

Zech. 10:1 Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain; so the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.

“latter rain” = the spring rain, from a root that means “to gather the after crop,” the latter growth

“grass” = to glisten (or be green); grass (or any tender shoot)

This is the first time I have really thought about this verse in context. The previous chapter ended in reference to the blessings of the Messianic Kingdom. This verse presents a contrast to God’s power in truth to provide for His people versus the impotence of idols and the lies of false prophets. The “latter rain” in context seems to be a reference to the believing remnant of Israel that will enter the Messianic Kingdom. Those who are part of that generation will be able to ask of YHWH and expect provision in abundance. “Showers of rain” actually reads “rains upon rains”; in other words, there will be no lack of provision. Every one will experience abundance of crops.

This ties in beautifully with the truth of the use of this phrase in James.

James 5:7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.

Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive **the early and latter rain**.

James was writing to “the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad” (v1). The husbandman (Jesus) is waiting for the precious fruit of the earth (His people, in context believing Israel). Jesus told us Himself that He would not return until the Jews have recognized Him as their Messiah and desire His return.

Matt. 23:39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

I have most often heard this applied to the increased activity of the Spirit in end times through connection to the words of the prophet Joel as referenced by Peter when he preached on Pentecost. Although I have yet to do a detailed study of Joel, my reading of it in connection with this passage does not indicate such to me. In context, I believe Joel is also referencing God’s blessing on the restored remnant of Israel during the Messianic Kingdom.

Joel 2:23 Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first *month*.

Joel 2:24 And **the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with wine and oil.**

Joel 2:25 And **I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten**, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.

Joel 2:26 And **ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you:** and my people shall never be ashamed.

Joel 2:27 And ye shall know that I *am* in the midst of Israel, and *that I am* the LORD your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

This is all a clear reference to Israel during the Messianic Kingdom. Verse 26 makes it clear that it is a time that they will “praise the name of the LORD your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you.” That has yet to be true of Israel since the Babylonian captivity.

I think confusion enters due to the following verses in Joel.

Joel 2:28 And it shall come to pass **afterward**, *that* I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Joel 2:29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

Joel 2:30 And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke.

Joel 2:31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.

Joel 2:32 And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered: for **in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the LORD hath said, and in the remnant whom the LORD shall call.**

I think the wrong choice from the Hebrew has been made for the word *afterward*; I think *since* or *when* would have been better choices. The pouring out of God’s spirit, which would be a necessity since the church (filled with the Spirit) is removed, is connected to (“and” verse 29) the wonders in heaven that announce the coming of God’s final week (7 years) of judgment upon Israel and wrath against the heathen.

Zech. 10:2 For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain: therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because *there was no shepherd.*

I was very surprised to see the Hebrew for idols—“a healer,” from a root that stated “to mend, to cure.” Obviously, idols can’t speak. Included in the meaning for *vanity* is a reference to wickedness.

The history of God’s people declares the truth of the application to His people throughout their history of rebellion and rejection of Him. Their idols have been impotent and the worship of these idols the basis for their wicked actions. Their false prophets have comforted them with lies. Their spiritual leaders were not leading and teaching the people according to God’s truth.

In the context of the reference to end times, I couldn’t help but make application to the self-proclaimed “healers” of today who are obvious charlatans taking advantage of the most vulnerable and the false prophets who abuse God’s word and misrepresent His truth. God established government and spiritual leadership to provide for the needs of the people. We naturally function with a flock mentality; peer pressure is a huge influence in both young and old. Without the leadership of godly shepherds, we are prone to fall into trouble.

Zech. 10:3 Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle.

Zech. 10:4 Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together.

“goats” = prepared, i.e. full grown...(figuratively) leaders of the people

God holds the leaders of the people, both spiritual and governmental, accountable for the attitudes and actions of the people. He has punished (through Assyria and Babylon) and will again punish those leaders. Zechariah is declaring God’s deliverance of the house of Judah and His declaration of them as a glorious participant in the battle between good and evil—between God and Satan. Through Judah will emerge “the corner...the nail...the battle bow...every oppressor.” I believe all of these have reference to the Messiah.

- Corner – Chieftan, leader of the people; Messiah will rule on the throne of David.

Luke 1:31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

Luke 1:32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

All other 8 translations use the word cornerstone, and scripture is clear in declaring Messiah in the person of Jesus Christ this cornerstone.

Acts 4:10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole.

Acts 4:11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.

- Nail – Represents One upon whom the glory of Judah/Israel rests; the One through whom the glory of the LORD will be manifest in the millennial temple. Isaiah declares this truth concerning Eliakim as a type of the Messiah.

Is. 22:23 And I will fasten him *as* a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father’s house.

Is. 22:24 And they shall hang upon him all **the glory of his father’s house**, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons.

