**Our Messiah Brings Us Hope**

**Zechariah (ESV)**

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I would invite you to turn with me to Zechariah. I’m just going to read one verse as our Scripture reading today. It’s sort of the foundation stone of this book. It’s a foundation application. But I would encourage you to keep your Bibles really with you and your fingers nimble because we’re going to go through an overview of the whole of Zechariah. We’re going to bounce around through this book to grab onto some of these amazing themes. I trust that this will be a real encouragement to us all, a strengthening of the church for worship. So the verse I’m going to read is Zechariah 1:3. We remember that this is a people who had just come out of exile and there is an opportunity for a restored covenantal relationship. God is inviting the people to return to Him.

**Zechariah 1:3** Therefore say to them, Thus declares the LORD of hosts: Return to me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts.

What a promise!

Our eternal God cares for our temporal concerns. God urges us in 1 Peter to cast

**1 Peter 5:7** …all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

God really, really does care for you and all the cares that you experience in this life. Yet, the dominant means that God provides to help us with our temporal problems is to teach us eternal truth. If we want God to help us with our temporal problems, we must receive the eternal truth that He gives to us in His Word.

This eternal truth is amazing, profound, magnificent and mysterious. This eternal truth reveals to us God in His glorious Person, His wonderful attributes and His gracious works. This eternal truth reveals this God so that we can know Him and walk with Him and fellowship with Him and worship Him. This eternal truth sets before us this all-sufficient Messiah King. This eternal truth dislodges our hearts from the blinding idolatry of self. This eternal truth convinces us that Jesus indeed is a treasure of infinite worth. It’s worth yielding everything in order to obtain Him. This eternal truth is that which taught the apostle Paul to say,

**Philippians 3:8** Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

Consider that! I count everything, everything good in this temporal life, if it is set alongside the worth of knowing Jesus Christ, this I consider as nothing. It’s not even close in comparison.

You see, we as followers of Jesus do not obey and worship Jesus out of obligation or out of a motivation of the fear of condemnation. We obey and worship Jesus out of this personal knowledge of the infinite worth of Jesus. It is faith that gives us eyes to see Jesus’ worth. When we see His value, we too will be like Paul. We will count everything to be loss in comparison to the surpassing worth of knowing Him. So this truth that the Gospel sets before us is that this Messiah King is of infinite value. We find life when we discover His worth. We forfeit life, anything that is truly life, when we are blind to it.

Zechariah is so helpful because Zechariah paints for us a very clear and beautiful picture of God’s Messiah so that by faith, we can see His value and worship Him. If we wish to gain a God-centered life, it is by faith receiving the eternal truth of God’s Messiah. That’s how we have a God-centered life. There is no other real path to it. This is the Gospel. Zechariah helps us to see the glory of this Messiah. He helps us to see His power, His grace, His love, His sacrifice, and His ultimate triumph.

I say this because we live in an age where many in Jesus’ church love this present life more than we love God. We set alongside all the good things of this present life, this present world. We set them alongside God and we say, “I’m really struggling to value God above these other good things.” So our chief interest often is to live our best life right now. “How am I being blessed in my temporal life today?” As a result, we often have little passion for God. We desire for God to be present in our lives in order to bless our plans. But we really don’t want to submit our lives to God’s plan. We want lives that are more successful and far less stressful. We don’t really see the benefit of sound doctrine, and so we use the Bible in bits and pieces as though God wrote it to be some sort of self-help manual for us. We take here and there and we dance in and out to look for these little self-help ideas.

When we come to church on Sunday morning, many think, “I hope the pastor will say something that helps me enjoy my temporal life more. I want him to tell me something that will help me find favor with my employer and help me advance in my career. I want him to encourage me so that I can fulfill my hopes and my dreams. I want him to share with me how I might deal with stress or depression. I want him to teach me how I can be more productive with my time. I want him to teach me how to be financially stable, to raise children that are successful, to have a marriage that is satisfying. In short, I want him to teach me how to be the best version of myself.”

Indeed, I would acknowledge that temporal concerns are not unimportant to God. But God’s chief interest is that we would know Him. His chief interest is that we would enjoy Him, that we would make much of Him, that He would become the center of all.God’s great gift to us is that through the Messiah King, through His Son, we might enter into a real vibrant, personal relationship with the living God. And that all of life, all into eternity, we would have the joy of discovering more and more and more of His majesty and wonder. Really, everything good in this temporal life, it flows from this knowledge of God. So the pursuit of God is everything. This series is entitled *Return to Hope!* We learn through Zechariah that God’s Messiah enables us to look into our future and as we look at our future, we say, “I can’t wait! This is going to be fantastic!”

