

Sudden Conversations

by Oswald J. Smith

The chapter 14 of Zechariah describes the final battle against Jerusalem, the Lord's intervention in the battle, and the consequences of the battle, including the reign of Jesus Christ and the judgment on the nations.

Duration: 30:29

Scripture: Zechariah 13:7-14, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Evangelism"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the prophecy of Zachariah and its fulfillment in the future reign of Jesus Christ. The sermon emphasizes the importance of holiness unto the Lord during this future time. It is mentioned that currently, there is no church where everyone is a born-again Christian, but in the future, there will be no non-holy individuals on the face of the earth. The preacher highlights the need for people to strive for holiness and warns of the judgment that will come upon those who do not worship the Lord in Jerusalem.

Transcript

Now, if you have your Bibles with you tonight, will you turn to the book of Zechariah? Go to the very end of the Old Testament, and go one book back. It's next to Matthew, except for one book. You can easily find it.

The end of the Old Testament, one book back, and you have Zechariah. Then turn to the last chapter. Turn, if you will, to the 14th chapter of the book of Zechariah.

Before I get into this chapter, I want to read the last verse of the preceding chapter. I want to read the last verse of the 13th chapter. Look at the 8th verse, if you will, the 7th verse.

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. Now, you know, of course, that that was literally fulfilled when Jesus was arrested at the Mount of Olives and taken off to be judged.

His disciples were scattered. The sheep were scattered. The shepherd was taken.

So you have a literal fulfillment of that prophecy made over 500 years before by Zechariah. Now look at the 9th verse, if you will. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silvers refined, will try them as gold is tried.

They shall call on my name, and I will hear them. I will say it is my people, and they shall say the Lord is my God. And that brings us right to the 14th chapter, where we start out with the exclamation, Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoils shall be divided in the midst of thee.

Now look at the 2nd verse. And I will gather all nations against Jerusalem. The last battle against Jerusalem has not yet been fought.

It is to be fought in the future. God says, I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken. It's going to be defeated.

This battle is going to be won by those gathered against Jerusalem. And Jerusalem is not going to win the battle. Jerusalem is going to lose the battle.

Now the battle has been fought again and again in Jerusalem, many battles. And here is the next great battle, the final battle, when Jerusalem is taken and absolutely defeated. I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, the houses rifled.

Who knows what's going to happen? The houses are going to be rifled. What happens when an army marches on a city and seeks to take that city? They take everything that is of any value in the city. They're going to every house.

They take everything they can take in the city. They take it away. They rifle every house.

That's what they're going to do here. They're going to rifle every house. And the city shall go forth into captivity.

And the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against these nations. Here is where God comes on the scene.

And fighting against these nations is very important in the day of battle. The day is going to come when God is going to rescue Jerusalem in spite of the awful tax that's going to be made of honor. The day is going to come when she'll be rescued.

She'll be delivered. That's what God says here. The Lord shall go forth and fight against those nations.

It's very important in the day of battle. His feet shall stand on that day before Jerusalem upon the Mount of Olives. His feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives.

The Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst. They're off toward the east and toward the west. There shall be a very great valley.

Half the mountain shall be moved toward the north and half of it toward the south. There's going to come a day when Jerusalem will be surrounded by the armies. She's going to fall once again.

And that fall is described in this chapter, the 14th chapter of Zechariah. I will gather all nations together against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken. Jerusalem is going to be taken.

It's going to fall. And the houses rifled. Second place, this army is going to rifle the houses.

You know what an invading army does. When an invading army comes to take a city, you know how the houses are rifled. And they steal everything that they can steal.

And that's going to happen when Jerusalem falls again. The houses shall be rifled. And the women shall be ravished.

And you know how women suffer when a city is captured. And half of the city shall go forth into captivity. And the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

They're going to capture one half of the inhabitants of the city, take them away to captivity, and they're going to leave the other half there in the city. Then, then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle. Now for the first time, God is going to take a part in this terrible struggle, in this awful battle.

