

Session 13 The Forerunner Message in Zechariah 14

I. OVERVIEW OF ZECHARIAH 12-14

- A. **Review:** In Zechariah 12-14, Jesus empowers, rescues, refines, and transforms Israel in the context of a global war and His return to earth (12:10; 14:3, 9). This is a very important prophetic passage. His end-time plan includes Israel's military victories, national salvation, horrific suffering, and world leadership as He establishes Jerusalem as the worldwide capital and worship center.
- B. This chapter demands a premillennial, plain-sense interpretation to make sense of the details in it. In allegorizing this chapter, amillennialists ignore many of the details. Luther wrote a commentary on Zechariah yet made very limited comments on the specific details in Zechariah 14, admitting: *"Here, in this chapter, I give up. For I am not sure what the prophet is talking about."*
- C. The eschatological sweep of Zechariah 14 has a unique place in the prophetic scriptures. In this oracle, the phrase, "in that day," occurs 18 times, indicating the end of the age (Zech. 12:3, 4, 6, 12:8 [2x], 9, 11; 13:1, 2, 4; 14:1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 20, 21).
- D. Outline of Zechariah 14

Zechariah 14	Israel is refined and transformed
14:1-2	Jerusalem will be surrounded by the nations
14:3-5	The Lord delivers Jerusalem
14:6-11	The transformation of Jerusalem—Jesus' world capital
14:12-15	God's judgment on the nations that attacked Jerusalem
14:16-19	All nations will worship Jesus in Jerusalem
14:20-21	Jerusalem will be holy

II. JERUSALEM WILL BE SURROUNDED BY THE NATIONS (ZECH. 14:1-2)

- A. Jerusalem will be temporarily captured and half its people taken captive (14:1-2). The battle for Jerusalem is a spiritual, political, economic, and military battle for the control of Jerusalem. It is one of the most significant battlefronts in the Spirit today.
- ¹***"Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst.***
- ²***For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled [*ransacked NIV; plundered ESV*], and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. (Zech. 14:1-2)***
- B. ***I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem:*** The Lord Himself will gather the armies of all the nations to stand against Israel (Joel 3:2, 12; cf. Zech. 12:3; 14:2; Zeph. 3:8; Ezek. 38:4; 39:2). Never have all the kings of the earth been in one city at the same time. Their presidential cabinets and military commanders will be with them. God will draw these leaders to Jerusalem to kill them and then replace their governments. Satan will also draw the nations to Jerusalem (Rev. 16:14).
- C. ***Your spoil will be divided in your midst:*** Jerusalem's spoil will be divided by those attacking the city. They will have a casual attitude in dividing the spoil in the street, with a false sense of security.

- D. **The city shall be taken:** Jerusalem shall be captured temporarily by the Antichrist's armies. I assume that this siege continues through most of the final 3½ years of this age.
²...*They [the Gentiles] will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months. (Rev. 11:2)*
- E. **The houses rifled, and the women ravished:** The Gentile soldiers will ransack and plunder the homes, stealing money, food, and valuable possessions while violating many of the women.
- F. **Half of the city shall go into captivity:** About 600,000 Jews live in Jerusalem today. That number will probably change by then, but it is difficult to imagine so many being taken into captivity.
- G. **The remnant shall not be cut off:** A remnant will be supernaturally protected and anointed for battle in Jerusalem and Judah (12:3-8). This important promise must be proclaimed ahead of time.