The main idea we trace through this great prophecy is that through God’s Messiah, we can take all our worries and replace them with confident faith in Him because He cares for us. He cares thoroughly for us and sufficiently for us. Through His Messiah, through Jesus, we can take all our despairing thoughts that roll through our heart and we can replace them with hope, with an eager anticipation of what our future is going to be. We don’t have to be a people who fret over our lives, who are frustrated about our world, or who are fearful about things that are to come. If you are a follower of Jesus, you can know that the Messiah is actively working to transform you into this encouraging, uplifting, positive people. The most positive people on the face of the earth are to be God’s children because wealone have a solid reason, a sure foundation to look at the future and say, “I can’t wait for tomorrow! It’s going to be great!” Why is that? Why do we have hope? That’s what we’re going to unfold this morning as we walk through the book of Zechariah. We’re going to look at eight promises that the Messiah brings to strengthen our hope. The first is the promised Messiah brings

**1. Hope for a revived relationship with God.**

Remember that Zechariah writes to a group of Jews some 50,000 strong, who recently returned to Jerusalem after being exiled in Babylon. God exiles Israel because this nation had committed spiritual adultery against Him. They had been an unfaithful spouse by cavorting with false gods. God uses Babylon as His instrument of discipline. This instrument is particularly sharp. Indeed, it was excruciating for Israel. It was cruel upon Israel. After 70 years of exile, the people are asking, “God did this. He disciplined us and He used such a harsh, sharp instrument to discipline us. Does God really want us back? After we failed God, we committed spiritual adultery, would God take us back into this covenant relationship that He promised to us when He made this covenant with Abraham, our father?” So the question after this exile is will God really love us like He did before we sinned against Him, before we committed idolatry? That’s why verse 3 of chapter 1 is so foundational, because it answers that question.

**Zechariah 1:3** Therefore say to them, Thus declares the LORD of hosts: Return to me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts.

“Repent of your sin. Turn away from going your own way and return to me. Here’s what is going to happen. I will absolutely return to you. Our relationship will be reconciled. I’m not going to hold your sin against you in such a way as to keep you at arm’s length. I’m going to embrace you again as my own chosen, special people.” The most central need every person has in life is the need for a personal relationship with the living God. I ask you this morning, do you have a personal, vibrant relationship with the living God? This is what eternal life is. It’s to know God and know Jesus Christ personally and to live in relationship with Him every day of life.

In Luke 15, Jesus tells this amazing story of a man who has two sons. The youngest decided, “Dad, I really don’t like you much, but I like your money. So I would like my inheritance now. When you give me my inheritance, I’m going to leave you and I might never see you again, in order to live life the way I want to live. Living close to you, you kind of impede my joy. You keep me from living the way I really want to live. So I just want the money and then I’m going to go.” The father miraculously gives him the money. He takes the money and he runs. He runs away to a far country, and there, he lives exactly the way that he wants to live. He lives recklessly.

Perhaps you’re here today, this morning, and this is where you are in the story. You are the son who presently doesn’t see the value of God as Father, God in relationship. You see rather, the value of living life the way you want to live life. You say it would be okay to have God on the periphery, but if I can’t have God on the periphery, I’d rather have Him not at all. I still want His stuff. I still want blessing, of course. But I really don’t want God.” If that is where you are this morning, I pray that the Lord would reveal to you how wrong the path is that you’re walking and how difficult your choice is and will be. For without God today, life is without true meaning. It’s without true purpose. Life without God tomorrow is life of eternal misery. It is misery without end, unending suffering with nothing good. That’s life without God. I pray that the Lord would help you to see that God is the source of life. He’s not someone to fear will take life away from us. He’s someone to know who will give life to us.

So then in the story, the son squanders all the money on his reckless living and he comes to the end of himself. He takes a job working for a pig farmer. He has a job, but he’s not bringing home the bacon. He looks at the pig’s food and he says, “Hmmm. That actually looks good to me, now.” Then he comes to the end of himself and says, “How is it that pig’s food starts looking good to me? How is that possible?” Then he starts thinking about home. He knows that he treated his father shamefully. He knows that he treated his father with contempt. He doesn’t even entertain the idea that the father would receive him back as a dad. But he says, “You know, maybe my dad might treat me like a servant. The servants have a warm bed and they have food. Maybe if I go back, maybe, maybe, maybe my dad would open his life just this much to me.” So he returns.

He doesn’t get home before the father sees him. The father sees him from a distance. You know, what the father doesn’t do is the father doesn’t say, “Well, I have to make sure he is going to return all the way before I open my life to him. Then once he gets here, he better have a good story. I had better hear real sincerity about this.” No, the father runs. He sees his son returning. It is a genuine return, and that isn’t essential. But as his son genuinely returns, the father returns to him. He is not passive in this. He’s not saying, “Well, okay. I guess.” He runs and when he sees him, he embraces him. He says, “My son was lost and is found. My son was gone and is home. Kill the fatted calf. Let’s get out the robes. Let’s put on the rings.” And relationship was fully restored. This verse in Zechariah 1:3 is sort of the verse that is an establishment of this whole parable.

