

Zechariah 09 - Israel's Postponement of Deliverance Due to Her Rejection of the Messiah; God's Protection of Israel During the Inter-Testamental Period

IV. Two Burdens (Zech 9:1—14:21)

(1) Israel's postponed deliverance due to her rejection of her Messiah (Zech 9:1—11:17)

(A) Divine warrior hymn (Zech 9:1-17)

(a) Judgment on the oppressing nations, through Alexander the Great (9:1-8)

(1) Hadrach (9:1a)

(2) Damascus (9:1b)

(3) Hamath (9:2a)

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The remaining six chapters of Zechariah are divided into two pronouncements ("burdens") from God: Zech 9-11 and Zech 12-14. The first pronouncement describes everything that God wanted to do for Israel at Jesus' first advent, had they accepted Him as their King in the 1st century.

Israel enjoyed a string of victories during the inter-testamental period, leading up to Jesus' arrival. These string of victories for the nation would've continued on, resulting in the inauguration of the millennial kingdom had Israel accepted Jesus as their Messiah.

However, Jesus arrived on a donkey (v9), to bring spiritual restoration to the nation first, not political restoration. Israel, however, was looking for the Messiah to bring in political restoration.

Zechariah 9

IV. Two Burdens (Zech 9:1—14:21)

(1) Israel's postponed deliverance due to her rejection of her Messiah (Zech 9:1—11:17)

(A) Divine warrior hymn (Zech 9:1-17)

(a) Judgment on the oppressing nations, through Alexander the Great (9:1-8)

(1) Hadrach (9:1a)

(2) Damascus (9:1b)

1 The pronouncement of the word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach, with Damascus as its resting place (for the eyes of mankind, especially of all the tribes of Israel, are toward the LORD),

1 The burden of the word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach, with Damascus as its resting place (for the eyes of men, especially of all the tribes of Israel, are toward the LORD),

1 A declaration: this message from the LORD in the land of Hadrach, with Damascus its confederate, because the eyes of humanity will look to the LORD, along with those of all the tribes of Israel.

1 The burden of the word of the LORD in the land of Hadrach, and Damascus shall be the rest thereof: when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the LORD.

- "The pronouncement of the word of the LORD" - a linguistic clue showing the breakdown of the final six chapters into two "pronouncements" or "oracles" from the LORD. This is the beginning of the first pronouncement; second pronouncement begins in 12:1.

— This first pronouncement is upon judgment of the nations who oppressed Israel; the judgment described was implemented by God through Alexander the Great.

— There were a number of nations who came against Israel in the time after Zechariah prophesied these things. During this time, God kept a record, and every single one of these nations was dealt with by God. He used Alexander the Great to mete out His judgment (333-331 BC).

— Based on God's promise to Abraham in Gen 12:3, God will curse those who curse Israel. Alexander the Great was God's instrument to fulfill that promise against Israel's enemies. And all of this was prophesied by Zechariah 200 years before it was literally fulfilled.

- "...Hadrach" - only here in OT; now identified with Hatarikka mentioned in the annals of Assyrian kings as an Aramaean country near Damascus and Hamath against which Assyria campaigned in 772, 755, and 733 BC

— The reference to Hadrach on the 8th century BC stele of King Zakar of Hamath attests to its influence as a name for the entire region of Phoenicia, beyond the Antilebanon mountains from Damascus and South Syria to North Syria in the region of Arpad.

— This was the first enemy of Israel to fall to Alexander the Great after the Battle of Issus in 333 BC. The order of the cities listed in v1-8 seems to correspond with Alexander's line of march through Palestine and the surrounding regions.

