

Connection Group Participant Guide

July 11, 2021

Zechariah 9:1-8

Introduction

Zechariah chapters 9-14 occur perhaps 40-50 years later. The temple has long been completed. Zechariah is now an old man. Israel is still weak and vulnerable, under foreign domination. Nehemiah had not yet returned to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Powerful and aggressive neighbors still surrounded the weak remnant. The people worried, “What if these neighbors attack us? What if they tear down the temple, we worked so hard to rebuild? What if they invade us and carry us off as captives again?” They feared what the future might hold for their families and their nation.

To these people Zechariah delivers the message of chapters 9-14, which prophesy of Israel’s future. It consists of two “burdens.” The first burden (chap. 9-11) focuses on Israel’s coming king, the Messiah, emphasizing His first coming and rejection. The second burden (chap. 12-14) focuses on Israel’s coming comfort, when the nation will go through severe trials and purging, but finally be delivered by the second coming of Her Messiah and King, the Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Feinberg calls these last six chapters of Zechariah “an incomparable treasury of prophetic truth” (*God Remembers* [American Board of Mission to the Jews], p. 151).

Highlight

What fate does Zechariah envision for Syria, Phoenicia, and Philistia? What have they done to deserve this fate? Are Syria, Phoenicia, and Philistia the real targets of this prophecy? What about Jerusalem?

Explain

What are these verses actually about?

Apply

How can we determine the balance between doing all that we can and yet depending on God’s strength (see 1 Cor. 15:10)? Sometimes God delivers while we do nothing (Exod. 13-14). At other times, we must act while trusting God (1 Sam. 23:2). How can we know the difference?

Respond in Prayer

Read through Isaiah 43:1-7 and listen with your heart to what it has to say. We recommend praying through this text on your own at home and together with your Connection Group.