**Zechariah 1:3** Therefore say to them, Thus declares the LORD of hosts: Return to me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts.

“Here is my nature as a covenant God who is faithful to you when you were unfaithful.” What a God! We have hope because the Father will return to us whenever we have a genuine heart of love and repentance. Secondly, the Messiah brings

**2. Hope for a clean heart.**

The people think, “Okay. God is going to take us back into relationship with Himself. That’s fantastic! That’s amazing! But we blew it. We feel the weight of the guilt of our past sins. We feel the shame. Will we ever be free from this stain, this burden that our past sin bears now upon our lives? Will we ever be free?” The answer to that question Zechariah gives us is, yes. Look what the Messiah does.

**Zechariah 3:3** Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments.

He is standing before the pre-incarnate Messiah, the pre-incarnate Son of God. Joshua is representing not only himself, but the whole of the people. He is standing there with filthy garments. The filthy garments represent sins, acts of disobedience.

**Zechariah 3:4** And the angel said to those who were standing before him,

So there are some other angels, serving angels who stand before the angel of the LORD, who is the pre-incarnate Christ, the Son of God. The Son of God says to the angels,

**Zechariah 3:4** …“Remove the filthy garments from him.”

Take off all those garments that defile him.

**Zechariah 3:4** …And to him he said, “Behold, I

The pre-incarnate Son of God, the one who would come to be Messiah says,

**Zechariah 3:4** …I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments.”

Skip down to chapter 13 now, where we see this same theme, this hope for a clean heart also reiterated. On this future day when the Messiah comes, for every person who is part of this covenant community,

**Zechariah 13:1** “On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.

One question that has to be rolling through these Jewish men and women’s minds is how can a guilty people be forgiven? How is it possible after deliberately, intentionally sinning against this faithful covenant-keeping God, how can we be forgiven? Here’s the answer. God says, “I’m going to open up a fountain and this fountain is going to be a fountain of cleansing.” Now, we know that this fountain is filled with the blood of the Messiah. It’s through His sacrifice that atones for the sin and brings cleansing.

What a wonder this atoning fountain is! Only a fountain filled with the blood of the Messiah can cleanse us from our sin. If you’re wondering this question, how can I be made clean from the guilt of my sin, the shame of my past sin, the condemnation that I know is placed upon my life as a result of my sin? How can I be clean?” The answer is still the same. It’s what Zechariah teaches us. The Messiah Himself says personally, “I will remove the iniquity from you and I will open up a fountain.”

Many try to wash their souls in a fountain of good works. “If I could just overcome. I did some bad things, but if I could do enough good things.” They come up out of that fountain and they’re just as filthy as they were before they entered it. Many try to wash their souls free of the stains of their past sins by jumping into religious ritual, by getting active in social helps and social works. There are all kinds of fountains. But every other fountain, you jump in and you jump in it deeply. For years and years and years you wash and wash and wash. Every time you come up, the weight, the guilt, the shame, the condemnation, the sin is still there. There is one fountain and one fountain only that brings cleansing. William Cowper writes of that in his great hymn.

There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel’s veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains:

So how can I be forgiven? It’s through this fountain that is opened through the blood of the Messiah. How clean can I be? I love that because it’s absolutely clean because it’s the Messiah who does the cleansing. The Messiah doesn’t allow for a little bit of filth remaining. The Messiah purifies completely. Psalm 103 says that He takes our sins and He removes our sins from us as far as the east is from the west. That’s how clean we are. What about us? This is a promise that is made to the Jewish people, the house of David, the inhabitants of Jerusalem. What about us Gentiles? Is there any hope for us? That’s this wonderful mystery of the Gospel in the New Testament.

**Ephesians 2:13** But now in Christ

The word “Christ” is the Greek word for Messiah.

**Ephesians 2:13-14** But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace,

John would say this.

**1 John 1:7** and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.

What hope! There is hope to live a life without the stain, without the weight of guilt and shame. Third, the Messiah brings

**3. Hope for the defeat of evil.**

The Jews, as they are listening to this amazing message about the Messiah who brings hope, they’re thinking, “Okay, we can have a restored relationship through the Messiah. We can have cleansing through the Messiah. But it sure is tiring to fight evil over and over and over without end. Every time it seems like we’re getting our head above the water, there is another wave of evil.” Sometimes it could be internal sin that they’re dealing with, their own desire to bow before idols. Sometimes it’s the evil that Satan himself places upon them. Sometimes it’s the evil of really evil nations pressing in and sort of conforming them through military might to conform to their evil. So all of these evils that the nation has endured and battled with, there is this question. Will sin, will evil continue in the world day after day, month after month, year after year without end? Now that sin has gotten into God’s good creation will sin always have a place in God’s good creation? The answer to that question is, no. Sin had a beginning. Wickedness had a beginning and wickedness will have an end. God created His creation good and He is going to make sure that at the end of the age, it’s good again, it is restored, it is righteous. There is hope for the defeat of evil.

