

ZECHARIAH

Chapter 14

The Lord Comes and Reigns

A day of the LORD is coming when your plunder will be divided among you. ² I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city. ³ Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. ⁴ On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south. ⁵ You will flee by my mountain valley, for it will extend to Azel. You will flee as you fled from the earthquake ^a in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him. ⁶ On that day there will be no light, no cold or frost. ⁷ It will be a unique day, without daytime or nighttime—a day known to the LORD. When evening comes, there will be light. ⁸ On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea ^b and half to the western sea, ^c in summer and in winter. ⁹ The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name. ¹⁰ The whole land, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem, will become like the Arabah. But Jerusalem will be raised up and remain in its place, from the Benjamin Gate to the site of the First Gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the royal winepresses. ¹¹ It will be inhabited; never again will it be destroyed. Jerusalem will be secure. ¹² This is the plague with which the LORD will strike all the nations that fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths. ¹³ On that day men will be stricken by the LORD with great panic. Each man will seize the hand of another, and they will attack each other. ¹⁴ Judah too will fight at Jerusalem. The wealth of all the surrounding nations will be collected—great quantities of gold and silver and clothing. ¹⁵ A similar plague will strike the horses and mules, the camels and donkeys, and all the animals in those camps. ¹⁶ Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁷ If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, they will have no rain. ¹⁸ If the Egyptian people do not go up and take part, they will have no rain. The LORD ^d will bring on them the plague he inflicts on the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. ¹⁹ This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of

Tabernacles.²⁰ On that day HOLY TO THE LORD will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, and the cooking pots in the LORD's house will be like the sacred bowls in front of the altar.²¹ Every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be holy to the LORD Almighty, and all who come to sacrifice will take some of the pots and cook in them. And on that day there will no longer be a Canaanite^e in the house of the LORD Almighty.

14:1 *your ... you.* Jerusalem (v. 2) is the object of the plunder. (CSB)

The division of spoil gained by the enemies who attack Jerusalem is described prior to the battle itself. The headline comes before the event. (TLSB)

14:2 *all the nations ... fight against it.* This is not an actual historical attack on Jerusalem, but rather a vivid reminder that the Lord permits His people to experience afflictions. (TLSB)

14:3 *day of battle.* Any occasion when the Lord supernaturally intervenes to deliver his people, such as at the Red Sea (see note on Ex 14:14). (CSB)

The Lord brings the nations to Jerusalem for the battle, and then He fights against them. The Lord continues to wage just war against all enemies of His people. (TLSB)

14:4 *On that day.* Refers not to vv 1–3 but rather to what follows. (TLSB)

Mount of Olives. Called by this name elsewhere in the OT only in 2Sa 15:30. This prophecy is probably referred to in Ac 1:11–12. (CSB)

A bold example of God described in human form (anthropomorphism) as a giant. (TLSB)

This hill would scarcely have been so called if its groves had not been outstandingly luxuriant in comparison with the surrounding land and the olives not of economic importance for the city. Oil was probably the only export of Jerusalem. Gethsemane, which was located on the Mt of Olives, means an oil or perfume press. (Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus – Joachim Jeremias – page 7)

split in two. God has power to cause cosmic upheaval (cf Mi 1:4). (TLSB)

east. Thus it faced the temple mount and, being about 2,700 feet high, rose about 200 feet above it. Cf. Eze 11:23; 43:1–2. (CSB)

14:5 *flee to the valley.* The Lord provides a wide valley as a way of escape for His people trapped in Jerusalem. (TLSB)

Azel. The name of a place east of Jerusalem, marking the eastern end of the newly formed valley. The location is unknown. (CSB)

From the tribe of Benjamin (cf Azel, 1Ch 8:37). This reference is likely to where his family lived, east of Jerusalem. (TLSB)

earthquake. At Hazor, archaeologists have found many collapsed buildings, the result of such an earthquake. (TLSB)

holy ones. May include both believers and angels. They will accompany our Lord when he comes (cf. Mt 25:31; 1Th 3:13; Jude 14; Rev 19:14). (CSB)

God's coming with His holy angels (cf Mt 25:31) will initiate the changes described in the following verses. (TLSB)

The picture sketched by the prophet shows Jehovah preparing to judge the nations, while the believers flee to Him for refuge, knowing that their salvation is near. (Kretzmann)

