

Zechariah & Luke: The Returning King

Lesson 20: The Returning King

Key Verse: *And the LORD will be king over all the earth, On that day the LORD will be one and his name one. ~Zechariah 14.9*

The familiarity of car alarms has made their blaring warning a bit meaningless. When we hear one, we often find it irritating, or consider that someone accidentally hit their panic button on their key fob. Rather than disputing the necessity of a car alarm, their familiarity has led us to dismiss their original purpose: preventing theft of a car! The familiarity of Jesus's resurrection and ascension can also cause us to dismiss the necessary work of Christ so that we may enter the presence of our **Holy** God. The promise and warning of the **Second Coming of Jesus, the Christ**, is more than an irritating alarm dismissed by the familiarity of heaven and hell. It is the security God's people have that our sin hasn't stolen us from God's presence-praise be to our ascended Jesus! But it is also the blaring warning of God's judgment against His enemies.

Ascended Messiah, My God, My Advocate, My King....Blessed be Your Holy Name. Thank You for coming for Your Church. Remove the familiarity of Your resurrection and ascension so that my faith in You will be more and more secured in the knowledge of You. Remove any temptation I have to dismiss what Your return as Conquering King means for all who do not believe in You as Messiah, Savior. Instead, give me the courage to proclaim Your name to all nations the forgiveness of sins (Luke 24.47). May Your Spirit in me give me courage to proclaim this to the ones in my home, my neighborhood, and to all others You bring into my life. Thank You for ascending into heaven. I can't wait to see You!

Zechariah 14.1-21: 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. **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.

6 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. **10** The whole land shall be turned into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem shall remain aloft on its site from the Gate of Benjamin to the place of the former gate, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses.

11 And it shall be inhabited, for there shall never again be a decree of utter destruction. Jerusalem shall dwell in security.

12 And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples that wage war 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 And on that day a great panic from the LORD shall fall on them, so that each will seize the hand of another, and the hand of the one will be raised against the hand of the other. **14** Even Judah will fight at Jerusalem. And the wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be collected, gold, silver, and garments in great abundance. **15** And a plague like this plague shall fall on the horses, the mules, the camels, the donkeys, and whatever beasts may be in those camps.

16 Then everyone who survives of all the nations that have come against Jerusalem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Booths. **17** And if any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. **18** And if the family of Egypt does not go up and present themselves, then on them there shall be no rain; there shall be the plague with which the LORD afflicts the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths. **19** This shall be the punishment to Egypt and the punishment to all

the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths.

20 And on that day there shall be inscribed on the bells of the horses, "Holy to the LORD." And the pots in the house of the LORD shall be as the bowls before the altar. **21** And every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holy to the LORD of hosts, so that all who sacrifice may come and take of them and boil the meat of the sacrifice in them. And there shall no longer be a trader in the house of the LORD of hosts on that day.

Luke 24.1-53: But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared. **2** And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb, **3** but when they went in they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. **4** While they were perplexed about this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel. **5** And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? **6** He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, **7** that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified and on the third day rise." **8** And they remembered his words, **9** and returning from the tomb they told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest.

10 Now it was Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles, **11** but these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. **12** But Peter rose and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; and he went home marveling at what had happened.

13 That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, **14** and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. **15** While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. **16** But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. **17** And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad.

18 Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" **19** And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, **20** and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. **21** But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. **22** Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, **23** and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. **24** Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."

25 And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! **26** Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" **27** And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. **28** So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, **29** but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. **30** When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. **31** And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight.

32 They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" **33** And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, **34** saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" **35** Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread. **36** As they were talking about these things, Jesus himself stood among them, and said to them, "Peace to you!" **37** But they were startled and frightened and thought they saw a spirit. **38** And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? **39** See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me, and see. For a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have." **40** And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. **41** And while they still disbelieved for joy and were marveling, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" **42** They gave him a piece of broiled fish, **43** and he took it and ate before them.

44 Then he said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." **45** Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, **46** and said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, **47** and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. **48** You are witnesses of these things. **49** And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay

in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

50 And he led them out as far as Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. **51** While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. **52** And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, **53** and were continually in the temple blessing God.