- "...Damascus as its resting place" - Damascus was a resting place for those in Hadrach, which was located further to the north

- "...for the eyes of mankind, especially of all the tribes of Israel, are toward the LORD" - indicate the awe of all peoples at the divine judgment brought on their cities

(3) Hamath (9:2a)

(4) Tyre & Sidon (9:2b-4)

2 And **Hamath** also, which borders on it; Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.

2 And Hamath also, which borders on it; Tyre and Sidon, though they are very wise.

2 Also Hamath, which borders on it— along with Tyre and Sidon— indeed they are very wise.

2 And Hamath also shall border thereby; Tyrus, and Zidon, though it be very wise.

- "...Hamath" - the principal city of Upper Syria, on the Orontes. It was Antiochus Epiphanes who named it Epiphania. It shares a border with Damascus.

— At the Battle of Issus in SE Asia Minor (October, 333 BC) Alexander the Great inflicted a defeat upon Darius and the Persians which threw open Syria and Israel to his lightning-like conquests, and exposed Egypt to his victorious armies.

- The prophet has in view the defeat of the historic enemies of Israel: Damascus, Hamath, and cities of the Syrian interior, and then the cities along the Mediterranean coast that stood in the conqueror's way in his victorious sweep into Egypt.

3 For Tyre built herself a **fortress**, And **piled up silver like dust**, And gold like the mud of the streets.

3 For Tyre built herself a fortress And piled up silver like dust, And gold like the mire of the streets.

3 "Tyre built itself a fortification, hoarding silver like dust and pure gold like mud in a street.

3 And Tyre did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.

- "...fortress" - Tyre was a prosperous island city which had previously survived several long sieges (the Assyrians sieged it for five years; Nebuchadnezzar for 13 years). It was finally destroyed by Alexander the Great after only a five-month siege because of God's involvement.

- "...piled up silver like dust" - describes the immense wealth and commercial and economic self-sufficiency (Cf. Ezek 28:4-5; 27:33)

4 Behold, **the Lord will dispossess her** And throw her wealth into the sea; And she will be consumed with fire.

4 Behold, the Lord will dispossess her And cast her wealth into the sea; And she will be consumed with fire.

4 Look! The Lord will evict her, striking at her power in the sea, and she will be consumed by fire.

4 Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire.

- "...the Lord will dispossess her" - Tyre's rapid fall, impoverishment, and destruction by Alexander was caused by God. Alexander *overthrew Tyre in only five months!* He built a causeway, directed new siege engines against it, and exploited a navy amassed from nearby city states.

— After the mainland city of Tyre was destroyed, Alexander built a bridge to the island city using the ruins of the old mainland city, then besieged the island, captured it, killed thousands, enslaved others, and set the city on fire.

— Tyre's wealth and strong fortifications were all cast into the sea (Cf. Ezek 26:4-12; 27:27) showing that no power can prosper apart from the living God.

(5) Philistines (9:5-7)

(i) Ashkelon (9:5a)

(ii) Gaza (9:5b)

(iii) Ekron (9:5c)

(iv) Gaza (9:5d)

(v) Ashkelon (9:5e)

5 **Ashkelon will see *it* and be afraid. Gaza too will writhe in great pain;** Also **Ekron, because her hope has been ruined.** Moreover, **the king will perish from Gaza,** And **Ashkelon will not be inhabited.**

5 Ashkelon will see *it* and be afraid. Gaza too will writhe in great pain; Also Ekron, for her expectation has been confounded. Moreover, the king will perish from Gaza, And Ashkelon will not be inhabited.

5 Ashkelon will see it happen and will be terrified; Gaza will tremble greatly. Ekron will be ashamed of her expectations, Gaza's king will perish, and Ashkelon will become uninhabited.

5 Ashkelon shall see *it*, and fear; Gaza also [shall see it], and be very sorrowful, and Ekron; for her expectation shall be ashamed; and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited.

- Verses 5-7 deal with various groups within Philistia...

- "Ashkelon will see *it* and be afraid" - Ashkelon was causing fear in God's people, so God's judgment of them will be terror about what Alexander the Great was about to do to them

- "...Gaza too will writhe in great pain" - Gaza inflicted pain upon God's people, so Gaza will writhe in "great pain," speaking of what Alexander the Great would do to Gaza

- "...Ekron, because her hope has been ruined" - whatever Ekron was anticipating and hoping for, God says it will not happen (we don't know what their expectation was)

- "...the king will perish from Gaza" - the prophecy circles back to Gaza now, this time talking about the king instead of the people. The king of Gaza will be killed at the hands of Alexander the Great.