III. THE LORD DELIVERS JERUSALEM (ZECH. 14:3-5)

- A. When Jesus returns to Jerusalem, He will deliver her from many enemies (14:3-5).
³*Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle.
⁴And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south. ⁵Then you shall flee through My mountain valley, for the mountain valley shall reach to Azal. Yes, you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, and all the saints with You. (Zech. 14:3-5)*
- B. **The Lord will fight:** Jesus will go forth to fight against the nations, showing Himself as the divine warrior. He will fight “up close and personal” in such a way that the blood of His enemies will stain His garments (Isa. 63:1-6). He initially fights through the Israeli army (12:4-9) in the 43rd month. Thousands of the enemies' crazed horses will be running blind with insane riders (12:4).
³*For I have trodden them [the nations] in My anger...their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes. ⁴For the day of vengeance is in My heart...” (Isa. 63:3-4)
⁴*I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness...and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. (Zech. 12:4)**
- C. **His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives:** He will not immediately destroy all the enemies there. He will stand on the Mount of Olives, and then an earthquake will split it! Jesus, with His eyes like fire and face like the sun, “stands” gazing at Jerusalem. Surely, He will remember His last two visits there—weeping for Jerusalem (Lk. 19:37-44) and ascending to heaven (Acts 1:11) An angel present at Jesus' ascension from the Mount of Olives said, “This Jesus will come in *like manner* as you saw Him go.” In like manner speaks of coming in His *resurrected body* and at the *Mount of Olives*.
³⁷...*as He was drawing near...the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples...
³⁸saying: “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD...” ³⁹Some of the Pharisees ...[said], “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples”... ⁴¹He saw the city and wept over it... (Lk. 19:37-39)
¹¹“This same Jesus...will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:11)*

- D. **The Mount of Olives shall be split in two:** The Mount of Olives runs north and south for almost three miles. Half of the mountain will move to the north and half to the south, creating a large valley that runs east and west—providing a way of escape for those trapped against the mountain. It is “His” valley because He forms it by an act of His power, parallel to dividing the Red Sea (Ex. 14). While standing on the Mount of Olives, Jesus prophesied of moving mountains (Mk. 11:1, 23).
¹...at the Mount of Olives...²²Jesus said..., “Have faith in God. ²³For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea’...” (Mk. 11:1, 22-23)
- E. **The mountain valley shall reach to Azal:** The new valley will extend from Jerusalem as far as Azal (its exact location is unknown). The point is that the valley will be large enough to provide escape.
- F. **The Lord will come:** This is a summary statement reaching back to Jesus’ return in 14:3. The message that Jesus *will* surely come in that hour will be important for those trapped in the siege. Jesus will come with all His holy ones—believers and angels (Mt. 25:31; 1 Thes. 3:13; Rev. 19:14).

IV. THE TRANSFORMATION OF JERUSALEM—JESUS’ WORLD CAPITAL (ZECH. 14:6-11)

- A. God’s glory will be expressed in *supernatural light* that will impact the atmosphere (14:6) and in *living water* that will impact the agriculture—at the time when Jesus is received as King resulting in a blessed social order worldwide (14:9). He will reign from His capital city in Jerusalem (14:10-11).
- B. Jesus’ kingship will be announced by miracles of darkness, light, and living water (14:6-8). This day will be unique and mysterious, thus fully understood only by the Lord.

⁶..in that day that there will be no light; the lights will diminish. ⁷It shall be one [unique] day which is known to the LORD—neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen that it will be light. ⁸In that day it shall be that living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea [Dead Sea] and half of them toward the western sea [Mediterranean Sea]; in both summer and winter it shall occur. (Zech. 14:6-8)

1. **There will be no light:** The light of the sun, moon, and stars will be darkened (Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15; Mt. 24:29). Darkness shall come on the Antichrist’s global empire (Rev. 16:10).

²⁹“...the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light...” (Mt. 24:29)

2. **It will be neither day nor night:** At evening time “it” will occur—a supernatural light. The absence of natural light does not imply it must be dark, but that light will emanate from Jesus. This unique and mysterious light will introduce God’s new order for the earth.

¹⁹...The sun shall no longer be your light...the LORD will be to you an everlasting light... (Isa. 60:19)

²³Then the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed; for the LORD of hosts [Jesus] will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem and before His elders, gloriously. (Isa. 24:23)

⁵Then the LORD will create above every dwelling place of Mount Zion...the shining of a flaming fire by night. (Isa. 4:5)

