this moment:

... just as I have planned so *it* will stand, to break Assyria in My land, and I will trample him on **My mountains**. Then his yoke will be removed from them and his burden removed from their shoulder.

As Antichrist sees the ultimate Man of war (Ex 15.3) touch down on the Mount of Olives, the Judeans on the temple mount will see their God beckoning them to come eastward across the Kidron into the newly opened corridor. As the Judeans flee, the great cloud of witnesses (Heb 12.1), now visible in their glorified bodies will protect the flanks of the fleeing mortals, for these holy ones will have come with their Lord to succor Jerusalem.

*** Zec 14.6: The Lights Go Out.**

And it will have come about in that day *that* there will not be light; *the* luminous *bodies* will congeal.

Compare my translation above to our versions:

In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. ^{NAU}

On that day there will be no light, no cold or frost. ^{NIVO}

And it shall come to pass in that day that there shall be no light, and there shall be for one day cold and frost ... ^{LXX (Brenton)}

The strikingly different versions of this verse have to do with the difficulty in rendering its last two words. The penultimate word, translated “luminaries” by the NAU, is the feminine plural adjective *precious* or *splendid*. As a plural adjective it can be rendered, *splendid [ones]*, and might describe celestial luminaries (Job 31.26), but this normally requires the masculine form of the adjective. In the OT, the feminine plural form is only used here and in three passages modifying the feminine word *stones*. Still, the cosmic context of Zec 14, and the immediately preceding statement that “there will be no light,” points us to the idea of celestial luminaries winking out.

The final word, counting both the *kethib* and *qere* readings, only occurs five times in Scripture; besides Zec 14.6 it appears in Ex 15.8; Job 10.10; Zep 1.12. Translated “dwindle” by the NAU, the word is either the verb *will congeal*, or the noun (in the *qere* reading) *a congelation*. Either way, this provides the idea of dwindling, in the sense of contracting. In regard to a celestial body, it would speak of a drawing in of its light. However, this idea of a congelation also provides the cue for the alternate reading about frost, i.e., a congealing of water.

The LXX translates literally into English, “in that day not shall be light and cold and frost.” It is unclear from the syntax whether the translators meant, “there shall not be light and *not* cold and *not* frost,” or, “there shall not be light, and *there shall be* cold and *shall be* frost.” The NIVO follows the former sense and Brenton follows the latter.

What we know from many other passages is that immediately preceding the dawn of the Day of the LORD, the light of the sun, moon and stars will be darkened, or go out altogether (Isa 13.9-10; 24.21-23; 60.19-20; Joe 2.10-11,31; 3.14-15; Amo 8.9; Mat 24.29; Mar 13.24; Act 2.20; Rev 8.12; cf. Isa 34.4; Eze 32.1-9; Luk 21.25; Rev 16.8-11; 22.5).⁵ This consistent teaching of the prophets lends support to the NAU rendering, “the luminaries will dwindle.”

If, on the other hand, the proper reading of Zec 14.6 speaks of cold and frost, I favor the NIVO (and ESV) interpretation: Though the celestial lights go out, God’s people need not fear that the world will freeze; there will be “no cold or frost” because the Day is about to dawn.

⁵ Isa 30.26 seems like an anomaly since it speaks of the brightening of the sun and the moon. There are two possible interpretations of this verse. It may refer to a *temporary* supernova-like increase in the sun’s brightness that could account for the “fierce heat” of Rev 16.8-9. This interpretation fits with the theme of judgment, and coordinates well with the following verse in which the LORD comes with his anger burning. Alternatively, Isaiah may refer to a *permanent* brightening due to the rising of the Sun of Righteousness (Mal 4.1-2), whose brilliance will be greater than that of the natural sun, yet without causing harm. This interpretation fits with the theme of healing, when “the LORD binds up the fracture of His people and heals the bruise He has inflicted.”

* Zec 14.7 §1: Day One.

For it will have become Day One; it will be known to YHVH, not day and not night, and it will have come about that at the evening there will be light.

Zechariah says regarding the Coming Day of the Lord that “it shall be day one.” This phrase could mean it will be:

1. A single day (Isa 9.14).
2. A time of continuous daytime, no night.
3. A singular, i.e., unique, day (NAU).
4. A particular day (Mark J. Boda).
5. A never ending day (HALOT).
6. *For* one day (cf. Gen 33.13) that there will be neither day nor night.
7. Day One, with the nuance of re-creation after the current luminaries have dwindled or gone out in Zec 14.6 (Mark J. Boda; cf. Gen 1.5).

In favor of the NAU reading, “a unique day,” Jeremiah had previously said, “that day is great, **there is none like it**” (Jer 30.7). This reading also harmonizes with the following phrase, “neither day nor night,” i.e., not like any other day. I am comfortable with the NAU translation, so long as we don’t miss the allusion to Gen 1.5: When the Sun of Righteousness rises on the millennial day, it will mark the beginning of the re-creation of all things (cf. Act 3.21).