- "...Ashkelon will not be inhabited" - Ashkelon, a populous city, will not be inhabited after Alexander the Great is done with it

(vi) Ashdod (9:6a)

(vii) Philistines (9:6b-7a)

6 And a *people of mixed origins* will live in Ashdod, And I will eliminate the pride of the Philistines.

6 And a mongrel race will dwell in Ashdod, And I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

6 A strange people will inhabit Ashdod, and I will eliminate the arrogance of Philistia.

6 And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

- God will destroy the cities and the citizens, and replace them with a mixed race group of people. It was Alexander's policy to mingle different conquered peoples.

— The loss of political independence, the splendor of their cities, and the glory of their temples would be a crushing blow to the Philistines and their pride. That in which they trusted in most would be cut off.

(viii) Ekron (9:7b)

7 And **I will remove their blood from their mouth And their detestable things from between their teeth.** Then **they also will be a remnant for our God,** And be like a clan in

Judah, And **Ekron will be like a Jebusite.**

7 And I will remove their blood from their mouth And their detestable things from between their teeth. Then they also will be a remnant for our God, And be like a clan in Judah, And Ekron like a Jebusite.

7 I will remove the blood from its mouth, along with its abominations from between its teeth. Its survivors will be dedicated to our God; It will be like a clan of Judah, and Ekron will be as a Jebusite.

7 And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth: but he that remaineth, even he, *shall be* for our God, and he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite.

- "...I will remove their blood from their mouth And their detestable things from between their teeth" - the blood and forbidden food (from idolatrous sacrifices) will be removed from their mouths of some Philistines indicates their removal from idolatry to belong to the God of Israel.

- "...they also will be a remnant for our God" - there will be a small subset of believers in God among the Philistines

— There are always those, even in the most evil of cultures, who choose to honor God. Since there is no evidence that this was fulfilled in the invasion of Alexander, it apparently awaits future fulfillment as part of the blessing that will result from messianic rule (Cf. v10).

- "...Ekron *will be* like a Jebusite" - the Jebusites were incorporated into Israel; David purchased the temple mount from Araunah the Jebusite (2 Sam 24:16-24; 1 Chr 21:18)

— We should understand this to mean that there will be those from Ekron (Philistines) who will be incorporated into Israel during the millennial kingdom in the same way the Jebusites were incorporated into Israel and lived in Jerusalem as equals, not as a conquered people (Cf. Joshua 15:63).

(6) Jerusalem (9:8)

8 But I will camp around **My house** because of an army, Because of him who passes by and returns; And **no oppressor will pass over them anymore**, For now I have seen with My eyes.

8 But I will camp around My house because of an army, Because of him who passes by and returns; And no oppressor will pass over them anymore, For now I have seen with My eyes.

8 I will set a garrison around my Temple, to hinder those who might come and go, and to guard against oppressors who intend to invade; for I have taken note of this with my eyes."

8 And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

- "...My house" - God will camp around His house, the people of Israel, which ultimately includes the Temple and the city of Jerusalem. Alexander the Great will come rolling into Israel in the midst of a string of massive military victories, but God will not allow him to touch Jerusalem.

— In fact, history tells us that the armies of Alexander passed by Jerusalem more than once without ever laying siege to it. The ultimate cause of this was God's protection of the city.

— This defense of Jerusalem foreshadows God's final protection of the city in the millennium, when never again will enemies invade Jerusalem (Cf. Joel 3:17).

Alexander's request for tribute was refused by Jaddua, the high priest, who refused to break his oath of loyalty to Darius. Alexander, in a rage, threatened severe punishment upon Jerusalem as soon as Tyre had fallen and he had reduced the Philistine strongholds. Jaddua ordered the population to make sacrifices to God and pray for deliverance. In a dream, Jaddua was told to go and meet Alexander.