God is going to intervene. And suddenly, after the city has been captured, after it has been defeated, God comes on the scene and God takes a part in the battle. The Lord shall go forth and fight against those nations as when he fought in the day of battle.

And his feet shall stand that day upon the Mount of Olives, the last place that Jesus Christ ever stood was on the Mount of Olives. Before he left this world to go into heaven, he stood on the Mount of Olives. The first place his feet are going to stand on when he comes back is again the Mount of Olives.

When the Lord Jesus Christ comes back a second time, he's going to come directly to the Mount of Olives and his feet are going to rest on the Mount of Olives again. He's going to stand there before the entire world. His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east.

There's no question as to what Mount of Olives is meant, because it's the Mount of Olives that's before Jerusalem on the east. And now here's a great miracle. And the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west.

And there shall be a very great valley, and half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south. So for the first time in the history of the Mount of Olives, it's going to be cloven asunder into two parts, half on one side, half on the other side. If you want to see the Mount of Olives as it is today, then you'll have to go very, very soon and see it, because there's a day coming when Jesus Christ returns again and a terrific change is going to take place in the Mount of Olives, and half of it's going to be on one side and half on the other side.

That hasn't happened yet. That's in the future. May I pause to say this? All these predictions in the 14th chapter of Zechariah, all of them are yet to be fulfilled.

Not one was fulfilled when Jesus Christ was here. Not a single one. But when Jesus Christ comes back again, every prediction in Zechariah 14 will be literally fulfilled.

And so this Mount, the Mount of Olives, is going to be part of the sunder, half toward the north and half toward the south. So there'll be a way for the kings of the east to march with their armies. Now look at the last part of the 5th verse, if you will.

From before the earthquake, in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee. Here it is in the Old Testament scriptures, the promise of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

So Jesus Christ is coming back again. He's going to bring his saints back with him when he returns the second time. And this verse says distinctly and plainly, the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.

That'll be a wonderful day. And it shall come to pass in that day that the light shall not be clear nor dark, but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day nor night. But it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light.

Now that only happened once before in the history of the world. There was one day in the Old Testament scriptures when God lengthened the day, when he brought the dial back in the days of one of the kings of Israel. That's going to happen again when Jesus Christ returns so that he'll have time to do all the work that he has to do when he returns the second time.

It'll not be light nor dark. It shall be known to the Lord, not as day nor night, but it shall come to pass that at evening time it shall be light when it should be dark. It will still be light according to the word of God.

And it shall be in that day that living water shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them toward the former sea and half of them toward the hinder sea, in summer and in winter shall it be. In other words, when Jesus Christ is coming back again, there's going to be a river that will start in Jerusalem and will flow in two directions, to one sea and to another sea. I do not know where this river is.

The word of God does not tell us. But somewhere in the city of Jerusalem there is a spring way down in the bowels of the earth. And as a result of the earthquake that God says is going to take place, at that time this spring will burst forth into a river and it'll be such a large river that half of the river will flow in one direction and the other half will flow in the other direction.

That's going to be a miracle wrought by God. And in the 8th verse, and it shall be in that day that living water shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them toward the former sea and half of them toward the hinder sea, in summer and in winter shall it be. Now look at the 9th verse.

And the Lord shall be king over all the earth. In that day shall there be one Lord and his name one. We're praying continually the prayer.

We're praying that prayer, Thy kingdom come. Every time we use the Lord's prayer, we say those words, Thy kingdom come. We're still offering that prayer.

Why is it that we're still offering it? Because it hasn't been answered yet. His kingdom has not yet come. And His kingdom is not going to come until the King comes back.

And when the King comes back, then this prayer of the church is going to be answered. Thy kingdom come. And that's what this verse says here very plainly.

Verse 9. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth. In that day there shall be one Lord and his name one. So there's a day coming when Satan is going to be dethroned and when God is going to occupy the throne of his father David.