Now, what Zechariah is going to teach us is that evil will not be completely defeated until the Messiah comes the second time. Its condemnation, its sting is vanquished at the Messiah’s first advent, but it’s allowed to remain. It’s allowed to be active. So when we look at our world, we have to know some of what the Bible promises. The Bible doesn’t promise that the world is going to get better and better and better until finally the Messiah arrives. We’re seeing just the opposite. The Bible says the world is going to get colder and colder to God. The world is going to get darker and darker with sin.

So how is that truth encouraging? This truth is encouraging first because through the Messiah, we don’t have to be overcome by evil today. Even though evil is present in the world, we don’t have to be overcome by it. We don’t have to be enslaved by it. We have a Messiah who has defeated first the penalty that our sin had placed upon us, and then He has defeated the power of sin, its rule over our lives. Secondly, this is really encouraging because that same message tells us that when the Messiah comes a second time evil will be vanquished. In other words, sin has no future in God’s good creation.

The first advent of Jesus, which is what we celebrate this month of December, reminds us that the Messiah will defeat evil at His second advent. Henry Longfellow thought about that very thing, that the first advent reminds us of the defeat of evil at the second advent. He wrote this Christmas carol that I love.

I heard the bells on Christmas day
Their old familiar carols play
And mild and sweet their songs repeat
Of peace on Earth, good will to men

He’s longing for a day when there is peace rather than conflict, when there is good will to men rather than unrighteousness. He says

And in despair I bowed my head
"There is no peace on Earth," I said
For hate is strong and mocks the song
Of peace on Earth, good will to men

He sees the promise and then he sees the reality. He says, “I don’t know if it’s true because all around me I see evil prevailing. All around me, I see broken relationships. All around me, I see a defiance against God.” The last stanza says

Then rang the bells more loud and deep
God is not dead, nor doth He sleep
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail
With peace on Earth, good will to men

Why is that? Because the King is coming. He guarantees it. So Zechariah prophesies of the defeat of evil. First, he prophesies of the evil of Satan. Satan is accusing Joshua the high priest, representing the people. He’s accusing them and saying, “They’re guilty. They’re guilty. You can’t have relationship with them. You can’t bring cleansing.”

**Zechariah 3:2** And the LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, O Satan!

Who is it that defeats Satan? It’s not us. It’s not Joshua. So friends, let’s be careful that we think we’re the ones defeating Satan in the spiritual battle. Let’s make sure we find our refuge in the Messiah. The LORD rebuke you, O Satan! The idea is that Satan’s power is not going to oppress His people anymore.

We continue reading the prophecies of Zechariah and we see it’s not just Satan that is vanquished, but we also see that sin itself inside the lives of people will also be put to an end. We have this amazing vision, one of the eight, of this flying scroll. Do you remember? It’s 30 feet wide and 15 feet tall.

**Zechariah 5:3** Then he said to me, “This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land. For everyone who steals shall be cleaned out according to what is on one side, and everyone who swears falsely shall be cleaned out according to what is on the other side.

The idea there is he lists all the sins, sins against God and sins against mankind, on this huge parchment. As you list it, God declares that all these sins will be cleaned out. There is going to be a sanctification for my people and they’ll be cleaned out first, through judgment of those who do not receive the grace of the Messiah, and secondly, through the restoration and salvation of those who do. But evil will come to an end.

Skip forward to Zechariah 12.

**Zechariah 12:9** And on that day I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

So there are nations that say, “We don’t care. We have our idols. We’re going to stand against the living God.” Guess what? Those nations will come to an end. Let me ask you, as you look at world politics, how many nations of the world are standing for the Lord and not against the Lord? I don’t know the number. Are there any? That’s the question. But on that day, all the nations who don’t bow the knee to the king when He comes, they will be destroyed. They will be removed from the face of the earth so that the earth will be populated only by nations who acknowledge Jesus as the King.

**Zechariah 13:2** And on that day, declares the LORD of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more. And also I will remove from the land the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness.

You go to a university today and you can take a course on world religions. I don’t know how many world religions there are, but there are many. It’s a long course. You learn a lot about all different kinds of beliefs and gods that people worship and how they worship those gods. In that day, when the King comes, if you take a world’s religions course, you’re going to study one religion and that’s all. You’re only going to study one faith, one God. That’s it. Everyone else, all the idols are removed. There are no more idols that are acknowledged. Jesus alone ascends and is worthy of worship and He will not tolerate His glory to be shared with any other gods. What those other gods do is they produce evil upon evil upon evil in this world. That’s what they do. There is a hope for the defeat of evil completely. Then when the Messiah comes, He’s going to bring

**4. Hope for the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

God gave His people, the Jews, a nearly impossible task to accomplish.They were to go back to Jerusalem, a city that is occupied by other peoples that are really strong, and they’re going to rebuild the Temple. They had very few financial resources, no real army to protect them. There is no group of skilled craftsmen to build. There is a lot of discouragement and logistical problems. “Lord, how can we accomplish this work that you have given to us? This project is going to end in disaster,” they’re thinking. God says, “Have hope. Here is how it’s going to happen. It’s not by your might, not by your numbers, not by your craftsmen, not by your financial resources. Here is how it’s going to happen. You’re going to accomplish my work by my Spirit. My Spirit is going to be with you. He will do the work for you.”

