

ZION VERSUS GREECE

Jon Macon

In Zechariah 9:13, the prophet Zechariah foretold of a coming conflict: “*When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man.*” The details of the prophecy in this chapter reveal that God was not speaking of a physical war between the nations of Israel and Greece, but rather a spiritual war between God’s children and the temptations of this world. In the end, God’s faithful children will stand victorious in this great battle.

Not a physical war

A study of the first part of Zechariah chapter nine shows us that this is *not* a prophecy of a physical war between Israel and Greece. In Zechariah 9:1-8, God through Zechariah had already prophesied that there would be no physical war between Israel and Greece: “The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of Hadrach, and Damascus shall be the rest thereof: when the eyes of man, as of all the tribes of Israel, shall be toward the Lord. And Hamath also shall border thereby; Tyrus, and Zidon, though it be very wise. And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets. Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire. Ashkelon shall see it, and fear; Gaza also shall see it, and be very sorrowful, and Ekron; for her expectation shall be ashamed; and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Ashkelon shall not be inhabited. And a bastard shall dwell in Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines. And I will take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth: but he that remaineth, even he, shall be for our God, and he shall be as a governor in Judah, and Ekron as a Jebusite. *And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.*” Yes, the Greeks would be God’s instrument of punishment upon many of Israel’s neighbors, including Phoenicia and Philistia, whose cities were named in that prophecy. But God clearly stated that He would protect Israel from the Greeks, and their army would “*pass by*” rather than “*pass through*” Israel. God does not make contradictory prophecies (Deut 18:21-22; Isa 46:9-11; Jer 28:9). When Alexander the Great and the Greeks were to pass through that land, God said that “no oppressor” would pass through and fight against God’s children at that time (Zech 9:8). History records that events transpired exactly as God foretold. There was never a physical war between Israel and Greece. Therefore, Zechariah 9:13-17 must be a New

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(continued)

Testament prophecy of a *spiritual* war between the sons of Zion and the sons of Greece.

Victory for the sons of Zion

In this war between the sons of Zion and the sons of Greece, Jehovah would bring victory to the sons of Zion. Zechariah 9:14-17 says, "*And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning; and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south. The Lord of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar. And the Lord their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land. For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids.*" The "sons of Zion" of Zechariah's prophecy could accurately refer to the members of the church of Christ. Hebrews 12:22-23 refers to God's church as "mount Zion," the "heavenly Jerusalem." In Revelation 14:1, Jesus Christ the Lamb of God is pictured standing upon mount Zion with his saved ones. The "sons of Greece" would represent the world in general, as "Greek" became a common term for any non-Jew (Acts 14:1; 16:1,3; 17:4,12; 18:4; 19:10,17; 20:21; 21:28; Rom 1:14-16; 10:12; 1 Cor 1:22-24; Gal 2:3; 3:28; Col 3:11). There is a great spiritual war taking place between Christians and the world (John 7:7; 15:18-21; 2 Cor 10:5; Eph 6:12). The very term "church" (*ekklesia*) means "the called out ones." Christians have been called out of the darkness and corruption of the world into God's marvelous light (Rom 12:2; Gal 1:4; Eph 2:1-3; 4:17-24; Php 2:15; Titus 2:11-14; Jas 1:27; 1 Pet 2:9-12; 4:3-5; 2 Pet 1:3-4; 2:20; 1 John 4:5-6). There is no friendship or fellowship between God's people and the world (John 8:23; 17:11,14,16; 18:36; 2 Cor 6:14-18; Gal 6:14; Jas 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17; 3:1,13; 5:19). In fulfillment of Zechariah 9:14-16, God is with us in this war (Matt 28:20; Rom 8:31; 1 John 4:4), Christ is our Captain (2 Tim 2:3-4; Heb 2:10), and the Lord has provided us with spiritual armor and weapons with which to war against the wickedness of the world, to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor 10:3-6; Eph 6:10-18). Christ overcame the world (John 16:33; Rev 3:21), and by faith in him, we also will overcome and win this war (1 John 4:4; 5:4-5; Rev 2:7,11,26; 3:5,12,21; 17:14; 20:7-9; 21:7). This is exactly as Zechariah 9:15 foretold.