The Lord Jesus Christ will occupy that throne. And He's going to reign in millennial splendor and power for 1,000 years. He'll reign over all the earth.

And everyone will be in submission to Him in that day. And the Lord shall be king over all the earth. There'll just be one King in the world.

That King will be the Lord Jesus Christ. And He'll reign over all the earth and His name one. Now look at the 11th verse, if you will.

And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction. For the last time, this world is going to be destroyed. There'll be no more utter destruction.

It's all over with. But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. But Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

Now it's never been safe to live in Jerusalem. In all the centuries that have passed and gone it has never been safe to dwell in Jerusalem. Jerusalem has been invaded more than 40 times and overthrown.

Lives have been lost. And Jerusalem is going to be invaded once again by the armies of this world. And it's going to be overthrown.

And men in thousands are going to die. But it says here that after that's all over and done with, then the Lord will set up His kingdom with headquarters in Jerusalem and men shall dwell in it. And there shall be no more utter destruction.

For the last time, Jerusalem will have been destroyed. And the city will never again be destroyed. And men will dwell in Jerusalem safe from destruction.

Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. I suppose one of the most dangerous places to live in the world is in the city of Jerusalem. Nobody knows when that city may fall again or when it may be destroyed again.

We know that it's got to fall once more. It's got to be destroyed once more. We know that for a certainty.

But there's going to come a time when the last destruction will have taken place and when Jerusalem will never, never be destroyed again. It will be safely inhabited. And for a thousand years, men and women will live in Jerusalem, boys and girls.

And there will be perfect safety for a thousand years in the city of Jerusalem. It will never be destroyed during that thousand-year period. And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord shall smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem.

Now listen to this plague. First, their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet. These armies will be standing somewhere before Jerusalem on their feet, great, vast armies consisting of hundreds of thousands of people.

And suddenly God will strike them and their flesh will consume away while they stand on their feet. That means that they'll crash to the ground. They'll be overcome.

They'll be conquered. And the Jews will be delivered. The city of Jerusalem will be saved.

But that isn't all. Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet. Second, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes.

Suddenly they'll go blind. Their eyes will consume away and they'll be blinded and they'll not be able to see, won't be able to see what's going on right before them. And then third, and their tongue shall

consume away in their mouth.

Here are three terrible judgments that will fall upon all the nations of the world as they stand before Jerusalem just after Jerusalem has been conquered and has been overcome and defeated. God steps on the scene. Suddenly these men who have conquered Jerusalem will find that their flesh is consuming away as they stand there.

Their eyes will go blind and they'll not be able to see. And every one of these predictions will be literally fulfilled. Their tongue shall consume away in their mouths.

They'll not be able to speak. This will be the judgment that will fall upon these people who have tried to conquer Jerusalem and conquer the Lord's people in Jerusalem. Now look, if you will, at the 14th verse.

And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the heathen round about shall be gathered together, gold and silver and apparel in great abundance. You know Jerusalem is going to become the wealthiest city on the face of the earth.

One of these days, the wealthiest city in the entire world will be the city of Jerusalem. They'll get their wealth from the nations that tried to conquer them. It will all come to the Jews.

It will all come to Jerusalem. And Jerusalem will find itself the wealthiest city in the entire world. Now the 16th verse.

And it shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem, every one that is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. In other words, the nations, the men who made up the nations that fought against Jerusalem, they're going to have to appear in Jerusalem once every year to acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ and to worship the Lord and recognize Him as Lord of lords and King of kings. Now what's going to happen if they refuse to go? What's going to take place if they say we'll not go up this year? We refuse to acknowledge Jesus Christ.

16th verse. And it shall come to pass that every one that is left of the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. But listen now, 17th verse.

And it shall be that whosoever will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. That will be the punishment. Now what happens when there's no rain on a nation? You know what the result is.

The result is famine. What happens when there's famine? There's nothing to eat. The people starve to death.

