

Zechariah 5:1-4

A Coming Global Judgment

The visions of Zechariah reveal a progressive unfolding of God's plan and purpose for the nation of Israel, and for the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom. The visions are in sequential order.

Chapter one; The first three visions gave assurance that God had neither rejected Israel nor was He done with the Jewish people.

The Gentile world-powers, who opposed Israel, would be broken and cast out by the Lord, but Israel would be restored to greatness.

In chapter two, it was foretold that the Messiah would return to live among His chosen people. The city of Jerusalem would be rebuilt much larger and more glorious than ever before.

And, God's original purpose for Israel, to bring God's blessing to the rest of the world, will be fulfilled.

Chapter three, these promises to make Israel a great nation, will one day be fulfilled by God, even though Israel is one of the most unworthy and unfaithful people.

However, Israel would need to be changed from their stubborn, wicked and rebellious nature.

In chapter three, we saw the symbols of Jesus Christ crucified for the removal of the sin of the Jews, foretelling God's plan for getting rid of the sinful nature and for cleansing the stubborn heart of the Jewish people.

Chapter four prophesies the Holy Spirit being poured out on the people of God to empower them for the completion of their calling to be a blessing to the world, and to build the spiritual house of God.

However, we all know that most of Israel rejected their Messiah, and has stubbornly persisted in living in rebellion against Jesus their Messiah.

We see this persistent rebellion foretold in chapter five, which reveals that before the glorious kingdom of God will be established on earth, there will be a period of world-wide moral darkness and global economic corruption, and lawlessness.

But this wickedness will be punished globally, and then removed from the earth before the Kingdom of God will be established.

God has two righteous methods of dealing with sin. The method that He delights in is the method of grace, through putting our faith in the sin-cleansing work of Jesus Christ.

This is beautifully illustrated in the third chapter, where the Righteous Servant removes the sin of Israel, and the repentant Jews shall be cleansed of all defilement in one day.

But what about those who refuse to repent but persist in their wickedness in spite of the repeated demonstration of God's grace to His people?

With them God's second method of dealing with sin is to remove the sinner from God's sight.

His two methods are, grace to those who repent, but terrifying removal from the earth of those who refuse His grace.

All who repent of their sin and trust in Jesus to take away their sin, will live together with Jesus here on this earth when He returns to set up His Kingdom and to rule over all the nations of the world.

But those who do not repent of their sin, and turn to Christ, will be removed and will live forever in a place called hell, which is a place of permanent separation from God and from all of His goodness.

It will be a place of torment, and meaninglessness, forever.

Zechariah 5:1–3, "Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying scroll. ²And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I answered, "I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits." ³Then he said to me, "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth: 'Every thief shall be expelled,' according to this side of the scroll; and, 'Every perjurer shall be expelled,' according to that side of it.'"

There are two aspects to all of these prophetic visions. There was an application of the vision to the historical context of Zechariah and the people of Israel he was speaking to 500 years before Christ, shortly after they had returned from their Babylonian captivity.

And that element of the prophecies has already been fulfilled, much of it in the lifetime of Zechariah.

But like the layers of skin on an onion, there is a deeper layer to these prophecies that points to future events surrounding the coming of Christ.

This still future element is the layer that we are focused on in our study of Zechariah.

A clue to understanding what this curse was is the statement in verse three, that, "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth."

In verse 3, the Hebrew word, *eretz*, that is translated into English as *earth*, can also be translated as *land*.

The word seems to have both meanings in this prophecy. In the context of Zechariah's day, it referred to the land of Israel. But in the future context of the last days, it's meaning seems to be referring to the whole earth.

This is how it is translated in the New King James Bible.

This is describing a global event in which the whole earth comes under a curse from God. The only time in the Bible when the whole earth is cursed, other than Noah's flood, is during a time of intense global judgment in the last days, known the Tribulation.

The whole earth will fall under the curse of this end time judgment; every continent, every nation, every island, every city, town, village and farm.

Once it begins, there will be no safe place to hide from God's curse. All who have violated God's law, and rejected God's grace offered through Jesus Christ, will fall under the curse of the law against their sin.

The scroll is described as flying. Flight is the fastest form of travel.

A flying scroll implies that the curse it contains would come suddenly upon the whole earth at once, not slowly spreading over a long time.

I believe we got a taste of just how quickly this curse could come upon the whole earth when we saw how quickly Covid was able to afflict the whole earth.

Other places in the Bible describe the global curse that comes upon the earth as coming suddenly.

1Thessalonians 5:2-3, "For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. ³ For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape."

To get a sense of what this curse written on the scroll likely refers to, read the book of Revelation, chapters 6 to 16, where we read of the seals of judgment, the trumpet judgments, and the bowls of wrath, which are descriptions of God's curse against the sin of the human race.