When Alexander was not far from the city, the high priest led a venerable procession to meet him. When Alexander saw the vestments, etc., he saluted the high priest, adored the name of YHWH, and said he had seen this in a dream at Dios in Macedonia. Presented with the prophecies of his own career in Daniel 7-8, he treated the Jews kindly and spared the city. [Josephus, Antiquities, XI, 8:3-6.]

At this point in history, things are going swimmingly for Israel...God is using Alexander the Great to exact penalty and retribution upon Israel's enemies and those who had hassled them in the past. God is even sparing and protecting the city of Jerusalem.

Wouldn't it be great if this winning streak kept going? All Israel had to do was recognize and enthrone their Messiah, Jesus Christ, when He arrived. It all came down to Israel accepting their Messiah, and their winning streak would continue right into the millennial kingdom.

However, Israel was looking for a conquering king, someone like Alexander the Great. They were not looking for a "humble" king riding a donkey. They looked for a Messiah who fit into their "box" and Jesus was outside of their box (Rom 9:32). However, because Israel did not recognize and enthrone their Messiah on His terms (His terms are outlined in the Sermon on the Mount), and instead killed Him, the blessings that would've come to them in the 1st century were postponed until a future time.

(b) The Messiah (9:9-10)

(i) First advent (9:9)

9 Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is righteous and endowed with salvation, Humble, and

mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout *in triumph*, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

9 "Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion; cry out, daughter of Jerusalem! Look! Your king is coming to you. He is righteous, and he is able to save. He is humble, and is riding on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he *is* just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

- "Rejoice greatly" - Zion and Jerusalem, representing the nation of Israel, are called to rejoice in the coming of their glorious King. The nations trembled at the coming of Alexander, but the people of Israel are exhorted to "rejoice greatly" at the presence of King Messiah.

- "...daughter of Zion" - personified as the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Cf. 2:10; Is 1:8)

- "...daughter of Jerusalem" - representing the whole nation of Israel

- "...your king is coming to you" - both groups, everyone in Israel, was exhorted to welcome the coming King not with fear but with glad rejoicing. The King here refers to their long-awaited Messiah, Jesus Christ (Cf. Is 9:5-7; Micah 5:2-4; Luke 1:32-33).

— He comes not only *to* them but *for* them, for their benefit and salvation. Alexander came to break down and destroy, but this King comes to save and redeem. Alexander came with pomp and pride, Israel's King will come in peace, riding on a donkey rather than a war horse.

- "...righteous" - describes both His character and His reign (Cf. Ps 45:6-7; Is 11:1-5; 32:17; Jer 23:5-6; 33:15-16)

- "...endowed with salvation" - He will come as a Deliverer, as One to give salvation to others (Cf. Is 62:11)

- "...mounted on a donkey" - His peaceful entrance, riding on a donkey, was fulfilled in Matt 21:1-5 when He presented Himself to Israel at the Triumphal Entry

— "donkey" - from extra-biblical literature we know that when ancient kings rode a donkey, instead of a war stallion, they came in peace.

Irrefutably Documented

Liberal and destructive criticism of the Bible, adept in its divisive tactics through long practice on the Pentateuch, Isaiah, and Daniel, would have us believe that chapters 9 to 14 were not from the hand of Zechariah, but from some unknown writer. The arguments, when carefully studied, are sometimes far-fetched, sometimes puerile, always baseless.

[Feinberg]

To fully appreciate the remarkable significance of the following, and the correlary prophecies in Daniel, it is essential to realize that the entire OT (Genesis to Malachi) was translated into Greek prior to 270 BC, *almost three centuries before* Christ was born. This is a well-known established fact of secular history.

After his conquest of the Babylonian Empire, Alexander the Great promoted the Greek language throughout the known world, and thus almost everyone spoke Greek. Even among the Jews, the Hebrew language fell into disuse, being reserved primarily for ceremonial purposes.