And so millions of these people who came against Jerusalem to try to conquer it will find that if they do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, there'll be no rain on their country and there'll be famine in their country and they'll face starvation. And that's the way God will judge them for not going up to worship Him at Jerusalem. Now what's to be the keynote of all this? Look at verse 20.

And that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses holiness unto the Lord. The key word on that day when Jesus Christ takes over the reign of government and reigns for a thousand years, the key word will

be holiness. Holiness unto the Lord.

Now that's something that you and I do not know very much about. There's everything but holiness in this our day. All we have to do is to look at the signs erected everywhere and see the lack of holiness in this city of ours right here in Toronto.

There's very little holiness. And if we were to go to certain parts of this city and certain places in this city, we would find anything but holiness. People in Toronto are not holy.

Only a little group. The vast majority are still giving themselves to unholiness and they're not holy as the Lord wants them to be. And so God says here, in that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses holiness unto the Lord.

Now then, in the last verse, what does it say? In that day there shall be no more the Canaanites in the house of the Lord. You cannot find a church today anywhere in the world where everyone is a born-again Christian. No such church exists today.

Go to any church you want to anywhere in the world and you'll find the Canaanites. You'll find that while there are Christians, there are the unsaved in the church pretending to worship God, never having been born again, still Canaanites in any church you go to anywhere in the face of this earth. But there's going to come a day, according to Zechariah, when holiness will be the key word, when there will not be a church anywhere in the world where there will be those who are unholy.

A day when holiness will be the key word and will rule and govern the nations of the world and especially the people of Jerusalem. Holiness unto the Lord. That day is surely coming, as sure as we're sitting here tonight.

And Zechariah makes it very plain, very clear. And I say once again, not a single prediction in the 14th chapter of Zechariah has ever yet been fulfilled. It's all in the future.

It has yet to be fulfilled. It was spoken 2,500 years ago. 2,500 years ago.

Zechariah was given these predictions. Not one of them was fulfilled when Jesus Christ was here 1,900 years ago. And not one of them will be fulfilled until he comes back again in his power and in his glory to rule and reign in this world of ours over the nations.

So when he does, when he comes again, the key note throughout the entire world will be holiness. And for the first time in the history of the world, we'll know experimentally the meaning of the word holiness. And there'll not be a Canaanite.

There'll not be a non-holy person anywhere on the face of the earth. I've read this chapter, the 14th chapter, again and again. Every now and again I turn back to it and I read it once more.

It always brings me comfort to know that there's a day coming when we're not going to be on the weaker side. We're not going to be defeated. We're going to be on the winning side, on the victorious side.

And holiness will be the key note in the entire world at that time. And there'll not be a Canaanite, a non-holy person, anywhere in the world while Jesus Christ governs in millennial splendor, power and glory as he will govern for a thousand years. Shall we bow together in prayer? Our loving Heavenly Father, we thank Thee that the day is coming when the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord

and of His Christ.

And there will be no more iniquity and holiness will be the key note in every nation and among all the peoples of the world. And when Jerusalem will at last become a holy city, the kind of a city Thou dost want it to be, and when all those with whom we mingle, all those with whom we associate, will be holy men and women living entirely for God and for a thousand years will enjoy life when there'll be no sin to deal with, no crimes of any kind, and when holiness will characterize the nations of the world and Jesus Christ will reign in millennial splendor, power and glory for a thousand years. We long for that day.

We yearn for that day. And we pray, Our Father, that that day may come and come speedily. We long for the return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

And we pray tonight again that the day may soon come when Jesus will be back again and will be reigning with His saints in power and in glory, and when His reign will last for a thousand years. We look forward to that day. We pray that it may soon come, that we may pray continually for it, that we may have a share in it when that day arrives.

Hear us in answer prayer and the glory and the praise and the honor shall be Thine own. For we ask it, Our Father, in Jesus' name and for His sake. Amen.

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