* Zec 14.7 §2: Light At Evening Time.

The Day of the Lord and its portending darkness will not be like the preceding days and nights of the world. The darkness will be no more a normal night than was the darkness at the crucifixion. Likewise, the dawning light will not bring about a normal day. The light will not come in the morning but in the evening, and it will not come from the natural sun that has been darkened, but will come from the Sun of Righteousness that “will rise with healing in its wings” (Mal 4.2). If the brightening of Isa 30.26 is to be taken in a positive sense (see above footnote), then the new Day will be unique in that its light will be seven times brighter than that of all preceding days, and yet without scorching or blinding, but rather illuminating all things, even for the blind (Isa 29.18; cf. Isa 9.2).

In addition to its occurrence in Zec 14.7, the exact Heb phrase, לַעֲתָּ- עֶרֶב , “at evening time,” occurs only three other times in the Bible. It is the moment when the dove brought to Noah the proof that the waters of judgment had abated from the earth (Gen 8.11). It is also the moment when Abraham’s servant (who was a type of the Holy Spirit) discovered the bride for the son (Gen 24.11). Also, it is the *final moment* for the enemies God’s people: “Before morning they are no more” (Isa 17.14).

*** Zec 14.8 §1: The Inclusio: Bookending With הָיָה.**

And it will be⁶ in that day *that* living waters will go out from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea, and half to the western sea; in summer and in winter it will be.

In many verses of the prophetic books, the verb הָיָה , *to be*, occurs twice (or more), and its occurrences are often used in parallel:

And it will be in the day, the that, [the] root of Jesse standing as banner of [the] peoples, unto him [the] Gentiles turn, **and will be** his resting place glorious. — Isa 11.10

They will be to Me a people, **I will be** to them [their] God. — Jer 32.38

And **it will be** in the day, the that, **not will be** light ... — Zec 14.6a

And **it will be** at time of evening light **will be**. — Zec 14.7b

However, it is very rare to find the verb both at the very beginning and at the very end of a verse (or clause), bookending the content and forming an inclusio.⁷ We have the following instances:

And it will be in the day, the that, **it will be** [in] every place [in] which **are** there a thousand vine[s] [worth] a thousand [pieces] of silver, to thorn bushes and weeds **it will be**. — Isa 7.23

⁶ I follow standard translation of the verb הָיָה here, though I like to over-translate it when it is a consecutive perfect to express the completed action in the future. The over-translation would be something like, “And it will have happened in that day ...”

⁷ An inclusio is a literary construction involving a repeated word, phrase or whole line, that occurs at the beginning and end of a poetic unit. An inclusio can be used to mark a particular theme, and is considered a form of (and sometimes an extended level of) literary parallelism.

And they will be the pierced of YHVH in the day, the that, from [one] end of the land and unto [the other] end of the land; not mourned and not gathered and not buried, for dung upon face of the ground **they will be**. — Jer 25.33

Son of man, **are** to me [the] house of Israel dross; all of them — bronze and tin and iron and lead — in the midst of a forge silver dross **they are**. — Eze 22.18

And **it will be** that will stand beside it fishermen, from En-Gedi and unto En-Eglaim a drying yard for nets **it will be**, ... —Eze 47.10a

Then we have our wonderful instance in Zec 14.8:

And **it will be** in that day *that* living waters will go out from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea, and half to the western sea; in summer and in winter **it will be**.

Reading these overly literal translations should give us a sense that the bookended verbs add emphasis to the statements that they enclose. After all, the verb *to be* is often redundant; we can translate more efficiently without it:

In that day, living waters will go out from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea, and half to the western sea; they will flow in summer and in winter.

The use of the *to be* verb, therefore, gives us a sense of emphatic affirmation: *it will be!*

Indeed, the verb **יָהָיָה**, *to be*, is an important literary device in the prophetic scriptures. S. Amsler, in the *TLOT*, explains that, in addition to the normal usage of **יָהָיָה**, the prophets employ this verb to “describe events embodying Yahweh’s personal intervention in judgment and grace ...”⁸ In these statements, **יָהָיָה** helps to underscore “the unexpected, incredible, and **yet certain and real nature** of the announced events” (my emphasis). In Zec 14.8, then, the bookending use of **יָהָיָה** tells us that the phenomenon of water bubbling out *of the rock* at the pinnacle of the temple mount, a phenomenon predicted by earlier prophets (see below) will **really happen**, and as unlikely as it may sound to the inhabitants of the region, this water will **really flow all year!**

⁸ Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann, *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1997), p. 362.