That brings us to Zechariah chapter 4, where there is this great vision of this lampstand with the two olive trees by it, representing the continual outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In the conclusion of all of that in Zechariah 4 it says

**Zechariah 4:6** Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel:

Zerubbabel is the leader of this project of rebuilding the temple. This temple is going to be built

**Zechariah 4:6** …Not by might, nor by power,

It’s not going to be by military protections through yourselves, nor by power, which is your own skilled people and finances. This accomplishment that God gives you, this mission that God has given you is going to be accomplished

**Zechariah 4:6-7** …but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts. Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain.

In other words, all those problems and obstacles that you think stand in the way of doing God’s will and God’s work, they’re all going to be leveled out and there is a path that is going to be made for you. It’s going to be a path provided for by the Spirit of God.

God provides us with His Spirit. We know this in New Testament times. In Acts 2, the Spirit was poured out upon us so that the Spirit is not only with us as the Spirit was with the people in Zechariah’s day. But the Spirit is now in us, indwelling us. Do you ever wonder if you have the strength to persevere under hardship, to persevere through temptation, to persevere through discouragement, and stay connected to God’s mission, to the ministry that God is doing through His church? Do you ever get discouraged? Do you ever say, “I don’t know if it’s worthwhile. I don’t know if I can do this. I don’t know if it’s appreciated. I don’t know if I can get along with the other people who are working.” Beloved, God’s Spirit is with us, and when we have God’s Spirit, we have everything we need to fulfill the works that God has created and prepared beforehand, before eternity for us to accomplish, each individually and us as a church together. I think it was Hudson Taylor who said those who do God’s work will never lack God’s supply. Never! God’s supply is His Spirit.

The enemy is never stronger than the Spirit and there are no resources that the Spirit doesn’t have access to that we need. God’s workers never lack God’s supply. God always gives His people tasks that are too big for us to accomplish on our own. Can I say that again? God always does that. He did it to this group and He does it to you and me. He gives us tasks for His glory that are too big for us to accomplish on our own. He loves to do that. When He does that, when He gives us these tasks, Satan loves to whisper, “You’re not going to accomplish this. Give up. You lack people. You lack money. You lack strength. You lack perseverance, whatever. You’re not going to be able to do this.” Here’s the message that Zechariah shares with us. The Messiah brings the hope because the Messiah is the one who gives us the Spirit. The Messiah brings hope by saying

**Zechariah 4:6** …Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts.

What is God asking you to do to fulfill His ministry, His mission in this world? How is He having you strengthen your own local church? How is He having you present the gospel to your neighbor and your work place? What is God asking you to do in your family? What is God asking you to do? Whatever that is, we don’t have to be fearful about it. We don’t have to think, “I don’t know how it’s going to work out in the future.” God gives me His Spirit so that I can be fruitful today to fulfill God’s intention behind this work.

**Psalm 20:7** Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.

The fifth hope that the Messiah brings is

**5. Hope for an atoning sacrifice.**

We touched on this a little bit earlier when we talked about the cleansing from sin, but I want to emphasize it again. This people, the Jewish people here in Zechariah’s day, they know that God is a righteous Judge. They’ve seen Him make righteous judgments against them as a people. They know that He is a righteous judge. They know that His justice does not allow sinners to go unpunished. They’ve experienced that as a nation. So here is the question. How can God maintain His justice and yet forgive people who have sinned and deserve to be punished for their sin? How can God do that? I love

**Zechariah 3:4** And the angel

This is the angel of the LORD, the pre-incarnate Christ.

**Zechariah 3:4** …said to those who were standing before him, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” And to him he

The angel of the LORD

**Zechariah 3:4** …said, “Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments.”

So not only is there the removal of the filth of sin, but now there is also the clothing with the pure vestments. We’re clothed with the righteousness of the Messiah, the New Testament teaches us. How is God able to forgive people who are not worthy to be forgiven, people who deserve judgment? How is God able? The first thing we know is that the Messiah is going to personally work to attend to this. It’s not given to someone else, some other created being. The Messiah Himself is going to accomplish this. Jump forward to Zechariah chapter 6.

**Zechariah 6:12** And say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Behold, the man whose name is the Branch:

That’s the Messiah.

**Zechariah 6:12** …for he shall branch out from his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD.

When He builds His kingdom, He’s going to build a temple, a place of worship.

