

## Zechariah 14:1-9 – Shaking Things Up

Zechariah chapters 9-13 spoke of a coming leader who was initially accepted but then rejected, pierced and struck down. This resulted in mourning, cleansing and purifying. Chapter 14 is another challenging passage to interpret. Martin Luther, in his 1527 commentary, said of chapter 14, “Here, in this chapter, I give up. For I am not sure what the prophet is talking about” (as noted by Al Wolters, cited in Anthony R. Petterson’s commentary). Wolters urged humility when interpreting this passage.

### **Read Zechariah 14:1-5.**

In verse 1, what did Zechariah say to behold? (14:1)

In verses 1 and 2, what would happen on that day? (14:1-2)

In verse 2, half of the city would go into exile. This may remind you of 13:8-9 where two thirds of people in the land would perish while one third would be left alive. What time period is this talking about, or is this symbolic language and not a historical prediction? (14:2)

Verse 3 signals a major shift. Verses 1-2 described judgment against Jerusalem. What happens in verse 3? (14:3)

Will God literally stand on the Mount of Olives and split the Mount of Olives? What is the Mount of Olives known for, besides olives? What impression do you get from verse 4? (14:4)

In verse 5, how was the split in the Mount of Olives used? “Azal” is an unknown location. The earthquake in the days of King Uzziah is mentioned in Amos 1:1. What happens at the end of verse 5? While “the holy ones” may make us think of angels, these “holy ones” may be the ones whom God saved and who will return with God to Jerusalem. (14:5)

**Read Zechariah 14:6-9.**

In verse 6, ESV has “no light, cold, or frost”. KJV has “the light shall not be clear, nor dark”. NASB has “no light; the luminaries will die out”. NIV has “neither sunlight nor cold, frosty darkness”. “light” is the same word used in Genesis 1:3 “let there be light”. Anthony R. Petterson translates the last part of the phrase as “splendid ones will congeal”. What is verse 6 describing? (14:6)

In verse 7, there is neither day nor night, but there is light. Genesis 1:13 speaks of the sun ruling the day and the moon ruling the night. The words for “day” and “night” in verse 7 are the same words used in Genesis 1:13. The word “evening” in this verse is also found repeatedly in Genesis 1, “and there was evening and there was morning”. What is verse 7 describing? See Jeremiah 4:22-26 and Revelation 22:5. (14:7)

In verse 8, another unusual event was described. Where do the living waters flow from? Where do the living waters flow to? At the end of the verse, what is unusual about these waters. What do the living waters symbolize? Where else in scripture are living waters mentioned? See Jeremiah 2:13, 17:13. See John 4:10, 7:38. See Revelation 7:17, 22:1-2, 17. (14:8)

In verse 9, what will happen? One of the themes of chapters 9-13 is leadership. At the time of Zechariah, Judah did not have a Davidic king sitting on a throne in Jerusalem. Is God king over all the earth right now? (14:9)

At the end of verse 9, what does it mean that Yahweh will be one and his name one? See Deuteronomy 6:4-5. (14:9)

I recently heard someone explain the white horse rider of Revelation 6:2. Who wears white? A doctor. “Bow” in Greek is “toxon”. “Crown” in Spanish is “corona”. Of course, the white horse rider is Anthony Fauci vaccinating everyone for the corona virus. Another person said that one of the horns in Zechariah 1:18 is the United Nations. I put both these examples of “interpretation” under the category of reading current events into scripture. We should be pulling the author’s intended meaning out of scripture. Prophecy can be challenging to interpret, but it is never a good idea to try to force current events into a prophetic passage. The two people mentioned above were 100% sure of themselves. That doesn’t help. I have always appreciated someone like Sproul who, more than once, came to a difficult passage and admitted that he had spent years trying to understand it, and still was not totally sure that he understood it fully. I also respect someone like Luther who came to Zechariah 14 and said, “I am not sure what the prophet is talking about”. It was not from a lack of effort on Luther’s part. Some passages are just difficult to understand as Peter said of some of Paul’s writings (2 Peter 3:16). Why do you think interpretations of prophecy to include current events is so popular?