The Septuagint

In order to make the Jewish Scriptures (what we call the OT) available to the average Jewish believer, a project was undertaken to translate the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. Seventy scholars were commissioned to complete this work and the result is known as the "Septuagint" (meaning "70") translation of the OT (this is often abbreviated "LXX"). It is critical to our interest to establish that the book of Daniel was in documented form almost three centuries before Christ was born. The Book of Daniel is actually one of the most authenticated books of the OT, historically and archaeologically.

The entire age of the church fits between Zech 9:9 and 9:10, just as it does between Is 9:6 and 9:7 and after the comma in Is 61:2. [Wiersbe]

(ii) Second advent (9:10)

10 And **I will eliminate** the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be eliminated. And **He will speak peace to the nations;** And **His dominion will be from sea to sea,** And from the *Euphrates* River to the ends of the earth.

10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.

10 I will banish chariots from Ephraim and horses from Jerusalem. War weapons will be banished, and your king will speak peace to the nations. His dominion will extend from sea to sea, and from the River to the farthest portion of the earth.

10 And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion *shall be* from sea *even* to sea, and from the river *even* to the ends of the earth.

- "...I will eliminate" - at His Second Coming, the King will remove these instruments of war from His people and from all the nations. No more reliance is to be placed in these carnal instruments of war because the Prince of Peace reigns.

- "...He will speak peace to the nations" - the King will command peace and peace will be brought to pass. His word of authority accomplishes what man could never bring about by his own schemes. This kingdom of peace will extend throughout the world.
- This is when lasting world peace will materialize (Cf. Is 2:4; Micah 4:3). God's destruction of war instruments—removing the chariots, the war horses, and the battle bow—signifies the end of war in the millennium.
- "...His dominion will be from sea to sea" - the peaceful rule of the messianic King from "sea to sea" and from "the River" (the Euphrates, Micah 7:12; Is 7:20) to the ends of the earth.
- These expressions clearly indicate the worldwide extent of the messianic kingdom
- Many (amillennial) scholars today like to deny an earthly millennial kingdom by saying that after the second coming is the "eschaton." However, Rev 21:1 tells us that there will be no "sea" in heaven (the "eschaton").

The references in "sea to sea" and "from the river to the ends of the earth" cannot be restricted to the Holy Land. From Psalm 72:8 and other parallel passages, from the absence of the definite article in these phrases of our verse, and from the general force of the prophetic Scriptures, we are driven to the conclusion that the reign of Messiah will be centered in the Holy Land and will extend to the ends of the earth. His will be a universal reign. [Feinberg]

As woven throughout Zechariah's message, the promise, based on God's covenantal obligations, of final restoration of the Jewish people to their land from wherever they have been dispersed is reiterated (v11-13). When the Lord establishes His kingdom through the Messiah, Israel will be richly blessed with both fertility and prosperity. The Jewish people themselves will participate in the judgment of the Lord over their national enemies, being led into holy war by their supernaturally enabled Messianic King (v13-17).

(c) God's protection of Israel during the Inter-testamental period (from Antiochus IV Epiphanes) (9:11-17)

(i) Blood covenant (9:11a)

(ii) Prisoners liberated (9:11b-12)

11 As for you also, **because of the blood of My covenant with you**, I have set your **prisoners** free from the **waterless pit**.

11 As for you also, because of the blood of *My* covenant with you, I have set your prisoners free from the waterless pit.