**Zechariah 6:13** It is he who shall build the temple of the LORD

In other words, He’s going to be personally involved in this temple.

**Zechariah 6:13** …and shall bear royal honor,

He’s going to be the king.

**Zechariah 6:13** …and shall sit and rule on his throne.

This is the throne of David.

**Zechariah 6:13** …And there shall be a priest on his throne,

So He’s not only going to be a king, but He’s also going to be a priest. Now, the Jews know that one vital function of every priest is that they would do the work of making sacrifices for sin. So how will this promised Messiah act as a Priest-King who makes a sacrifice for sin? What we find in Zechariah 12:10 is this little hint and then Isaiah and the New Testament sort of brings this hint out into full fruition.

**Zechariah 12:10** “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on himwhom they have pierced,”

So how is it that the Messiah is able to fill the righteousness of God and forgive people who don’t deserve to be forgiven? It has something to do with this piercing. Isaiah, a prophet earlier than Zechariah has fleshed this out more completely in that great chapter 53. Isaiah says this Messiah

**Isaiah 53:5** But he was pierced for our transgressions;

This piercing has to do with connection to our transgressions.

**Isaiah 53:5** …he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought uspeace,

Upon him was the punishment from God that brought us peace with God. So He was bruised and crushed for our sins and the punishment that we deserve was placed upon Him so that we could have peace with God, so that we can be forgiven.

**Isaiah 53:5-6** …and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of usall.

The LORD treated His Messiah as though His Messiah were guilty of the sins that we’ve committed. So justice is served. Justice is fulfilled in the Messiah’s crushing, piercing, bruising. We know it to be crucifixion. Peter makes this connection between Jesus’ death and these prophecies of the Messiah. He says

**1 Peter 2:24** He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

I emphasize this because this is such a key aspect of our hope, of how we look at the future. The death of Jesus that happened in the past has so much to do with how we think about our future. Friends, let no one rob you of the doctrine of the substitutionary death of Jesus upon the cross. Many teachers will seek to dislodge you from this doctrine of the atoning substitutionary death of Jesus on the cross. Jesus’ substitutionary death on the cross is central to the Gospel. If we lose the aspect of Jesus dying on the cross for our sins, being punished by God, God’s wrath being poured out, that Christ satisfied the justice of God on the cross, if we lose that, we lose the Gospel altogether. No matter how sophisticated the arguments may come to you in the future, let no one dislodge from you the preciousness of Jesus the Messiah taking your sin upon Himself, suffering the wrath of God for you so that you can be free from the wrath of God forever and ever. The Messiah brings

**6. Hope for a national repentance and revival.**

Just the comment, I love it here in chapter 12. He is saying that this nation will not be in this sin cycle over and over again. One day, Israel as a nation will be saved.

**Zechariah 12:10** “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him,

It’s the mourning of repentance and it’s the depth of mourning

**Zechariah 12:10** …as one mourns for an only child,

So this miracle of repentance will come upon Israel not because Israel created repentance in their own hearts. Their hearts were hard. But it’s because the Spirit of grace came to their hearts and softened their hearts. Has that happened yet? No it has not. The nation today is still in a state of spiritual stupor and blindness and rejection and rebellion. They haven’t mourned for him who they have pierced. But that day will happen. The Apostle Paul, who is a Jew, rejoices in that day. He says

**Romans 11:25** …I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel,

In other words, He is saying there are some Jews who have turned soft toward God, but there is a hardening that has come upon Israel.

**Romans 11:25** …until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

God is opening a door for us Gentiles to receive the blessings that He has offered to His people, Israel. He says

**Romans 11:26** And in this way all Israel will be saved,

In other words, there is going to be a day, Paul is affirming, when the Spirit of grace falls and all Israel will be saved. They’ll come as a people.

**Romans 11:26-27** …as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”; “and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”

He says

**Romans 11:28-29** …as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

As Gentiles, we rejoice because we get to participate in this open door, this Spirit of

grace that can come upon us and receive the blessings of this new covenant. The last two are perhaps the most precious. The Messiah will bring

**7. Hope for a future kingdom.**

Again, this people has lost their kingdom. They lost their land. They lost their nation, their government. They’re back in Jerusalem, but they still don’t have a nation. They still don’t have any kingdom. They don’t have any land. They needed encouragement. They’re filled with anxiety. “Is our nation going to come to an end? It still could. We’re still very weak and feeble. Are the Gentile nations going to turn on us again to attack us like they did just seventy years earlier? Are the promises of God about a future kingdom for us really going to come to fruition? Has God just said ‘I’m going past that because of how much you’ve sinned against me’?”