14:6 *no light, cold, or frost.* With God's coming (v 5), atmospheric conditions change radically. (TLSB)

There would not be full daylight, literally, "the glorious things will withdraw themselves," evidently said of the lights of heaven, the sun, moon, and stars. (Kretzmann)

14:7 *unique day.* Due to the topographical, cosmic and cataclysmic changes. See also Isa 60:19–20 and notes; cf. Rev 21:23–25; 22:5. (CSB)

The created light of our present world will be replaced by a light totally different from anything known to humans. Darkness will be eliminated (Is. 60:19). (TLSB)

14:8 *living water will flow.* Perhaps both literal and symbolic (cf. Ps 46:4; 65:9; Isa 8:6; Jer 2:13; Eze 47:1–12; Joel 3:18; Jn 4:10–14; 7:38; Rev 22:1–2). (CSB)

This will be flowing and not stagnant. Water guarantees life. (TLSB)

EASTERN...WESTERN – This means that the blessings of the Gospel would be distributed throughout the world. (Kretzmann)

The prophet uses the geography of Judah to picture God's new creation. (TLSB)

SUMMER...WINTER – These waters are not a wadi or gully that dries up in summer. (TLSB)

14:9 *The LORD will be king over the whole earth.* A pervasive theological theme in Scripture. (CSB)

All earthly government will cease, and the Lord will reign as King. (TLSB)

one LORD. See Dt 6:4. (CSB)

Israel's confession, "The LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Dt 6:4), will be on every tongue (Php 2:11) so that "God may be all in all" (1Co 15:28). (TLSB)

Triune God once more accepted by the Church as He had revealed Himself in Christ. (Kretzmann)

14:10 *plain.* The prophet envisions further geographical changes as he seeks to picture God's new earth. The mountains of Judah become a plain. (TLSB)

Geba. About six miles north-northeast of Jerusalem at the northern boundary of Judah (2Ki 23:8). (CSB)

Rimmon. Also called En Rimmon (Ne 11:29; cf. Jos 15:32), it was about 35 miles south-southwest of Jerusalem, where the hill country of Judah slopes away into the Negev. (CSB)

Exact location unknown; somewhere on the southern border of Judah. (TLSB)

Arabah. All the land around Jerusalem is to be leveled. (CSB)

There will be no more mountains to obstruct the work of the Church. (Kretzmann)

Jerusalem will be raised up. See note on Isa 2:2–4. The elevation may be both physical and in prominence. (CSB)

Jerusalem, with its walls and gates, will remain the high point above the surrounding plain (cf Mi 4:1–2). (TLSB)

Benjamin Gate ... First Gate ... Tower of Hananel. All were probably at the northeastern part of the city wall (cf. Jer 31:38; 37:12–13; 38:7). (CSB)

Corner Gate. At the northwest corner (cf. Jer 31:38). (CSB)

royal winepresses. Just south of the city. Thus the whole city is included. (CSB)

14:11 *inhabited.* See 2:4. (CSB)

never again ... destroyed. As at the time of the exile to Babylonia (see Isa 43:28 and note). (CSB)

Jerusalem will be secure. See Jer 31:40. (CSB)

The Lord threatened and even ordered utter destruction on His own people due to their sins (Is. 43:28; Mal 4:6), but the new Jerusalem will be safe from such a decree. (TLSB)

14:12 *nations that fought against Jerusalem.* This is a strike against all who wage war against Jerusalem (14:2). Cf. Ex 7-12. The horrible plague described here pictures God's terrible judgment on all who oppose Him (cf. Rev. 20:7-10; 22:1:8). (TLSB)

14:13 *great panic ... attack each other.* Plague will create holy terror. (TLSB)

Confusion will reign, causing enemy soldiers to grab hold of each other and fight among themselves. (TLSB)

It has always been a matter of good fortune, so far as the Church is concerned, that its enemies disagree among themselves and thus often frustrate their own evil intentions. (Kretzmann)

14:14 *gold and silver and clothing.* The plunder of battle, thus reversing the situation in v. 1. (CSB)

Reverse of v 1, where the enemy divided the spoil of Jerusalem. (TLSB)

14:15 A similar plague will strike the beasts of burden, preventing the people from using them to escape. (CSB)

The plague of v. 12 will fall not only on enemy soldiers but on animals used for war. Enemies of God's kingdom will be utterly destroyed. (TLSB)

14:16 *go up year after year to worship the King.* The prophet saw a time in the future when nations who had initially attacked Jerusalem (v 2) would go there to worship the Lord (Zec 8:22). This prophecy is fulfilled in NT times when people of all nations come into God's kingdom.