*** Zec 14.8 §2: Living Water Flowing Out From Jerusalem.**

Isaiah was perhaps the first of the prophets to look forward to a time when the land of Israel, dry both literally and spiritually, would be renewed by ample water (Isa 35.1-7). He said that “waters will break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the Arabah. The scorched land will become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water....” In a similar vein, Isaiah prophesied that YHVH will make Israel’s wilderness “like Eden, and her desert like the garden of YHVH....” (Isa 51.3).

Then Joel provided details explaining when and how this abundant watering will come about (Joe 3.18):

And in that day

The mountains will drip with sweet wine,

And the hills will flow with milk,

And all the brooks of Judah will flow with water;

And a spring will go out from the house of the Lord

To water the valley of Shittim.

The renewal of the land by abundant water will occur **in the day of the LORD**, when a spring will flow out from the temple that will water the wide and arid Jordan valley at the north end of the Dead Sea! Now, since the “house of the LORD” sits at the very top of Mt. Moriah, for water to flow from it implies a spring emerging from Moriah’s rocky peak (the rock currently under the Dome of the Rock). In other words, Joel predicts a time of miraculous blessing with similarities to the time of God’s provision for Israel in the time of Moses. Not only will water come from the rock again, but it will bring life to the region of the Dead Sea.

Later, Ezekiel (ch. 47) confirmed that in a future time water will flow from under the threshold of the Temple, implying a spring at the very peak of the buried temple mount, emerging from the rock. The great entrance to the Temple sanctuary will face east, and the water will flow out toward the east from the right side of the threshold (as one faces east), trickling past the south side of the altar. The water will flow through the temple courts to the city wall, and out the south side of the city’s Eastern Gate. Five hundred

yards from the city wall, the stream will be ankle deep. A thousand yards from the wall, the water will be knee deep. Fifteen hundred yards out, the water will be waist deep, and two thousand yards out the stream will be a river that must be swum for it can't be forded. Now, water naturally follows the contours of the land, but Ezekiel's vision implies that the stream flows due eastward. If this is the case, there must at this future time exist a cleft in the Mount of Olives, for the two-thousand-yard measurement, going due east from the temple, would take Ezekiel well beyond the other (eastern) side of the Mount. The glorious Man speaking to Ezekiel informed him that the waters will flow all the way down to the Arabah, and to the Dead Sea whose waters it will freshen. Not only will fish abound in the [no longer Dead] Sea, but all along the river there will be fruit trees bearing fruit on a monthly basis, since they are watered by the water flowing from the sanctuary, i.e., from God's presence, and these trees will also bear leaves with healing virtue. The book of Revelation (ch. 22.1-2) helps us understand that the river Ezekiel saw in Jerusalem will mirror the river flowing from the throne of God in New Jerusalem, the heavenly city.

Finally, Zechariah saw that the spring waters flowing from Jerusalem **in the day of the LORD** would divide into two branches. Ezekiel was fully informed about the branch going eastward, but Zechariah saw that a branch would turn west and flow to the Mediterranean. He also saw in his vision that this flow from Jerusalem would not be seasonal but constant, flowing both in summer and winter.

*** Zec 14.8 §3: The Meaning Of The Living Water.**

In Heb idiom, "living water" simply means "running water." However, Jesus often used the phrase "living water" in a double sense, alluding to water's life-giving properties. John leaves us no doubt as to the referent of Christ's metaphorical use of the phrase "living water": "By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive" (Joh 7.39 ^{NIVO}). Now, as we go back to the OT prophets, and read of living water bubbling from the rocky pinnacle of Mt. Moriah and flowing out from under the Temple, we're reminded of an even earlier time when water flowed from the rock at Horeb,

and again at Kadesh, at the bidding of Moses (Ex 17.6; Num 20.8-11; Deu 8.15). Since the water flowed from the rock in two different locales, one might wonder if it was the same rock that somehow travelled with the Israelites. This is not likely, but Paul wrote that there *was* “a spiritual rock that followed them; and the rock was Christ” (1Co 10.4). The living water that will flow from the rock under the Temple, then, will be real water (though infused with extra physical-life-giving virtue), but it will be a constant reminder of the life-giving Spirit that flows from Christ. Apart from our Rock and the Spirit who flows from our Rock, there is no life, but in the Day of the LORD there will be life abundant.

*** Zec 14.9: One Lord, One Name.**

And it will have come about that YHVH *reigns as* king over all the land; in that day YHVH will be one and His name one.

That the LORD will be one, and His Name one, echoes the prophecy of Isaiah:

Isa 2.17 The pride of man will be humbled, And the loftiness of men will be abased; And **the LORD alone will be exalted** in that day, 18 But the idols will completely vanish. 19 Men will go into caves of the rocks, And into holes of the ground, Before the terror of the LORD, And the splendor of His majesty, When He arises to make the earth tremble. 20 In that day men will cast away to the moles and the bats Their idols of silver and their idols of gold, Which they made for themselves to worship...