The problems that the Jews experienced 2500 years ago are the same ones we experience today. Do you ever feel overwhelmed by the potential of disaster falling upon your life? Are you ever anxious over some potential disease grabbing hold of you or grabbing hold of someone you love? Are you ever anxious over relationships that are crumbling and breaking apart? Are you anxious about the future of people whom you love? They seem to be making some bad decisions and you’re concerned for them. Are you anxious over your finances? Are you anxious over politics and world affairs, asking, how is this all going to shake out? Do you ever feel overwhelmed by worry and fear? The answer is yes, of course we do. What’s the answer to it? The answer is the knowledge of God, the knowledge of His kingdom.

Jesus says this in Matthew 6. Don’t be anxious about what you’re going to wear or what you’re going to eat. Why not? Well first, because God cares for the birds of the air and you’re more valuable than they are as people. But then He says this. He says to seek first His kingdom. There is a future kingdom. Part of that kingdom is now, but part of it is in the future. Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. When you do that, everything else, all of these anxieties that seem to be so high and just jumping off the charts and keeping you awake at night, all these will be flattened. All these things will be added to you, He says.

I love what Corrie Ten Boom said while she was in a concentration camp in Europe. She said, “Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.” That’s Zechariah here. He says, “Let me tell you about this God. Let me tell you about this Messiah so that when you look at your future, you’re not afraid to trust this unknown God, because He’s not unknown anymore. He’s known. Though the future is unknown, this God is known. This is the God who knows the end from the beginning because He is sovereign over the end and He is moving all things toward this kingdom. What is this kingdom like? I love this! Let me just give some descriptions that are given here in Zechariah of this kingdom. First, he says in

**Zechariah 2:10** Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for behold, I come and I will dwell in your midst, declares the LORD.

God Himself is in the midst of this kingdom. He dwells with the people.

**Zechariah 2:11** …And I will dwell in your midst, and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you.

It’s a time when the knowledge of God will fill the earth as the water fills the seas. What a wonder that will be! Jump down to Zechariah chapter 8. I love this description!

**Zechariah 8:3** Thus says the LORD: I have returned to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem,

Again, it’s God’s real person, the Messiah’s real person being in the midst of His people, with His people in relationship.

**Zechariah 8:4-5** Thus says the LORD of hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of great age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.

That picture just captures my imagination. Could you name one city in the United States where you see girls and boys playing in the streets? Would you send your five year old to the streets of downtown Peoria, let alone downtown Chicago? “Hey, go ahead. I’ll drop you off here at 8:00 in the morning and I’ll come back and see you in the afternoon.” Does that happen? Why not? It would be kind of crazy to do that. Don’t you know all that could happen to him? Don’t you know all the wicked people that are around? Yes, I do. That’s why boys and girls aren’t playing in the streets. When the Messiah comes, guess what? You’ll drop them off in the middle of a huge metropolitan area and say, “I’ll see you later. Enjoy yourself on the playground. Here’s lunch.”

Old men and old women, they’re sitting there, too. Where do old men and old women sit in the middle of a city and just enjoy themselves without fear? Where does that happen in the United States or other places in the world? That’s what is going to happen. And they’re going to get to old age because the Messiah flattens out pandemics. He doesn’t allow pandemics to rule over the world. His power is complete over everything. So everybody gets to an old age and when they get to an old age, they’re able to be in their old age in complete safety, without fear of getting knocked on the head, because the Messiah is creating a kingdom of peace and righteousness.

**Zechariah 8:13** And as you have been a byword of cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing. Fear not, but let your hands be strong.”

I love

**Zechariah 8:23** Thus says the LORD of hosts: In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, ‘Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.’”

So this is a special people, the Jewish people. In that day, this kingdom is going to be such that it’s first a promise to the Jews, but it’s also now a kingdom that we get to be into. But as we get to engage with it, here we find that the promise is that Gentiles can still be part of the kingdom even in the Old Testament. What’s going to happen is we’re going to grab hold of a Jewish people. “You are blessed by God. I want to take hold of your robe because there is some special blessing that God has placed upon you.

Can you imagine how encouraging that would be to a Jewish man or woman living 2500 years ago in Jerusalem? Because no one is doing that now. Everyone sees a Jewish person and they turn around and spit at them. In this day, people will say, “No, you’re blessed by God. I want to be near you so I can gain the blessing that God promised to you as a people.”

**Zechariah 9:16-17** On that day the LORD their God will save them, as the flock of his people**;** for like the jewels of a crown they shall shine on his land. For how great is his goodness, and how great his beauty!

This people who have been so far from God and so rebellious, will be like jewels in a crown and shall shine in the land. How great is His goodness? Again, it’s not them that produces this glory. It’s God placing glory upon them. How great is His beauty!

**Zechariah 10:6** “I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph. I will bring them back because I have compassion on them, and they shall be as though I had not rejected them, for I am the LORD their God and I will answer them.

**Zechariah 13:9** …They will call upon my name, and I will answer them. I will say, ‘They are my people’; and they will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’”

Such is the kingdom!

