

# **LONGING FOR CHRIST TO RETURN - FULL**

Part 1 of LONGING FOR CHANGE, Zechariah 14:1-9.  
Peter Foxwell. The Cornerstone Church. November 28, 2021.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Today is the first day of Advent. During this season in the Christian calendar, we focus on the return of Christ. Advent means appearing and this season leading up to Christmas is about increasing our longing for his appearing.

Our reason for longing is this: When Jesus returns, he will make everything right.

All the things that make life so hard - sin, evil, injustice, disasters, death, sickness, the devil - all these things will end and will be replaced by Christ and his Kingdom on earth.

## **THE CONTEXT OF ZECHARIAH 14**

Today, we're going to stoke our fire for Christ and his Kingdom by reviewing the prophetic promises of his return in Zechariah chapter 14.

Let's take a moment to picture Zechariah's situation. Use your imagination.

The year is 520 BC and Zechariah is standing on the summit of the Mount of Olives looking west over the city of Jerusalem. Seventy years ago, the Babylonian army burned it to the ground.

Twenty years ago, the people began to rebuild, but progress has been very slow. The wall is rubble. Most houses are still demolished. The temple is in ruins.

"Where is God in all of this?" he wondered.

Out of the ruins, God spoke about the future of Jerusalem and the return of Christ. Zechariah chapter 14 envisions several events, but three of them give us a timeline of hope. Let's look at those now.

## A TIMELINE OF HOPE

**EVENT ONE. Verses 1-3: Jerusalem will be attacked, but the Lord will intervene.**

Zechariah 14:1-3 (ESV) Behold, a day is coming for the LORD, when the spoil taken from you will be divided in your midst. 2 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken and the houses plundered and the women raped. Half of the city shall go out into exile, but the rest of the people shall not be cut off from the city. 3 Then the LORD will go out and fight against those nations as when he fights on a day of battle.

The ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy is still to come. According to Ezekiel 38-39, an alliance of nations will invade Israel. God will destroy them but, as a result, Jerusalem will be occupied by the Antichrist and his godless armies (Daniel 11:31, 45; Matthew 24:15).

That's when the Lord will step in decisively. "The Lord will go out and fight against those nations" (Zechariah 14:3). The Lord Jesus Christ will return to fight against the Antichrist and his armies and he will defeat them in the Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16:16).

His victory is described in Revelation 19.

Revelation 19:15-16 (ESV) From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Sin and death and evil do not win in the end. Jesus will reign on the earth.

**EVENT TWO. Verses 4-5: The Lord will stand on the Mount of Olives.**

Zechariah 14:4-5 (ESV) 4 On that day his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives that lies before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two from east to west by a very wide valley, so that one half of the Mount shall move northward, and the other half southward. 5 And you shall flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azal. And you shall flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD my God will come, and all the holy ones with him.

The Mount of Olives lies on the other side of a valley to the east of Jerusalem overlooking the temple mount. In his first advent, the Lord Jesus rode a donkey down the Mount of Olives while his disciples hailed him as King. On the night he was betrayed, he prayed in an olive grove at the foot of the hill. Jesus also ascended into heaven from the top of the Mount. And one day, he will return there (Acts 1:11-12) and split the mountain in half forming a valley.

His return will be visible and glorious and we'll be there with him.

Matthew 24:30b-31 (ESV) ... they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

**EVENT THREE. Verses 6-9: The Lord will be king on the earth.**

Zechariah 14:6-9 (ESV) On that day there shall be no light, cold, or frost. 7 And there shall be a unique day, which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but at evening time there shall be light.

8 On that day living waters shall flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea. It shall continue in summer as in winter.

9 And the LORD will be king over all the earth. On that day the LORD will be one and his name one.

Jesus is already ruling all things from heaven, but one day he will return to rule on the earth. This is pictured in Zechariah 9.

Zechariah 9:9,10b (ESV) Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. 10b ... and he shall speak peace to the nations; his rule shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

Our timeline of hope is summed up in verse 9.

Zechariah 14:9 (ESV) And the LORD will be king over all the earth.

This is what theologians call the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus Christ. He will reign on the earth for 1000 years (Revelation 20).

During Advent, we focus on reasons to long for the return of Christ and for his Millennial Kingdom. What is so special about his Millennial reign on the earth that it would cause us to long for his return?

## **WHY LONG FOR JESUS TO RETURN?**

**His glory will outshine the sun and moon.**

Isaiah 60:19 (ESV) The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give you light; but the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.

**Christ will reign, and we will reign with him, for 1000 years.**

Isaiah 9:6-7 (ESV) For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of

the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Jeremiah 23:5-6 (ESV) Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 6 In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'

Revelation 11:15 (ESV) Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."

Revelation 20:4b (ESV) They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Revelation 20:6b (ESV) ... they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

**The promises of God's covenant's with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:18) and David (2 Samuel 7:12-16) will be fulfilled** - a people, a land, an eternal King, and blessing on all nations.