This future time of the world coming under a curse is known as the Tribulation, a seven-year period of intense punishment from God resulting in the majority of the planet's population dying from war, famine, disease, earthquakes, asteroids falling to earth, demonic attacks, poisoned water supplies, and the brutal violence of lawless people killing one-another.

Look at what Zechariah says will be the outcome of this curse that goes over all the earth: *Zechariah 5:3b, "...'Every thief shall be expelled,' according to this side of the scroll; and, 'Every perjurer shall be expelled,' according to that side of it."*

Verse three of this vision specifically identifies the thief and perjurer as those the curse would come upon.

It is believed that these two particular sins each represent a violation of the two great commandments: to love the Lord with all your heart and to love your neighbor as yourself.

To lie under oath was to break the third commandment forbidding taking God's name in vain. To steal was to break the eighth commandment. Perjury is a sin against God. Stealing is a sin against man.

But why are these two sins specifically singled out? They seem to be pointing us to a particular characteristic that marks this future time in history leading up to God's judgment.

Life on a global scale will be impacted in the last days by **thieves** and **perjurers**.

First of all, the thieves. In John 10:10, Jesus compared Satan to a thief, characterizing the thief as one who comes to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.

I think it is significant that recently we have begun witnessing, on a global scale, influential people who are stealing freedoms, stealing businesses, stealing life-savings, stealing authority, stealing governments, stealing peace and prosperity, stealing health, and destroying economies, cultures, families and democracies.

In fact, the stated objective of some of these influential thieves in the World Economic Forum, and the UN 2030 Initiative, who are planning the Great Reset, is that, "You will own nothing, and be happy." (Just do an internet search of that statement.)

Their objective is to take over the world.

Secondly the Bible identifies perjurers (everyone who swears falsely) as being a special focus of the last days curse—a perjurer is one who willfully makes a false oath that he has no intention of keeping, or who sincerely makes an oath, but then later intentionally violates that oath.

Deception is at the heart of perjury. Lies cloaked behind an oath, meant to lead others into believing the opposite of what is actually happening.

Politicians are notorious for making all kinds of official promises that they have no intention of keeping. God's curse in the last days will target these people.

We see a global rash of medical professionals under Hippocratic oath, trusted to do no harm, intentionally violating that oath.

We see perjury among law enforcement and judges who take oaths to uphold the law, intentionally violating their oaths, not just in third-world countries, but in western, developed countries all over the world.

And this wave of violating official oaths of office and of court is happening not just here, but around the world.

And the global curse of the last days is coming upon all who reject Christ, but Zechariah's prophecy indicates that these thieves and perjurers will be especially targeted.

God's judgment against sin will be absolutely just. Nobody will get away with their crime.

Verse three also says that every thief and perjurer will be expelled from the land, meaning that God will remove them all from the earth before Jesus sets up His Kingdom on earth.

But before they are removed from the earth, they will fall under the curse and be punished.

This is something we call the remedial judgment of God. Remedial because it is meant to bring remedy, before it is too late.

This curse is God's foretaste of what is coming so that sinners can repent before it is too late.

The curse and judgments of the present day and of the Tribulation, are God's gradual withdrawal of His preserving grace and blessing.

It's God's way of saying, "You are rejecting Me. But before I cast you away permanently, let me give you a taste of what life without God is like, to see if you might change your mind about rejecting Me."

Zechariah 5:4, "I will send out the curse," says the Lord of hosts; "It shall enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name. It shall remain in the midst of his house and consume it, with its timber and stones."

God's curse against sin comes right into their homes, and affects their personal lives, their family, their finances, their mental health, and their physical health, to bring judgment upon the guilty.

Those who reject Jesus can't escape the curse of their sin. They can't leave it at work and come to the security of their home to find peace. The curse follows them home and moves in with them. It lives with them 24/7 until they and their household, and everything they own is destroyed.

Then they will be expelled from the earth and from the presence of God, and will have no part in the greatness of His Kingdom, which Jesus will set up after the seven years of Tribulation are over.

In Conclusion:

God has two righteous methods of dealing with sin.

The method that He delights in is the method of grace, through putting our faith in the sin-cleansing work of Jesus Christ, He will take away our sin, and make us members of His family. All who repent of their sin and trust in Jesus to take away their sin, will live together with Jesus here on this earth when He returns to set up His Kingdom and to rule over all the nations of the world.

But what about those who refuse to repent but persist in their wickedness in spite of the repeated demonstration of God's grace to His people?

His other method of dealing with sin, if we reject His grace, is to take the sinner away from His presence and from His creation.

Those who do not repent of their sin, and turn to Christ, will be removed and will live forever in a place called hell, which is a place of permanent separation from God and from all of His goodness. It will be a place of torment, and meaninglessness, forever.

His two methods are, grace to those who repent, but terrifying removal from the earth of those who refuse His grace.

The only escape from the curse and punishment of sin is to call upon the grace and mercy of God.

1John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

John 1:12, "But as many as received [Jesus], to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name."

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