

Z'kharyah ~ Part 12

The prophecy of **Z'kharyah** ends in classic prophetic fashion. The nations attack **Yerushalayim**; **God** intervenes and blesses **Yerushalayim** miraculously; **God** announces curses on **Yerushalayim's** enemies; and the peoples of the world go up to **Yerushalayim** to worship. Everything from cooking pots to horses' bells is set apart as holy to the **Lord**, a privilege previously extended only to the temple and priests (Ex 28:36–38) but actually intended for the entire nation of **Isra'el** (Exodus 19:6). For the prophet's audience, this would have been unimaginable yet invigorating.

The Great Battle

14¹ Look, a day is coming for Adonai when your plunder, [Yerushalayim], will be divided right there within you. ² "For I will gather all the nations against Yerushalayim for war. The city will be taken, the houses will be rifled, the women will be raped, and half the city will go into exile; but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city." ³ Then Adonai will go out and fight against those nations, fighting as on a day of battle. ⁴ On that day, his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which lies to the east of Yerushalayim; and the Mount of Olives will be split in half from east to west, to make a huge valley. Half of the mountain will move toward the north, and half of it toward the south. ⁵ You will flee to the valley in the mountains, for the valley in the mountains will reach to Atzel. You will flee, just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of 'Uziyah, king of Y'hudah. Then Adonai my God will come to you with all the holy ones. ⁶ On that day, there will be neither bright light nor thick darkness; ⁷ and one day, known to Adonai, will be neither day nor night, although by evening there will be light.

The venue for **God's** great triumph is the city of **Yerushalayim** under severe duress, not only being plundered but with the enemy dividing up belongings in the presence of the inhabitants (vv. 1–2). Yet the victory involved a *huge valley* that provided a miraculous escape route. On God as Divine Warrior, see note at 9:10–15. **Holy ones** refer to angelic forces from heaven (Psalm 89:5, 7; Jude 14). The otherworldliness of these events is underscored by the absence of ways to keep track of time.

The King's Reign

⁸ On that day, fresh water will flow out from Yerushalayim, half toward the eastern sea and half toward the western sea, both summer and winter.

A perpetual supply of *fresh water* will also emanate from **Yerushalayim**, reaching both east and west, to the **Dead Sea** and to the **Mediterranean**. Such a life-giving river is a common feature in descriptions of sanctuaries, from **the Garden of Eden** to the **New Jerusalem**. The living waters are found in **Yeshua**.

⁹ Then Adonai will be king over the whole world. On that day, Adonai will be the only one, and his name will be the only name. ¹⁰ All the land will be made like the 'Aravah, from Geva to Rimmon in the Negev. Yerushalayim will be raised up and inhabited where she is, from Binyamin's Gate to the place where the earlier gate stood, and on to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hanan'el to the king's vineyards.

Adonai alone, and His name alone, is the starting point for true faith, the opposite of idolatry (Deuteronomy 6:4). *Yeshu'yahu* envisioned **Yerushalayim** to be the highest mountain in the world, with people streaming to it from all over the earth (Isaiah 2:2–3). Here, the picture is of people coming to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (Deuteronomy 16:13–15).

¹¹ People will live there, the curse will be broken, and Yerushalayim will live in safety.

Live in Safety. Yerushalayim, the city of peace, has been fought over more frequently than any other city on earth, and prayed for over the millennia (Psalm 122:6–9). As **God** promised (2 Samuel 7:10–17; Psalm 2:6; Ezekiel 37:24–28; Joel 3:16, 17), she will know permanent righteousness and, with it, peace, rest, and safety.

Punishment of the Wicked

¹² Adonai will strike all the peoples who made war against Yerushalayim with a plague in which their flesh rots away while they are standing on their feet, their eyes rot away in their sockets, and their tongues rot away in their mouths. ¹³ When that day comes, there will be among them great panic, sent by Adonai, so that everyone lays hands on his neighbor, who in turn attacks him. ¹⁴ Y'hudah too will fight against Yerushalayim; and the wealth of all the nations will be assembled—gold, silver and clothing in great abundance. ¹⁵ A plague like this plague will also affect the horses, mules, camels, donkeys, and all the other animals in those camps.

The prophet, one final time, cycles back over the judgment that precedes the kingdom. **God** will strike the heathen forces gathered against **Isra'el** with a supernatural plague similar to His judgment of the **Assyrian** army (Isaiah 37:36), causing a panic so great that they begin to attack one another (cf. Judges 7:22; 1 Samuel 14:15–20; 2 Chronicles 20:23), aiding in the escape of the half. **God** will enable His people to fight. Then **He** will send a widespread plague that extends even to their animals, preventing their use in military endeavors or for escape. This depicts the thwarting of their efforts as God ultimately destroys them by the **Messiah** (Revelation 19:11–16). This very important passage reveals that some **Gentiles** will go into the millennial kingdom alive, along with the redeemed **Jews**.

Celebration of Righteous

¹⁶ Finally, everyone remaining from all the nations that came to attack Yerushalayim will go up every year to worship the king, Adonai-Tzva'ot, and to keep the festival of Sukkot.

The nations that once came up against *Yerushalayim* for war will now come to the city for the three annual festivals, especially the climactic **Feast of Booths**, or **Tabernacles**, in the fall. Like **Ezekiel** before him (46:9–12), **Z'kharyah** envisages ongoing festival worship in renewed Israel but broadens this to include those from beyond Israel's bounds.

All Will Acknowledge the King

¹⁷ If any of the families of the earth does not go up to Yerushalayim to worship the king, Adonai-Tzva'ot, no rain will fall on them. ¹⁸ If the family of Egypt doesn't go up, if they refuse to come, they will have no [annual] overflow [from the Nile]; moreover, there will be the plague with which Adonai will strike the nations that don't go up to keep the festival of Sukkot. ¹⁹ This will be Egypt's punishment and the punishment of all the nations that don't go up to keep the festival of Sukkot.

Along with the promises of **God's** blessings comes a reminder that humans may choose a path that will lead them away from what **God** offers. *No rain will fall on them*; this is the stock language of judgment.

Holiness of the Kingdom

²⁰ When that day comes, this will be written on the bells worn by the horses: "Consecrated to Adonai"; and the cooking pots in the house of Adonai will be [as holy] as the sprinkling bowls before the altar. ²¹ Yes, every cooking pot in Yerushalayim and Y'hudah will be consecrated to

Adonai-Tzva'ot. Everyone who offers sacrifices will come, take them, and use them to stew the meat. When that day comes, there will no longer be merchants in the house of Adonai-Tzva'ot. ¹

The holiness that once resided in the **Temple** will be transferred to the entire city of **Yerushalayim**.

In our next post, we will begin to explore **Mal'akhi**.

¹ Z'kharyah 14:1–21.