

Zechariah 9:1-13 – Behold Your King

The 8 visions and the message to the Bethel delegation contained gracious and comforting words from God. God would punish the enemies of Israel and bless Judah and Jerusalem. God promised that the temple would be completed and that Jerusalem would be rebuilt. God would again dwell with his people. God's word contained encouragement for those involved in building the temple. God also spoke about blessings that were still in the future. The Branch would spring from the line of David and would also have a priestly function. The final 6 chapters of Zechariah are composed of two oracles. Chapters 9 through 11 make up the first oracle. The second oracle is in chapters 12 through 14.

Read Zechariah 9:1-8.

In verse 1, ESV has "The oracle of the word of Yahweh". NASB and KJV have "The burden of the word of Yahweh". NIV has "A prophecy: The word of the Lord". The word "oracle" or "burden" is the same word used in Jeremiah 23:33-40. "The burden of Yahweh" was such an abused term by false prophets that God told Jeremiah to forbid the people to use the term. In Zechariah 9:1, we have a true "burden of Yahweh". The phrase "The oracle of the word of Yahweh" also begins chapter 12. (9:1)

Where was Hadrach? Where was Damascus? Was this oracle good news for them or was it bad news? The second part of verse 1 can be taken two ways. Either Yahweh has his eye on mankind and all Israel (ESV) or mankind and Israel have their eye on Yahweh (ESV note, NASB, KJV, NIV). Which do you think best fits the context? (9:1)

In verse 2, the ESV translation understands Yahweh's eye to be on Hamath and Tyre and Sidon like it was on Hadrach, Damascus and all Israel. NASB, KJV and NIV all translate the end of verse 2 as a parenthetical statement. The meaning is that Yahweh was against Hadrach, Damascus, Hamath, Tyre and Sidon. Which do you think best fits the context? Hadrach's northern border reached the Euphrates River. Going south from Hadrach was Hamath, Sidon and Damascus, and then Tyre. Tyre and Sidon were on the Mediterranean Sea. How were Tyre and Sidon described at the end of verse 2? (9:2)

In verse 3, what had Tyre done? In verse 4, what would God do to Tyre? (9:3-4)

Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron and Ashdod were all cities of Philistia. For some reason the city of Gath was not mentioned. Ashkelon, Gaza and Ashdod were all on or near the Mediterranean Sea? What would happen to these Philistine cities? King David was the one who had previously subdued the Philistines. The list of the northern areas and cities along with the Philistine cities may have been included to remind the people of the extent of David and Solomon's kingdom. (9:5-7)

In verse 8, what did God say he would do? What was “my house”? (9:8)

Read Zechariah 9:9-13.

Verse 9 should be a familiar verse. It is quoted in Matthew 21:5 and John 12:15 in the context of Jesus’ Triumphal Entry. Zion and Jerusalem were to rejoice greatly and shout aloud. Why were they to greatly rejoice? What 4 details were given about their coming king? For the second descriptor of the king, ESV and KJV have “having salvation”. NASB has “endowed with salvation”. NIV has “victorious”. The translations reveal the two ways this word / phrase is understood. It usually refers to one who is saved (often by God). Some believe that the context dictates a meaning of “victorious”. Which do you think best fits the context? ESV and NASB have “humble” for the third description. KJV and NIV have “lowly”. Some commentators believe that this word should be translated as “afflicted”. Why would Jerusalem rejoice over an afflicted king? “Afflicted” fits with Isaiah 53 and David’s life while Saul was after him, but it doesn’t seem to fit this verse. What is the significance of the king riding on a donkey? See Genesis 49:10-11. (9:9)

In verse 10, what did God promise to do? What would be true of the coming king? See Psalm 72:8. (9:10)

What covenant was referred to in verse 11? Was it God’s covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15), God’s covenant with Israel at Sinai (Exodus 24:3-8) or another covenant? (9:11)

In verse 11, who were the prisoners? What was the waterless pit? Some see a reference to Joseph being thrown in a pit (Genesis 37:22-24). Jeremiah was also thrown into a pit (cistern) that had no water (Jeremiah 38:6). In Psalm 40, David said that God drew him up from the pit of destruction (Psalm 40:2). (9:11)

In verse 12, what did God command the prisoners of hope to do? What did God promise to do for the freed prisoners? Some see a reference to the double blessing Joseph received. Both Ephraim and Manasseh, his sons, received an inheritance in the Promised Land. See also Isaiah 61:1-7. (9:12)

In verse 13, what did God say he would do? What does this verse mean? Did Israel ever combat Greece? (9:13)