3. **Living water shall flow from Jerusalem:** A river with supernatural healing properties will flow out from Jerusalem (14:8). Ezekiel saw this same river of living water (Ezek. 47:1-12). Its waters will flow east to the Dead Sea and west into the Mediterranean Sea (Ps. 46:4; 65:9).
- ¹...there was water, flowing from...the temple...⁸When it reaches the sea, its waters are healed. ⁹And it shall be that every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed...¹²Along the bank of the river...will grow all kinds of trees...because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for medicine. (Ezek. 47:1-12)*
- a. Israel will be like the garden of Eden after Jesus returns (Isa. 51:3; Ezek. 34:29; 36:35). Jesus will restore the agriculture, atmosphere, and animal life to the conditions of the garden of Eden (Isa. 11:6-9; 35:1-8; 51:3; 65:17-25; Ezek. 34:29; 36:35; 47:6-12).
- ³⁵This land [Israel] that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden... (Ezek. 36:35)*
- b. Millennial Jerusalem will be the epicenter from which “garden-of-Eden-type” blessings will spread progressively to the whole world (Isa. 11:6-9; 35:1-8; 51:3; 65:17-25; Ezek. 34:29; 36:35; 47:6-12). The new light and water “systems” to be established will impact the entire ecosystems via evaporation and release by clouds of rain into other places.
4. **In both summer and winter:** Living water will flow from the temple continually all year long, in the heat of summer when most streams in Israel dry up and in the winter when it is cold.
- C. Jesus will be received as King over all the earth (14:9). This will result in a blessed, unified, safe social order worldwide as every nation enjoys peace without war, civil strife, or fear of harm. He is “one”—Jesus is unique or one of kind— He will be the only one in the earth recognized as God.
- ⁹The LORD shall be King over all the earth. In that day it shall be—“The LORD is one,” and His name one. (Zech. 14:9)*
- D. Jesus’ global capital city will be leveled, exalted, and safely inhabited (14:10-11). Jerusalem will be both leveled and raised, or elevated, to a height that surpasses all other mountains. An earthquake will bring unprecedented topographical changes. The whole region will be greatly altered.
- ¹⁰All the land shall be turned into a plain from Geba [6 miles north of Jerusalem] to Rimmon... [35 miles south of Jerusalem]. Jerusalem shall be raised up and inhabited in her place from Benjamin’s Gate [north wall] to the place of the First Gate [north-east corner] and the Corner Gate [north-west corner], and from the Tower of Hananel [north wall] to the king’s winepresses [south wall]. ¹¹The people shall dwell in it; and no longer shall there be utter destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. (Zech. 14:10-11)*
1. **All the land shall be turned into a plain:** Jesus will level the mountains and raise the valleys to make a plain that will be about 40 miles long and 10 miles wide. The plain will stretch from Geba six miles north of Jerusalem to Rimmon about 35 miles south of Jerusalem.
- ²In the latter days...the mountain of the LORD’s house [the temple] shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills. (Isa. 2:2)*

2. **No longer shall there be destruction:** No city has suffered more destruction in its history than Jerusalem. During the 2,500 years between 586 BC and its recovery in AD 1967, Jerusalem has been invaded over 50 times, endured 36 wars, been conquered 20 times, reduced to rubble 17 times and rebuilt 18 times. Jerusalem has been sacked by armies of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Macedonians, Ptolemies, Seleucids, Romans, Byzantines, Persians, Arabs, Seljuks, Crusaders, Mongols, Mamluks, Turks, British, and Jordanians.
3. **Safely inhabited:** After Jesus returns, Jerusalem will be the safest city in history (14:11). It will be a city that is totally free of fear, crime, and war. Elderly people will sit in the streets, and children will play in them without fear (Zech. 8:4-5).
⁴“Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each one with his staff in his hand because of great age. ⁵The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.” (Zech. 8:4-5)