**Zechariah 14:8** On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea.

In other words, there is going to be geographical changes by the power of the Messiah and His return. These will be geographical changes that produce a more lush earth.

Let me ask you, how often should we think about the Kingdom; the future kingdom as well as the present kingdom? Here’s what Jesus taught us. He said, when you pray, pray this way. “Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.” Whenever you pray, think about the kingdom. Don’t let this become like every so often a pastor is going to mention the kingdom and think about it for a little while before lunch. No, every day pray thy kingdom come. That’s hope! When the Messiah comes, He brings

**8. Hope for the return of the King.**

The Kingdom will not come until the King comes to rule and reign. There are a couple ideas that Zechariah sets before us. First, he says when the Messiah comes, He is going to come in humility with His glory hidden from the eyes of men. He says that to us in

**Zechariah 9:9** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

He’s not mounted on a glorious war horse. He’s mounted on a donkey. It’s not even a full-fledged donkey. It’s on the colt, the foal of a donkey. So when the Messiah comes, He’s going to come so humbly, we’ll say, so quietly, that His glory is going to be hidden.

But secondly, Zechariah tells us that when the Messiah comes, He is going to come with such power that His glory is going to be on full display. Undoubtedly, Zechariah himself is thinking, how are both of these to be? How is the Messiah going to come humbly and quietly and how is he also then going to come in glory? We understand that now because we understand that His coming is going to be in two parts; the first advent and the second. The first advent will be very different from the second advent.

In the first advent, think of this. The King came out of heaven, where all the angels and all the saints adored Him. They gave Him glory and saw His wonder. The King came to an earth where very, very, very few people loved Him. Very, very few people received Him. Very, very few people saw His glory. He did that so that He might bring salvation to you and to me. But at the second coming of Jesus, notice chapter 14 now. What’s the outcome?

**Zechariah 14:3** Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle.

Notice this, and this is just one of the cataclysmic events that is going to take place at His coming. It’s going to shake the world.

**Zechariah 14:4** On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives

When He comes, it is with such power. He is the one who spoke the worlds into order. He’s the one who sustains all things. So this isn’t even difficult for this King. When His feet touch ground, what is going to happen? This Mount of Olives

**Zechariah 14:4** …shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward.

**Zechariah 14:5** Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.

All the saints in their resurrected bodies will come with Christ and it will be a day of absolute earth-shaking visibility. Everyone is going to see Him.

**Zechariah 14:9 NASB** And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one.

I want to have some concluding applications. First, receive Jesus as your Messiah King. The only way to benefit from the hope that He offers is by receiving Him. Have you received Jesus? We know He’s the Messiah that was promised. We know He is God come in the flesh. We know He is the King. In Him alone you can have relationship with God. In Him alone you can be cleansed of sin.

Secondly, strengthen your hope. If you have received Jesus as the Messiah, strengthen your hope. Hope is the remedy to despair, to frustration, to fear. God Himself is not frustrated by the events of our present world. Not one of them is He frustrated over. He’s not worried about the future. So while we as Christians are not blind to the problems of this world, we’re not blinded by them either. We keep our hope in the Lord. When we have the Messiah King, we strengthen our hope. Strengthen your hope.

Thirdly, speak hope to one another. If you’re a person like myself, sometimes you wake up and you are a little anxious about things that are happening both personally on a small scale and big on a national or world scale. Sometimes you get frustrated. Are you like that? Is anybody with me? That’s why community is so important. Community isn’t important just to sort of emotionally have people around us. One of the reasons why community is so important is so that we would stimulate one another to faith, to love, to hope. It’s that we would speak these eternal truths into each other’s lives. I need to be reminded of that. I don’t always have those things rolling through my mind. I need brothers and sisters to speak hope into my life. Let’s be people who speak hope. Let’s not be people who speak frustration and worry and anxiety into each other’s lives. Let’s speak hope into one another’s lives.

Fourth, wait with longing for the Messiah to come. Wait for the Messiah to come again like a child waits for Christmas morning. This morning, I was talking to a little girl. I said, “Are you ready for Christmas?” Oh man! It was a question that just lit her up. She started literally dancing and saying how much she can’t wait for Christmas morning. Why is that? Well, there is this expectation of something really good that she has on that day. We have something far greater. We know that. So let us wait for Him. Let’s be ready and wait for Him with that kind of eagerness. Your kingdom come!

Finally, let’s work while you wait for the Messiah to come. Waiting isn’t to be passive. Jesus gave that parable of the talents. He says wait and then the master is going to come. He’s going to come at a time you’re not expecting. So here’s the message of the parable of the talents. Let’s keep working. We have these resources of time, of our energy, of spiritual gifts, of financial resources. The master when he comes, he says, “What did you do with them while you were waiting? What did you do to prepare for my glory to be received?” What are you going to do? Let’s work together for the glory of God so that we together will be able to hear those blessed words from the King when He comes, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”