Diamonds: As we end this study, our final destination is the temple of God. Zechariah places us in His eternal, heavenly temple where even the mundane is holy with a final prophecy of the end of all time and history (the final consummation) (Zechariah 14.21). Luke foreshadows heaven’s reality by placing Jesus’s disciples in a constant act of worship, blessing God in His temple (Luke 24.53). In both passages, the people’s presence before their holy God, as well as the holiness of God’s people, is secured in the resurrection and ascension of Jesus, the Messiah.

Zechariah 14 is such a difficult passage to interpret and understand that Martin Luther gave up on interpreting it because he couldn’t understand it!¹ Thankfully, despite some remaining difficulty, we understand Zechariah 14 as a passage of hope in Christ’s final return to permanently conquer all His enemies and redeem all of His Creation as its eternally reigning and ruling King (Zechariah 14.9).

The beginning of Zechariah 14 is a continuation of the promise of the refinement of “this third” in Zechariah 13.9. As we enter the horrific violence and evil prophesied against God’s people (Zechariah 14.1-2), we see God’s mighty and eternal response: His return as conquering King (Zechariah 14.3, 9).

1. List what happens to the earth upon Christ’s final return in Zechariah 14.4-10. Then list what happens to God’s enemies from Zechariah 14.12-15.

The “Feast of Tabernacles” is a yearly Jewish festival that celebrates the Lord’s Kingship. It was celebrated at the end of the dry season. This prompted the worship of God as the one who provides “living water” alongside community prayer for God’s provision of “living water” for their harvest. More than a temporal cry to God for the season’s needed water, this prayer and corresponding worship was a passionate cry for the Messiah to come provide His people with “rivers of living water” flowing from their very own hearts (John 7.37-38).²

2. What was the conditional covenant-like promise and consequence for the families who refused their yearly pilgrimage to worship the King? Note that Egypt’s consequence is different because of their constant access to water from the Nile. What was Egypt’s consequence for refusing to obey God in submission as their King? (Zechariah 14.16-19)

In addition to the cry for Messiah as “living water”, the Feast of Tabernacles also reveals God alone as His peoples source of protection and recognition of His blessings as He “tabernacles”, or dwells, *with* His people. “For Jews, it is a time of great joy as they remember the intimacy of those forty years when God “tabernacled” with them in the desert, sustaining them each day with manna from heaven”.³ (Exodus 16)

3. From Zechariah 14.11, 20-21, how is heaven an eternal and permanent, “Feast of Tabernacles”?

¹Phillips, p.303

²Spangler & Tverberg, pgs.128-131

³Spangler & Tverberg, pg 129

4. Using your lessons studying Zechariah, how does the final return of Jesus as King create a final and fulfilled “Feast of Tabernacles”? Freely answer this question with as many lessons you have from Zechariah, even if it is only this one. The answers and observations are unlimited!

Luke is fulfilling his aim of making certain the knowledge of God through revisiting the prophecies of God, fulfilled in His Son, confirmed in His resurrection, and secured in His ascension. On this foundation, this certain knowledge of Jesus, we too join Theophilus in faith that our Messiah has come, providing salvation to His people. In addition, we share the faith that He ascended into heaven and will return to restore all of His Creation into a glorified state worthy of Him, ushering in eternal presence with Jesus as King.

This year, you have been asked to tell your best friend what happened while she missed all the action! Likewise, we have prompted you to join the crowds and become one a follower of Jesus, making Him your Rabbi. Review the places you have been with Jesus from the following questions identified in the lessons: Lesson 2, #7; Lesson 6, #7, #10; Lesson 8, #3; Lesson 10, #5; Lesson 14, #4, #5; Lesson 19, #5.

Now, you are “one of the rest” present when Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary, and some others report that Jesus’s body is gone (Luke 24.1-12). You are trying to wrap your head around the implications of being unable to find Jesus’s body, as well as what they were told by the angels: Jesus is alive! (Luke 24.5-8) While the men accuse the women of being too overwhelmed by their emotions to be believed, Peter runs off to find out for himself (Luke 24.12).

5. Your best friend is next to you. What do you say to one another? How has your journey with your Rabbi helped you sort out the confusion of this moment?

To understand the magnitude of importance Jesus’s ascension carries for us, we must first focus on Jesus’s real, physical death, subsequent burial, and physical resurrection. Jesus did not faint or enter a coma-like medical state only to resuscitate once buried. Likewise, Jesus’s resurrection was not into a celestial-like bodily form.