Certainly, “the LORD alone will be exalted” in that day, no other gods, not powers, authorities or celebrities. He will finally be recognized as the Supreme Being of our universe.

Many have noted the connection between Zec 14.9b and the *Shema* of Deu 6.4, “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!” Much discussion has attached to both verses, often focusing upon questions of monotheism and Trinitarianism. The fundamental idea, though, seems to be that YHVH is *the only one in a given category*. Deu 6.4b is a nominal clause; the Eng versions and LXX insert the verb(s) *to be*. The first instance of the added verb seems unwarranted (NAU), while the second is probably correct (NIVO, ESV, LXX): “YHVH our God **is** YHVH one.” If we understand the predicate as indicating that YHVH is the only **one** in the given category,

what is the category in view? The answer is: The category of gods who are “our God.” In other words, “Listen, O Israel to YHVH our God; YHVH is the **one** and only [who is *our* God]. You shall love YHVH your God with all your heart ...” This is not an admission of ontological polytheism (which is ruled out in Gen 1.1), but only a recognition that Israel had other alternatives with regard to gods that they could choose to love. The emphasis in the *Shema* is upon YHVH being the **one** and only God that Israel is to worship (as was appropriate in view of the promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Deu 6.10, and in view of the covenant confirmed at Sinai).

If we transfer this formula of interpretation to Zec 14.9, we see that the category in view is “king over all the earth,” and we arrive at this meaning: “In that Day, YHVH will be the **one** and only [king over all the earth], and His Name will be the **one** and only [name recognized as sovereign].” There will be no Darius of Persia, there will be no Antiochus of Greece, there will be no Caesar of Rome ruling over the land and over Israel’s leaders. Neither will there be foreign gods or local idols. Israel will answer to the one true God manifest in a Jewish King — Israel will answer to Him alone.

Even if my interpretive formula for Zec 14.9 is correct, it does not exhaust the wonderful meaning of the text. Many Scriptures confirm YHVH’s inherent oneness, but the emphasis upon His Name being one is unprecedented. His Name expresses His character, and the unity of His Name implies that the entirety of His character is expressed in it. As Kenneth L. Barker says, quoting Baldwin, “God’s name Yahweh [the LORD] expressed all He had ever been and ever would be (Ex. 3:13–17).”⁹ God had occasion to reveal Himself in times past as YHVH Yireh (YHVH who will see and provide), or YHVH Tsevaot (YHVH of armies), or YHVH Rophecha (YHVH Who heals you), etc., but now, in His Day, everyone will know

⁹ Barker, Kenneth L. “Zechariah.” In *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, edited by Frank E. Gaebelein, Vol. 7. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986.

without question that He is all of those things and more. His one Name, יהוה, will say it all.

*** Zec 14.10-11 §1: Jerusalem Rises Above A New Plain.**

Will turn all the land *into* a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but she will have risen and remained in her place from *the* gate of Benjamin unto the site of the First Gate, unto the gate of the Corner and Tower of Hananel, unto *the* wine presses of the king. Then *they* will dwell in her, and a curse will be no longer, and will dwell Jerusalem in security.

The hill country around Jerusalem, from Geba (about six miles north of Jerusalem) to Rimmon (about 35 miles south of Jerusalem) where the hills slant down to the northern Negev, the Beersheba valley, will sink and settle into a plain. Jerusalem proper, namely an area just a little larger than the current walled city, and including the temple mount, will rise, or appear to rise as the territory around it settles. Zechariah confirmed what Isaiah had already said: “In the last days, the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains, and will be raised above the hills; and all the nations will stream to it” (Isa 2.2).

The main area of the ancient city will not collapse nor slide away laterally, but will remain solidly on its foundation.¹⁰ This repeats the assurance already given in similar words in Zec 12.6b. The part of Jerusalem nearest the rock pinnacle of Mt. Moriah (called in Aramaic, *Ha Shetiyah*, the “foundation stone,” currently capped by the Dome of the Rock) will not be moved. It will remain solidly in place, in spite of the earlier earthquake that will collapse a tenth of the larger city and kill seven thousand people (Rev 11.13), and also in spite of the final and unprecedented earthquake that will split the “great city”¹¹ into three parts and completely destroy Gentile cities in the region (Rev 16.18-20).

¹⁰ I.e., its site, or literally, its “under part,” (Heb. תַּחַת).

¹¹ The phrase “great city” (referring to the one that is split into three parts) has Jerusalem as its antecedent (Rev 11.8). However, the phrase could refer *kataphorically* to the following entity identified as “Babylon the great,” and thereafter as “the great city” (Rev

Then, the new temple described by Ezekiel will sit “on the top of the mountain” (Eze 43.12), with the new sanctuary replacing previous structures as the covering of *Ha Shetiyah*. Jerusalem will be rebuilt, probably on the north side of the temple precincts, but possibly on the south, to cover an area of about one and a quarter square miles, three and a half times the size of the walled city (not of the larger metropolis) today (Eze 45-47).