11 Now concerning you and my blood covenant with you, I have liberated your prisoners from a waterless pit.

11 As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein *is* no water.

- "...because of the blood of *My* covenant" - God's faithfulness to His covenants with Israel is His basis for delivering her from worldwide dispersion

— The Abrahamic Covenant is a covenant of "blood" because it was ratified with the blood of severed animals (Gen 15:8-21)

— The Exodus, the most important redemptive event in history other than the Cross, happened because God remembered His covenant with Israel (Ex 2:24; Cf. Ezek 36:22)

- "...with you" - Israel didn't make a covenant with God, God made a covenant with them

- While Zechariah was giving these prophecies, the 2nd and 3rd returns from Babylon were yet to take place (1st return: 538-515 BC; 2nd: 458-457 BC; 3rd: 444-432 BC)

— The immediate addressees in these verses may have been Jewish exiles still in Babylon, but the covenant-fulfillment theme suggests an ultimate reference to Israel's end-time regathering [Walvoord]

— God promises restoration and blessing for those Jewish exiles who are still in Babylon...because of His covenant with them

— The nation's future hope (messianic deliverance) was the basis for contemporary encouragement in Zechariah's day

- "...prisoners" - the exiled Jews who had not yet returned to Israel from Babylon

- "...waterless pit" - Babylon, where

12 Return to the stronghold, you prisoners who have the hope; This very day I am declaring that **I will restore double to you.**

12 Return to the stronghold, O prisoners who have the hope; This very day I am declaring that I will restore double to you.

12 Return to your fortress, you prisoners who have hope. Even today I am telling you: In return I will repay you double.

12 Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare *that* I will render double unto thee;

- "...I will restore double to you" - a promise from God that His blessings in the millennium will far exceed anything Israel has ever known

— When you're in the "pit" one must remember that it's only temporary; Job was hit hard with suffering, but had faith that better days are ahead (Job 42:10; Cf. Joel 2:25)

These verses (v13-17) predict the defeat of Greece (particularly Antiochus IV Epiphanes) by the Jewish people during the Maccabean era (2nd century BC), and other victories that God brought to his people during the inter-testamental period. Zechariah received this

prophecy in 518 BC, and the events he describes here occurred around 167 BC. Daniel also described these events (Dan 8:21-25; 11:29-35).

(iii) Victories (9:13-17)

13 For I will bend Judah as My bow, I will fill the bow with Ephraim. And I will stir up your sons, Zion, against your sons, **Greece**; And I will make you like a warrior's sword.

13 For I will bend Judah as My bow, I will fill the bow with Ephraim. And I will stir up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece; And I will make you like a warrior's sword.

13 For I have bent Judah as if it were my bow, loading it with Ephraim. I raised up your sons, Zion, against your sons, Greece, wielding you like a mighty warrior's sword."

13 When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man.

- Verses 13-17 refer to the conflict of the Maccabees with Antiochus Epiphanes (169-135 BC, Cf. Dan 8:9-14; 11:32). The Jewish victory foreshadowed Israel's final conflict and victory when God will bring them into millennial blessing.

- "...Greece" - Zechariah references Greece by name, 200 years before it became a legitimate empire

— Liberals point to this to argue that Zechariah 9-14 (the prophetic part of the book) must have been written much later, after these events took place in history. However, Daniel also mentions Greece (Dan 8:21; 10:20), and he wrote even earlier than Zechariah (during the Babylonian empire).

— However, the reference to Greece as a future dominant power is no problem to those who accept the validity of predictive prophecy

- As the bow and arrow (that which "fills" the bow) are each essential to the other, so Judah and Ephraim (Ephraim represents the 10 Northern tribes of Israel) will be reunited.

— The reference to these weapons of warfare (including the warrior's sword) indicates that God will empower His people to defeat the enemy, the sons of Greece.

14 Then the LORD will appear over them, And **His arrow will go forth like lightning**; And the Lord GOD will **blow the trumpet**, And march in the storm winds of the south.

14 Then the LORD will appear over them, And His arrow will go forth like lightning; And the Lord GOD will blow the trumpet, And will march in the storm winds of the south.

14 The LORD will appear over them— his arrow will shoot like lightning. The Lord GOD will blow the trumpet, and go out with the southern windstorm.