Feast of Tabernacles. Of the three great pilgrimage festivals (see Ex 23:14–17), perhaps Tabernacles was selected as the one for representatives of the various Gentile nations because it was the last and greatest festival of the Hebrew calendar, gathering up into itself the year's worship. (See note on Eze 45:25.) It was to be a time of grateful rejoicing (Lev 23:40; Dt 16:13–15; Ne 8:17). Beginning with the period of Ezra and Nehemiah, the reading and teaching of "the Book of the Law of God" became an integral part of the festivities (Ne 8:18; cf. Isa 2:3). The festival seems to speak of the final, joyful re-gathering and restoration of Israel, as well as of the ingathering of the nations. See chart on "OT Feasts and Other Sacred Days". (CSB)

This most prominent OT festival in postexilic times would naturally come to mind as an example of worship (Ne 8:13–18; Jn 7:2–10). (TLSB)

14:17 *no rain*. One of the curses for covenant disobedience (Dt 28:22–24; cf. Zec 9:11–10:1). (CSB)

Since rain is such a great blessing for an agricultural society (Jl 2:23), it becomes a symbol of God' favor. The Lord withholds blessing from those who fail to worship Him. (TLSB)

14:18 *Egyptian people ... will have no rain*. With either reading, the withholding of rain may still be included, for drought would cause even the Nile inundation to fail. (CSB)

Specially mentioned because of the oppression Israel experienced there (Ex 1:13–14). (TLSB)

Egypt was representative of all the world-powers and enemies that have tried to oppress the Church of God throughout history. (Kretzmann)

plague. Not the same plague described in v 12, which struck those waging war against Jerusalem. Here the plague is “no rain.” (TLSB)

14:20 *on that day*. This phrase brackets vv 20–21, which describe the radical changes in the new Jerusalem (see note, 12:3). (TLSB)

bells of the horses. Horses, used almost exclusively for war, seem totally out of place in God's kingdom of peace. Yet the bells that adorn them are inscribed with the same words as the gold plate on the turban of the high priest: “Holy to the LORD” (Ex 28:36). (TLSB)

HOLY TO THE LORD. Engraved on the gold plate worn on the high priest's turban (Ex 28:36–38) as a reminder of his consecration to the Lord's service. See note on 3:5. God's original purpose for Israel will be realized. (CSB)

pots ... bowls before the altar. Bowls (basins) outranked pots in temple ritual, but “on that day” they will be equal. (TLSB)

14:21 *Every pot in Jerusalem ... holy*. See Joel 3:17. Even common things become holy when they are used for God's service. (CSB)

Even the lowly cooking pot used for daily food preparation will be holy to the Lord and may be used in preparing a sacrifice. In heaven, there will be complete holiness. (TLSB)

Canaanite. Represents anyone who is morally or spiritually unclean— anyone who is not included among the chosen people of God (cf. Isa 35:8; Eze 43:7; 44:9; Rev 21:27). (CSB)

No openly godless people being permitted as members of the Church of God. The nearer the Church approaches its perfection, the clearer is shown the cleavage between those who are in truth the servants of the Lord and those who merely bear the name of His ministers; and the final revelation of those who in the accepted time, in the day of salvation, were for and against the Lord Jehovah will conic on the Last Day. (Kretzmann)

trader. The temple will no longer be a place for economic transactions (Mt 21:12; Jn 2:14–17). (TLSB)

Ch 14 Zechariah’s description of Jerusalem’s future anticipates John’s vision: “I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Rv 21:2). Both foresee a day when the Lord will use His mighty power to crush all His enemies and make all things new and holy. Those wearing white robes, whose sins have been washed away in the blood of the Lamb, will reside in that Holy City (Rv 7:13–14). They will “serve Him day and night in His temple” (Rv 7:15). • “Now come, Thou Blessed One, Lord Jesus, God’s own Son, Hail! Hosanna! We enter all The wedding hall To eat the Supper at Thy call.” Amen. (*LSB* 516:2) (TLSB)