The metaphorical meaning of this dramatic topographical change has not been lost upon us. One student commented that it will be as if the very earth itself (as the hills sink to a plain) will bow down before our Rock. Indeed, God’s house will be the single point of stability in a convulsing world, and by its immovability will call mankind to the unchanging Rock of our salvation.

*** Zec 14.10-11 §2: No More Curse.**

When we read in Zec 14.11 that there will be no more curse, Gen 3.17 and Rev 22.3 immediately come to mind. However, there are various words in Scripture that are translated with *curse* in our Eng versions. In Zec 14.11, the Heb word is חָרֵם, *harem*, meaning a ban, or a thing banned, or a thing devoted to destruction or to a temple treasury (cf. Jos 6.18). Since in this passage the cessation of all bans is paralleled with “Jerusalem will dwell in security,” the idea is that no foreign power will ever again conquer Jerusalem, devoting the city to destruction and its riches to a pagan temple.¹² This is a wonderful promise that contrasts with the earlier threat of judgment given by God in Isa 43.28.

In Gen 3.17, the verb *to curse* is אָרַר, *arar*, *bind with a curse*. It is the ground, not a person, nor a city, nor a specific territory that God so binds. The ground, as the source of nourishment for mankind, is “subjected to

17.18; 18.10,16,18,19,21). The reference to the “great city” in Rev 16.19 is probably a Janus phrase pointing backward to Sodom-like Jerusalem and at the same-time forward to Babylon-like Rome.

¹² Kenneth L. Barker, “Zechariah,” In *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Daniel and the Minor Prophets*, edited by Frank E. Gaebelein, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), Vol. 7, p. 694.

futility” (Rom 8.20) for man’s sake that our race might learn dependency upon the God whose law Adam spurned. When the lesson is no longer needed, “the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption” (Rom 8.21); thus, this curse will also be no more.

The Grk word in Rev 22.3, *κατάθεμα*, is a cognate and synonym of *ἀνάθεμα*, *anathema*. This term, like אָנָתְמָה of Zec 14.11 refers to a banned or devoted thing (see the LXX of Lev 27.28; Num 21.3; Deu 7.26; 13.16,18; Jos 6.17; etc.). It appears that Rev 22.3 alludes to Zec 14.11, and like the earlier passage refers to the cessation of the military practice of devoting cities to destruction. This becomes clear when we reconsider the versification of Rev 22.2-3. The versification in our versions seems incorrect; the break should come after the word *curse*. Then verse 2b would read, “and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations, and there will no longer be any curse (ban).” In other words, the nations will be healed and there will no longer be war between them (such as had always resulted in conquest and destruction).¹³

This interpretation of Rev 22.3 may disappoint those who have always read the promise of “no more curse” as referring back to Gen 3.17 rather than to Zec 14.11. However, the reversal of the Gen 3 curse is more than adequately promised in Rom 8. No part of our glorious hope is lost by understanding the Rev 22.3 promise as referring to the cessation of war.

* Zec 14.12-15 §1: Their Flesh Will Rot.

And this will be the plague *with* which will smite YHVH all the peoples which fight against Jerusalem: rotting his flesh and he *still* standing on his two feet, and his two eyes rotting in their sockets, and his tongue rotting in their mouth. And it will have happened in that Day *that there* will occur a great panic of YHVH among them, and they will seize a man a hand of his companion and his hand will rise up against *the* hand of his companion. And also Judah will fight in Jerusalem, and will be gathered *the* wealth of all the nations *that were* surrounding *the city*: gold and silver and garments in great abundance. Also thus will be a plague of the [war]horse, the mule, the camel

¹³ David E. Aune, *Revelation 17–22*. Vol. 52C, Word Biblical Commentary, (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), pp. 1178-1179.

and the donkey and all the cattle which will be in those encampments, *just* like this plague.

The description of men’s flesh “rotting” while they still stand on their feet, and their eyes and tongues rotting in their orifices, always brings to mind a nuclear blast for today’s readers.¹⁴ However, this plague will not pollute Jerusalem in the way that will leave Egyptian cities desolate for forty years (Eze 29.12). Furthermore, not all of the attackers will perish by this flesh-melting plague, but some will survive it long enough to panic and turn violently upon their fellow combatants. Instead of a nuclear blast, Scripture points to an act of Messiah’s words or of His Spirit as that which will bring an end to His enemies. “He merely blows on them, and they wither” (Isa 40.24).