6. List all the proofs Luke provides in this chapter that directly prove Jesus died and was resurrected in a human bodily form?

The doubt and disillusionment among most people in this chapter are understandable. In fact, Jesus was kind in His admonishment of Cleopas and his companion while they struggled to understand who Jesus proved to be. A better translation of Jesus’s response to their doubts, disillusionment, and confusion is not a stern rebuke in calling them “foolish ones”, but more accurately, a kind response to their being “clueless”.⁴

⁴ Phillips, p.649

7. What do you notice about how Jesus draws these men to a more complete understanding of Him? What is Jesus's focus in expanding their knowledge of Him as Messiah (Luke 24.13-32)?

This year your knowledge of Jesus as Messiah expanded in a similar manner as Jesus taught Cleopas and his companion. "The Old Testament has one central theme, and that theme is Christ."⁵ In Luke, you also joined the crowds, following your Rabbi.

8. Review your answer to Question 5 in Lesson 1, "The Risen, Reining, Returning King". What answer(s) did you discover as He came alongside you, revealing Himself through both Zechariah and Luke? Or, if you had a burning question that developed, what was that question and what is/are His answer(s)? How has He expanded your knowledge of Him?

Deity: Holy⁶~ (Zechariah 14.9, 20-21; Luke 24.51) God's holiness is His inherent and absolute greatness, in which He is perfectly distinct above everything outside himself and is absolutely morally separate from sin. This definition is centered on the concept of separation, signified by the Greek and Hebrew words for "holy" (Greek: *hosios, hagios*; Hebrew: *qadosh*). There are two aspects of God's holiness found in Scripture:

1. Majestic Holiness: God is inherently great and resists all compromises of His character and therefore is transcendentally distinct from all His creatures in infinite majesty. He is majestically unique. This sense of God's holiness qualifies all His other attributes, and all these qualify His holiness. In other words, "Holiness is the biblical 'shorthand' for the very essence of God". His majestic holiness is found in both the Testaments:
 - Old Testament: Exodus 15.11; Psalm 71.22, 89.18, 97.10-12; Isaiah 5.16, 54.5, 57.15
 - New Testament: Mark 1.23-24; Luke 1.46-55; John 17; Revelation 15.4
2. Ethical, Moral Holiness: Since God is inherently great and therefore transcendentally distinct from everything outside Himself, He is most certainly separate from sin, being morally and ethically perfect, abhorring sin and demanding purity in His moral creatures. (Leviticus 20.26, 22.31-32; Job 34.10; Psalm 5.4-5; Isaiah 1.11-17; Ezekiel 39.7; Zechariah 8.16-17; 1 Peter 1.13-19)

God's holiness is not independent of His righteousness. To understand the magnitude of Christ's work on the cross, as well as the magnitude of God raising Him from the dead, we must know about His righteousness. God's righteousness is His perfect absolute justice in and toward Himself, His prevention of any violation of the justice of His character, and His revelation of Himself in acts of justice.

A holy and righteous God demands holiness and righteousness of people who would be rightly related to him (Psalm 29.1-2; 1 Peter 1.15-16). God stands in absolute, essential opposition to sin, so He must judge and punish sin. In the salvation of sinners, the holiness and righteousness of God are revealed, because in salvation God effectively judges sin and imputed righteousness to people so that He can accept them as holy without compromising His essential holiness and righteousness.

The idea of holiness takes on a spiritual meaning among the people of God based on the holy character of God. For instance, the high priest of God had inscribed across his headpiece "Holy to the LORD" (Exodus 39.30). The

⁵ Phillips. p.652

⁶ MacArthur, J. & Mayhue, R., *Biblical Doctrine*, A Systematic Summary of Bible Truth (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2017) ppgs. 60-61, 183-185, 631

high priest was especially set apart by God to intercede on behalf of a sinful nation to a holy God for the forgiveness of their transgressions.

Holiness embodies the very essence of Christianity. The holy Savior has saved sinners to be a holy people (1 Peter 2.0-10). That is why one of the most common biblical names for a believer is “saint”, which simply and wonderfully means “saved and set apart” (Romans 1.7; 1 Corinthians 1.2).