**Israel will be restored to God.**

Zechariah 8:3, 7-8 (ESV) Thus says the LORD: I have returned to Zion and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts, the holy mountain. 7 Thus says the LORD of hosts: Behold, I will save my people from the east country and from the west country, 8 and I will bring them to dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness."

Isaiah 60:1, 3, 11, 15, 16b (ESV) Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. 3 And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. 11 ... Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut, that people may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession. ... 15 Whereas you have been forsaken and hated, with no one passing through, I will make you majestic forever, a joy from age to age. 16b ... and you shall know that I, the LORD, am your Savior and your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

### **The devil will have no influence.**

Revelation 20:2-3 (ESV) And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

Satan will be chained and Christ and his people will reign.

According to the Bible, Satan's influence on our lives today is huge:

- He is the god and ruler of this world - 2 Corinthians 4:4; John 12:31; 14:30;
- He is the commander of the powers of the unseen world that are at war with us - Ephesians 2:2; 6:12.
- He is a schemer, a predator, a murderer, a liar, and a deceiver - 2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 6:11; 1 Peter 5:8; John 8:44; Revelation 20:3.
- He accuses believers at the throne of God - Revelation 12:10.
- He blinds the minds of unbelievers and controls their lives - 2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2.

How good will our lives be when Satan is bound? Think about it.

- All the conflict, strife, and misery he causes. Done!

- All the lies he sows to keep hearts and nations in bondage. Done!
- The mental and physical illness he brings. Done!

When Jesus returns, Satan is done.

### **There will be peace on earth.**

Isaiah 2:4 (ESV) He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Isaiah 2:2-4 (ESV) It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, 3 and many peoples shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

### **Justice will prevail.**

Isaiah 42:1 (ESV) Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

Isaiah 9:7 (ESV) Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore.

Psalm 72 is a prophetic prayer for the Millennial Kingdom to be unveiled.

Psalms 72:1-4 (ESV) Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the royal son! 2 May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice! 3 Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness! 4 May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor!

### **We'll be free from disease and death.**

Isaiah 35:4-6 (ESV) He will come and save you. 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; 6 then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.

Isaiah 65:18-20 (ESV) But be glad and rejoice forever in that which I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness. 19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in my people; no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping and the cry of distress. 20 No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.

## **CONCLUSION**

In his first Advent, the Lord Jesus Christ gave us a preview of what will happen in his second Advent. He forgave sins, healed the sick, cast out demons, fed the hungry, and welcomed the outcasts. He urged the people to repent, to return to God, and to enter the Kingdom of God by committing to him by faith. All of this was a foretaste of what his Millennial Kingdom will be like.

We long for the return of Jesus because he will make everything right.

One pastor summed up the Millennial Kingdom.

Imagine a world dominated by righteousness and goodness, a world where there is no injustice, where no court ever renders an unjust verdict, and where everyone is

treated fairly. Imagine a world where what is true, right, and noble marks every aspect of life, including interpersonal relations, commerce, education, and government. Imagine a world where there is complete, total, enforced, and permanent peace, where joy abounds and good health prevails, so much so that people live for hundreds of years. Imagine a world where the curse is removed, where the environment is restored to the pristine purity of the Garden of Eden, where peace reigns even in the animal kingdom, so that “the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little boy will lead them” (Isa. Isa. 11:6). Imagine a world ruled by a perfect, glorious Ruler, who instantly and firmly deals with sin. Humanly speaking, that description may seem far-fetched, a utopian fantasy that could never be reality. Yet it accurately describes conditions during the future earthly kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Commentary on Revelation 12-22, John MacArthur).

In his crucifixion and resurrection, the Lord Jesus not only defeated sin, death, and the devil, he also paved the way for his return in glory. We know by faith that Jesus is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords and the kingdoms of this world belong to him. He rules from heaven now, but one day he will rule on earth. When he returns, our faith will be sight. Every knee will bow to him.

His Kingdom is a beautiful manifestation of the love, power, justice, goodness, beauty, and truth of God. And all those who belong to Jesus will live in that glorious new reality.

That is why we long for Jesus to return to rule on earth. And it is why we pray, your Kingdom come. We also pray, come quickly, Lord Jesus.

WORSHIP CELEBRATION  
Sunday, November 28, 2021

## Welcome & Invocation - Peter

### Prayer - Eve

*Who You Say I Am -Eve/McKenzie* [ Default Arrang  
McKenzie, Alex ]

*Goodness Of God -joey* [ Bethel Music in C: Joey ]

### Advent Candle - Peter

### ACTS Prayer & Communion - Peter

### Pray & Dismiss Kids - Peter

*It is well with my Soul-MCKENZIE* [ Default Arrang

### Teaching - Peter

*Prince Of Heaven-mckenzie* [ Default Arrangement

### Updates - Peter & Joey

### Blessing - Joey