*** Zec 14. 12-15 §2: Judah Will Fight.**

The verb fight (לָחַם) occurs in the niph'al stem, prompting the impulse to translate, “Judah also will **be fought**” However, this particular verb, which once meant something like, “be brought to blows,” is normally used in the niph'al (166 times in the HB), and only occurs four times in the qal stem. The niph'al form of the verb came to primarily express an active meaning, and so *fight* rather than *be fought* is the correct translation. Alternatively, we could translate with something like, “Judah will also be engaged in battle” and thereby preserve a sense of the passive idea in the verb.

The point of Zec 14.14a is that, along with the plague from YHVH, and the panic from YHVH, Judah will constitute a third blow against the besiegers. The glory will go to the LORD for Israel’s deliverance, but Judah will *not* remain passive. Instead, Israel will rediscover the strength and the joy to be had in fighting *on the same side* as their God.

¹⁴ Mark J. Boda, *The Book of Zechariah*, Edited by R. K. Harrison and Robert L. Hubbard Jr., The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016) p. 772.

*** Zec 14. 12-15 §3: The Wealth Will Be Gathered.**

The gathering, presumably by Judah, of the wealth left behind by the besiegers reverses the circumstance described in Zec 14.1. The gold, silver and garments mentioned had probably been looted from Israelite and Egyptian households as the army of Antichrist marched through the Holy Land to attack Egypt and then turned north again to besiege Jerusalem (Dan 11.40-45; notice the reference to the “treasures of gold and silver”). We find it interesting that “garments” will be counted as “wealth” in the End-Time as they were in biblical times. This implies either a clothing shortage during the Great Tribulation, such that the invading army loots jeans and tee-shirts along with gold and silver, *or* that the tactical gear of the invaders will remain useable even after the bodies of the wearers dissolves at the Lord’s command.

The gathering of spoil from the battlefield tells us that there will be no radioactive poisoning of the area. This implies a supernatural, rather than nuclear, demise of the invaders.

*** Zec 14.16-19 §1: The Mandatory Feast Of Booths.**

And it will be [that] every remaining one of all of the nations, the ones going against Jerusalem, also they will ascend as is befitting from one year to the next, [i.e., annually, 1Sa 7.16; 2Ch 24.5] to bow to king YHVH of armies and to celebrate the feast of booths. And it will be [that] whichever one does not ascend from out of [the] families of the earth, unto Jerusalem to bow to king YHVH of armies, also not upon them will there be the rain. And if [the] family of Egypt will not ascend, and not enter, also not upon them [will the rain fall]; this will be the plague [by] which will smite YHVH the nations which do not ascend to celebrate the feast of booths. This will be the sin-offering [i.e., purification] of Egypt and the sin-offering [i.e., purification] of all the nations which do not ascend to celebrate the feast of booths.

Zec 14.16-21 undermines the Replacement Theology which claims that the Church has replaced Israel in God’s redemptive plan. If the Church has replaced Israel in every respect, why will the Lord rule from *Jerusalem* when He returns? Why will the nations celebrate the Feast of Booths (with

its direct reference to the Israelite exodus)? Why will there be a temple in Jerusalem, in which people will sacrifice animals? For those who object that future sacrifices are unnecessary, or that such sacrifices would demean our Lord's death which He died "once for all" (Rom 6.10; Heb 7.27), I answer that future sacrifices will **commemorate** the Lord's atonement (as does the Lord's Supper) even as the sacrifices of antiquity **foreshadowed** it.

The feast of booths, during the seven days of which the celebrants were to dwell in leafy shelters (Lev 23.34-43), commemorated the time when the Israelites lived in booths and tents, *with the LORD*, in the wilderness. It celebrates God's deliverance from bondage, God's gracious provision in the wilderness, and above all God's willingness to cohabit with redeemed man.

Now, there have always been those who have no desire that the LORD, nor His Messiah, rule over them (cf. Christ's parable, Luk 19.12-27), but sadly there are many among our fallen race who would not even want God to live in their neighborhood! Nevertheless, Emmanuel, God with us, is a major theme of eschatology. World history culminates with the "tabernacle (booth) of God ... among men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them" (Rev 21.3; cf. Lev 26.11-12; Eze 37.27). The continuing observance of the Feast Of Booths after the Lord's coming will celebrate the restored Edenic fellowship in which God and man *can* once again commune together in the same earthly paradise. Therefore, those Gentiles who refuse to go up to worship the King YHVH of Armies during the annual Feast Of Booths will be making a statement by their absence: "we don't want this man to rule over us, and we don't want to live with Him!"