V. GOD’S JUDGMENT ON THE NATIONS THAT ATTACKED JERUSALEM (ZECH. 14:12-15)

- A. The Lord will totally destroy Israel’s enemies (14:12-15). Here Zechariah elaborates on the promise that Jerusalem will be safe (14:11). The Lord will use four means to destroy Jerusalem’s enemies—plague (14:12), panic (14:13), fear-crazed Gentiles turning against each other (14:13), and anointed Israeli soldiers (14:14a). Chronologically, these verses describe what follows 12:3-8.
¹²This shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths...¹³In that day...a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor and raise his hand against his neighbor’s hand;¹⁴...The wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be gathered together: gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance.¹⁵Such also shall be the plague on the horse and the mule, on the camel and the donkey. (Zech. 14:12-15)
- B. **All who fought against Jerusalem:** The Lord will strike each person who fought against Jerusalem, stole its goods, raped its women, and took its citizens captive (14:1-2).
- C. **This shall be the plague:** The flesh, eyes, and tongues of the enemy soldiers will dissolve even as they stand on their feet (14:12), meaning this aspect of God’s judgment will come suddenly.
- D. **A great panic from the Lord:** Great fear from the Lord will take hold of the Antichrist’s army causing them to fight their own soldiers. (Judg. 7:22; 1 Sam. 14:15-20; 2 Chr. 20:23; Ezek. 38:21).
- E. **The wealth of the surrounding nations:** Israel will reverse the earlier situation by taking the spoils of the Gentiles who had previously stolen their money and possessions (14:2). The gold and silver from the surrounding nations shall be gathered to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple (14:14).
- F. **Plague on the horse and mule:** The plague will destroy the horses, mules, camels, and donkeys in the Antichrist’s armies; they will not be available for any soldiers to escape.

VI. ALL NATIONS WILL WORSHIP JESUS IN JERUSALEM (ZECH. 14:16-19)

- A. The Gentiles shall be converted and unified with Israel in worshiping Jesus (14:16-19). Here we see the Father's zeal for the supremacy and glory of Jesus, who will be worshiped by all nations.
- ¹⁶...everyone who is left of all the nations...shall go up from year to year to worship the King... and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁷And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem...on them there will be no rain. ¹⁸If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. (Zech. 14:16-18)***
- B. ***Everyone who is left of all the nations:*** The unsaved survivors of the Tribulation who refused to worship the Antichrist will be saved and worship Jesus. Scripture refers to “those who are left,” who receive salvation and populate the millennial earth (Isa. 4:3; 10:20; 11:11; 49:6; 65:8; 66:19)
- C. ***Feast of Tabernacles:*** This feast celebrates the Lord’s *provision* (food and crops), *redemption* of His people, the *harvest* of the nations, and the fact of the Lord *tabernacling* among His people.
- D. ***Whichever families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem:*** Every family will be required to go to Jerusalem to worship Jesus and acknowledge both His kingship and Israel’s national supremacy.

VII. JERUSALEM WILL BE HOLY (ZECH. 14:20-21)

- A. Israel will walk in holiness in every area of life—public, religious, private (14:20-21).
- ²⁰In that day “HOLINESS TO THE LORD” shall be engraved on the bells of the horses. The pots in the LORD’s house [the temple] shall be like the bowls before the altar. ²¹Yes, every pot in...Judah shall be holiness...there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD... (Zech. 14:20-21)***
- B. ***The bells and pots:*** The bells on horses represents their *public life* in the streets. The ordinary cooking pots in the temple being considered as holy as the bowls used to sprinkle the sacrificial blood on the brazen altar represents Israel’s *religious life* and institutions related to the temple (14:20). Every pot in Jerusalem and throughout Judah represents the *private life* in their homes. Even the most common things in their everyday life will be as dedicated to the Lord as holy.
- C. ***Canaanite:*** There will no longer be any ethnic Canaanite family lines, so most agree that this speaks of a type of behavior, not a bloodline. The Hebrew word *kēna ‘ānī* can be translated as *Canaanite* or *merchant* (Prov. 31:24). The Targum and many modern translations use *merchant*. Greed will not be a part of worship in the temple. No one will see God’s work as a money-making enterprise.
- D. Israel will be the first nation in which every person and every institution is holy (Isa. 60:21). God’s original purpose for Israel was that they would live as a holy nation of priests (Ex. 19:6).
- ²¹Your people shall all be righteous...that I may be glorified. (Isa. 60:21)***
- ²“I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; with great fervor I am zealous for her...³I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, The Mountain of the LORD of hosts, The Holy Mountain.” (Zech. 8:2-3)***