When one considers that a holy God saves, it is not surprising to learn that He gives His Holy Spirit to every believer at salvation. The primary purpose of this gift is to equip believers with the power to live a holy life (1 Thessalonians 4.7-8; 1 John 3.24, 4.13).

In Zechariah 14.20-21 we see that in heaven the mundane is now holy to the Lord. It is remarkable that the title reserved for the headdress of the high priest (Exodus 28.36-38) is now used for the most common bells on a horse to pots for everyday cooking! The imagery of the pots used to cook meats and meals point to an incomprehensible reality: total and complete holiness. “Zechariah is saying that heaven will be completely holy. God’s entire redemptive purpose and plan, reaching back into eternity and spinning out through the ages, has as its goal a perfectly holy people in a perfectly holy city. This is what the reign of Christ achieves: holiness issuing forth in praise to God and blessings for His people.”⁷

9. Throughout our study this year we have heard both Zechariah and Jesus call for repentance that leads to salvation. What deities and/or doctrines help you tie the call to repentance with “a perfect holy people” who “issu[e] forth in praise to God and blessings for His people”?

Doctrine: Second Coming of Jesus, the Christ⁸~ (Zechariah 14.5c-11; Luke 24.51) “The Bible is clear that one day Christ will return in bodily form (Matthew 24-25) to rule and reign over all creation. Scripture gives no timeline as to when it will occur (Acts 1.7), only assuring that it will be unexpected (Matthew 25.8-10) and glorious (Matthew 24.30).

“Because of the mystery surrounding these events, several views have emerged in Christians’ attempts to understand everything the Bible teaches about this return and His millennial reign. One view holds that upon His return, Jesus will begin a literal 1,000-year reign on earth. Another holds that this millennium occurs in this church age, to be followed by His return. Another still holds that the millennium symbolically represents Christ’s reign in heaven and in the hearts of God’s people while we wait for His return.

“Despite these differences, all views agree that the imminent return of Christ is the hope of every Christian, knowing that when Christ returns, all things will be made new.”

Jesus foreshadows the resurrection body as a spiritual body, transcending our current limitations of time and space (1 Corinthians 15.42-44) by astonishing (and freaking out!) His disciples with His supernatural ability to appear and disappear (Luke 24.31, 36-37).⁹ But even more, in His ascension, we marvel that God was again able to be in the presence of a human body. “Comprehend this staggering thought: because of the bodily ascension of Jesus Christ, the dust of earth now sits on the throne of heaven.”¹⁰

⁷Phillips, p.324

⁸The Gospel Project, *The 99 Essential Doctrines*, LifeWay Christian Resources (2018), #96

⁹Phillips, p.671

¹⁰Phillips, p.693

Even more, His ascension to the right hand of God means He is our advocate before God, presenting our prayer to Him. Even more, His ascension into heaven brings us closer to Him through the receipt of the promised “power from on high” (Luke 24.49), the Holy Spirit. And finally, His ascension makes good and secure the promise that upon His return, we too will be *exalted* to a permanent presence *with* God!

10. As you prepare to depart from this year’s study as one His disciples who witnessed His ascension, for what are you worshipping Jesus with great joy and blessing? (Derive your answer from any time during this year’s study)

Your Scripture-Soaked Prayer:

Lecture Outline:

Aim: Jesus is our forerunner of hope.

- I. Risen (Luke 24.1-48): Jesus’s resurrection secured our future with God.
 - a. What leads you to hope? Is it great circumstances, good deeds, kids who turned out to be great adults, professional accomplishments, the ability to pull off a perfectly enviable Christmas card?
 - b. What leads you to believe that your future is secure? Know that Jesus is your forerunner of hope, most especially in hopeless circumstances.
- II. Reigning (Luke 24.49-53): Jesus’s ascension unleashed the promised Holy Spirit.
 - a. For what are you worshipping Your King?
 - b. Where is He reigning in your life? Are you fully submitted to His reign over your sin?
- III. Returning (Zechariah 14.1-21): Jesus’s feet will touch this earth again!
 - a. When your story ends on earth, does it continue into eternity with Jesus as your Savior?
 - b. What will happen to you when the story of this world ends when Jesus’s feet once again touch this earth?

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