The text does not say explicitly that Egypt will *not* go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths, but by its hypothetical statement, v. 18 implies that the Egyptians *might* stay home, as might people of other nations. The lack of rainfall on the land of such rebels, and the resultant food shortages, will be well-deserved chastenings for those refusing to acknowledge their divine Provider. However, these chastenings will be corrective rather than retributive. The word in v. 19 translated *punishment* by most versions has a wider connotation. It is the Heb word חַטָּאת, *hatta't*, meaning *sin* or *sin*

offering. By extension it can mean the punishment, guilt *or* purification of sin. This “punishment” of withholding the rain will result in Egypt’s purification. By God’s grace they will see the connection between their refusal to ascend to Jerusalem and the lack of rain descending upon their land. They will hear again the words of Jesus, spoken at the Feast of Booths long ago, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink” (Joh 7.37-39). As they repent and go to bow the knee before King YHVH, they will come to know Him not only as the One who controls the seasonal rains, but as the source of the living water of the Spirit. In this way, Isaiah’s words about Egypt (Isa 19.21-22) will be fulfilled,

Thus the LORD will make Himself known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day. They will even worship with sacrifice and offering, and will make a vow to the LORD and perform it.

The LORD will strike Egypt, striking but healing; so they will return to the LORD, and He will respond to them and will heal them.

That is the good news, but let us make a practical observation here. Today’s vocal atheists often accuse Christians of blind faith, of believing in something for which there is no evidence. We, of course, do not for a moment concede that there is a lack of evidence for the historical truth of what the Bible records, but let us observe what the atheist is *implying about himself*. The atheist who so confidently dismisses Christianity as lacking in empirical evidence implies that he would readily believe if such evidence were forthcoming. This, however, is a conscious lie at worst and pitiful ignorance at best. In the prophetic Scriptures we see that when King Jesus returns, people who witness his return, and who will be able to see Him enthroned, will still not believe! Zec 14.17-19 implies that Egypt or other nations will refuse to ascend Mt. Zion to worship King YHVH of armies. In Rev 20.7-10 we have confirmation that at the end of the thousand-year reign of Jesus on earth, there will still be human beings eager to throw off the restraints of living under His rule (cf. Psa 2). Indeed, according to Jesus, when the rich man in Hades asked Abraham to send someone raised from the dead so that his five brothers would repent, Abraham replied, “If they do not listen to

Moses and the Prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead” (Luk 16.27-31). The truth is that fallen man, with his vitiated nature, is spiritually dead in his trespasses and sins (Eph 2.1), unable to respond to the truth of the gospel, and unable even to perceive the reality of God’s kingdom without first being born again (brought to spiritual life) by the power of the Holy Spirit (Joh 3.3-5). Our job, then, is to intercede for our atheist friends, asking that God will open their eyes to see, and open their hearts to believe, for only then will they receive the ample evidence that we have to share for the truth of the gospel.

*** Zec 14.16-19 §2: The Eschatology Of Egypt.**

Isaiah 19.18-21 ^{NAU}

In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will be speaking the language of Canaan and swearing *allegiance* to the LORD of hosts ... there will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD near its border.... He will send them a Savior and a Champion, and He will deliver them. Thus the LORD will make Himself known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day. They will even worship with sacrifice and offering, and will make a vow to the LORD and perform it.

Egypt is destined for redemption, but hard times will come first. God has and will judge the nation of Egypt for two reasons: their oppression of His people, and their luring of His people away from trust in Him. Over the millennia, Egypt has suffered much at the hands of conquerors and colonizers. Especially Nebuchadnezzar, but perhaps also the Caesars, and even the British, have foreshadowed the eschatological judgment that will come upon Egypt “in that day”!

The LORD says that He himself will strike Egypt (Isaiah 19.22) and become a terror to it (Isaiah 19.16-17). He will destroy the tongue of the Sea of Egypt (the Red Sea) even as He made a path through it in the first exodus (Isaiah 11.15). The waterways of Egypt, including the mighty Nile, will all dry up, perhaps in a drought like that of Joseph’s seven lean years (Isaiah 19.5-8; Ezekiel 30.12-13; Zechariah 10.11).

However, Egypt’s real enemies will be her own idolatry and spiritism (Isaiah 19.3), as well as a cruel and mighty king who will rule over them

(Isaiah 19.4). Though Isaiah's mention of this king may have some reference to historical conquerors, it surely points to Daniel's "king of the north," i.e., the future despot over the Seleucid region, the future king of Babylon, the Antichrist. This king of the north will plunder Egypt "in the End Time" (Daniel 11.42-43). His sack of Egypt will culminate in complete military devastation (Ezekiel 30.4), and an event (perhaps the complete destruction and poisoning of Egypt's water) that will render the land uninhabitable for forty years. During these forty years, the Egyptian people will be dispersed among the nations, much like the diaspora of Israel (Ezekiel 29.9-12).

Egypt's End-Time ruin will be so horrible that our compassionate God, the same One who will "strike" Egypt, will also "heal" Egypt (Isaiah 19.22). God will send them a Savior (Isaiah 19.19-20)! Their End-Time salvation may consist of deliverance from Antichrist, as well as help in vacating their uninhabitable land.