14 And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south.

- This description of a thunderstorm controlled by God pictures poetically Israel's empowerment for victory of Antiochus Epiphanes

- "...His arrow will go forth like lightning" - God's protection of Israel and judgment of their enemies went forth like lightning during the period when the Maccabees fought against the Syrians

— Lightning also describes God's protection of Israel and judgment of their enemies during the time of the Second Coming (Cf. Matt 24:27)

- "...blow the trumpet" - a trumpet is also associated with the Second Coming (Cf. Matt 24:31)

15 **The LORD of armies will protect them.** And they will **devour and trample on the slingstones**; And they will drink *and* be boisterous as *with* wine; And **they will be filled like a sacrificial basin**, *Drenched* like the corners of the altar.

15 The LORD of hosts will defend them. And they will devour and trample on the sling stones; And they will drink *and* be boisterous as with wine; And they will be filled like a *sacrificial* basin, *Drenched* like the corners of the altar.

15 The LORD of the Heavenly Armies will defend them; they will devour and conquer those who sling stones. They will drink and be boisterous like those who are drunk. They will be filled to the brim with blood, like the corners of the altar.

15 The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, *and* make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, *and* as the corners of the altar.

- This divine appearance was through providential means in the Maccabean period, but will be literal and visible when Christ appears victoriously at His Second Coming

- "The LORD of armies will protect them" - He who watches over Israel neither sleeps nor slumbers (Ps 121:4)

- "...devour and trample on the slingstones" - the Lord will deliver such great victories for Israel that they will trample on their weapons of war

- "...they will be filled like a *sacrificial* basin" - the death of Israel's enemies will be like a sacrifice to the Lord on His altar

— The latter half of this verse pictures Israel's unrestrained joy and fullness of rejoicing because of God's mighty deliverance

16 And the LORD their God will **save** them **on that day As the flock of His people**; For *they are like* the *precious* stones of a crown, Sparkling on His land.

16 And the LORD their God will save them in that day As the flock of His people; For *they are as* the stones of a crown, Sparkling in His land.

16 The LORD their God will save them at that time as his very own flock of people, because they are his crown jewels, exalted throughout his land.

16 And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they *shall be as* the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.

- "...save" - not salvation, but rescue from the forces of the Antichrist at the "battle" of Armageddon

- "...on that day" - the Second Coming

- "...As the flock of His people" - God will protect His people during this time like a shepherd protects his flock (Cf. 10:3).

- Then Israel will "sparkle in His land" like jewels in a crown. This is a beautiful cameo of the fulfilled promises concerning the people in the land (Cf. Amos 9:11-15). They will be attractive and beautiful symbols of all God has done for them.

— Divine blessing on nature will produce conditions of plenty (Cf. Joel 2:21-27) so that physical health will also be assured (v17)

17 For how great *will* their loveliness and beauty *be!* Grain will make the young men flourish, and new wine, the virgins.

17 For what comeliness and beauty *will be* theirs! Grain will make the young men flourish, and new wine the virgins.

17 For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! Grain will make the young men thrive, and new wine the virgins.

17 For how great *is* his goodness, and how great *is* his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.

- "...For how great *will* their loveliness and beauty *be!*" - Israel will no longer be despised by the nations of the earth as she is today; during this time she will be attractive again

- "...Grain will make the young men flourish, and new wine, the virgins" - describes agricultural prosperity during this time period as part of God's blessing and protection of His people

— This is a direct outworking of the blessings of the Mosaic Covenant (Deut 28:1-14)

Replacement theologians have to do interpretive gymnastics when dealing with passages like this one that describe God's future restoration and blessing of Israel. As McComiskey does in the quote below, they have to allegorize and somehow apply these verses to the church:

The citizens of Christ's kingdom as well as God's ancient people are a landed people. Hebrews 3 and 5 make this clear, affirming the believer's landedness in the gospel —'at-homeness in Christ.' Today, the fruit of the land that causes its citizens to flourish is the fruit of salvation. [McComiskey, Thomas Edward, Zechariah in The Minor Prophets: A Exegetical and Expositional Commentary, 3:1003].