At long last, Egypt will be restored, but as a lowly nation that will no longer rule over other nations, nor have its own prince (Ezekiel 29.13-16; 30.13; Zechariah 10.11). Their salvation will culminate in the Egyptian people coming to know YHVH. They will worship Him with sacrifice (Isaiah 19.21), for there will be an altar to the LORD there in Egypt (Isaiah 19.19-20). In the Day of the LORD, at least five Egyptian cities will speak Hebrew, though they may only be the *first* five cities that will do so (Isaiah 19.18) — **Will Hebrew be the millennial language? That should motivate us in our study of Hebrew!**

Here's the great miracle: In the Day of the LORD, Egypt will be united, heart and soul, with Assyria and Israel, the three together experiencing God's fatherly blessing (Isaiah 19.24-25). There will be a highway running from Assyria, through Israel to Egypt (Isaiah 19.23). Assyria-Israel-Egypt will be the new Holy Land corridor! In the Day of the Lord, no barriers will remain to keep exiled Israelites from returning to their true homeland; all the remaining Israelites scattered throughout the region of ancient Assyria and the northeastern section of Africa will come home to the King in Jerusalem (Isaiah 27.12-13).

Countless Egyptians, along with the peoples of other nations, will enter the Millennium as mortals, no longer bothered by Satan and his minions, but still contending with their own sinfulness. Thus, they will be held accountable if they do not periodically appear to worship the Lord in Jerusalem. The Egyptians who fail to come during the Feast of Booths, will feel the consequences to their fragile water system (Zechariah 14.16-19). If they refuse to drink of the spiritual water, they will feel the lack of natural water.

*** Zec 14.20-21 §1: Holy Horses And Cooking Pots.**

In that Day, will be *inscribed* upon bells of the horse¹⁵ “holy to YHVH,” and will be the pots in *the* house of YHVH like the bowls before the altar. Then will be every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah holy to YHVH of armies, and will come all those sacrificing and will take from them and boil in them; and no merchant will still be in *the* house of YHVH of armies in that day.

The phrase, קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה, *holy to YHVH*, is exactly what was engraved upon the golden plate attached to the front of the high priest’s turban (Ex 28.36). To have this phrase attached to any other item implies a radical change in the religious culture. According to commentator, Mark J. Boda, to have the phrase associated with “unclean” animals, such as horses, must have been shocking to the original readers and hearers of Zechariah’s prophecy.

This radical, penultimate prediction of Zechariah implies that many more creatures and objects will be dedicated to the honor of YHVH in the coming age than are dedicated to His service currently. It also implies that there will be a sort of leveling among people: though the Levites will have charge of the temple precincts and rituals during the millennium, non-Levites — even Gentiles — will have greater access to the Lord’s presence than anyone (with the exception of the high priest) had *before the veil was torn*.

¹⁵ “The horse” here is singular, not referring to a particular, individual horse (as in Est 6.8-9), but to “the horse” *as a class or category* of animal.

*** Zec 14.20-21 §2: Martial Law Under YHVH Of Armies.**

These verses include a final emphasis upon our Lord's militant character. "LORD of armies" is repeated twice in v. 21 (cf. Zec 14.16,17), providing a bookend for the opening emphasis in the chapter, "Then the LORD will go forth and fight ... as when He fights on a day of battle" (v. 14,3), and for the section that begins with ch. 9, "I will camp around My house because of an army" (Zec 9.8, which see in the commentary above). This emphasis implies that "the horse" in view is the war horse of chariot and cavalry; this is the usual biblical meaning of the phrase, **סוּס**, *the horse* (1Ki 20.21; 2Ki 7.10; Psa 33.17; Amo 2.15; Zec 14.15). The message, therefore, is that any and all martial enforcement in the millennial kingdom will be done at the behest of, in honor of, and according to the just principles of, King YHVH.

*** Zec 14.20-21 §3: No Longer A Canaanite In The House Of YHVH.**

The commentators continue to debate whether the Heb **כְּנַעֲנִי** should be translated literally as *Canaanite* (NAU, and most others), or as *merchant* (or *trader* as in ESV). However, one must ask, When were there ever ethnic Canaanites in the Jerusalem temple? We must recognize the force of the adverbial phrase *no longer* (**לֹא ... עוֹד**) as implying that a known phenomenon would no longer occur, and since ethnic Canaanites never frequented the temple, we are forced to conclude that the correct interpretation of **כְּנַעֲנִי** is *merchant* or *trader*. For other instances of the word used in this way see Job 41.6; Pro 31.24; Isa 23.8.

This prophetic pronouncement is quite prescient, in that the Sadducean temple market had not yet been established in Zechariah's time. In the preliminary "day of the Lord," i.e., the time of Christ's atoning ministry, the temple merchants were a special target of His wrath. In His eschatological Day, there will no longer be any profiteering from worshippers in the temple.

Oh that we would apply the spirit of this prediction now, and eschew even the appearance of making merchandise of the gospel!