- Battle bow – Messiah will be the only battle bow required in the final defeat of armies of Antichrist at Armageddon.

Psa. 7:11-13 God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry *with the wicked* every day. If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.

- Every oppressor – In Isaiah the Hebrew for the word *oppressor* is translated *exactor*.

Is. 60:17 For brass I will bring gold, and for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron: I will also make thy officers peace, and thine **extractors** righteousness.

I think this is emphasizing that the leaders of the people in the Messiah's Kingdom will be the good shepherds that the leaders of the people were intended to be from the beginning.

Zech. 10:5 And they shall be as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets in the battle: and they shall fight, because the LORD is with them, and the riders on horses shall be confounded.

Zech. 10:6 And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and will hear them.

They (Judah) are going to emerge as a nation of the mighty. I think this was looking forward to the Maccabees' defeat of Antiochus Epiphanes and on into the future to the establishment and governance of the millennial kingdom. I am reminded that Messiah's Kingdom will be an earthly kingdom, and people will still be born having a sin nature. Scripture tells us that the Lord will rule with a rod of iron, and I'm sure that rod of iron will in part be through His appointed leaders/representatives in/from Israel. This makes me think of God's promise to Abraham.

Gen. 22:17 That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and **thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies...**

The principle – If God be for you, who can be against you!

God again declares His intent to re-gather the whole nation of Israel in His mercy and restore them to fellowship as though they had never rebelled against Him or rejected Him. As YHWH, His purposes will be accomplished.

Is. 14:24 The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:

“and will hear them” – This is a reference to listening to their prayers with the intent to answer because they are following Him in faith and obedience. This is in direct contrast to His refusal to “hear” them when they had rejected Him in unbelief and disobedience.

Is. 59:2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear.

Jer. 11:9-11 & 14 And the LORD said unto me, A conspiracy is found among the men of Judah, and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to hear my words; and they went after other gods to serve them: the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers. Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon them, which they shall not be able to escape; and though they shall

cry unto me, I will not hearken unto them.... Therefore pray not thou for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them: for I will not hear *them* in the time that they cry unto me for their trouble.

Zech. 10:7 And *they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine: yea, their children shall see it, and be glad; their heart shall rejoice in the LORD.*

Zech. 10:8 I will hiss for them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they shall increase as they have increased.

Ephraim is another name for the house of Joseph referenced in the verse above. God is emphasizing His intent to restore the whole house of Israel—not just Judah. God will issue the call and His people will return home to Israel—not just in part, but in whole. Those who come will all be part of the remnant that He has redeemed by His shed blood on the cross. I thought the Hebrew for the word redeemed was enlightening—“ransom...to release, preserve... deliver...rescue.” They were bought with His blood, released from the power of sin, preserved to new life, delivered from the power of death, and rescued from the attack of the enemy—as is every man and woman who trusts in Him by faith.

The redemption and restoration of Israel will be the cause of great joy in the hearts of the people. I think this is specific wording in connection to the new covenant promised through the prophecy of Ezekiel.

Ezek. 36:24 For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

Ezek. 36:25 Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.

Ezek. 36:26 **A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.**

“they shall increase as they have increased” – In the time of King Solomon Israel was described as a nation with numbers as the sand by the sea. This was in accordance with God’s promise to Abraham as stated in Genesis 22:17 above.

1Kings 4:20 Judah and Israel *were* many, as the sand which *is* by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry.

I think in essence, the prophet is declaring God’s promise to again multiply them into a great nation.

Zech. 10:9 And I will sow them among the people: and they shall remember me in far countries; and they shall live with their children, and turn again.

Zech. 10:10 I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; and *place shall not be found for them.*

God’s judgment upon Israel that caused their dispersion had another purpose—to facilitate the teaching of God’s word. Their conversion as a people will result in a testimony to the nations of the truth of God’s word. Though they have made their homes in other countries, they will once again desire to return to Israel, the land God specifically set apart for them among the nations.

In reference to verse 8, it would seem that the nation will be even more populous than it was during the reign of Solomon—“place shall not be found for them.” The prophet Isaiah declares this same truth.

Is. 49:19 For thy waste and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction, shall even now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and they that swallowed thee up shall be far away.

Is. 49:20 The children which thou shalt have, after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ears, The place *is* too strait for me: give place to me that I may dwell.

The land of Gilead lay east of Jordan, stretching from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea in the area of modern day Jordan.

Zech. 10:11 And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and all the deeps of the river shall dry up: and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away.

Zech. 10:12 And I will strengthen them in the LORD; and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the LORD.

These glorious promises of blessing are tempered by the fact that Israel will first “pass through the sea with affliction.” The sea is often used to represent the nations in scripture, and history shows that the Jewish people have suffered greatly at the hands of the nations. Though they have often been the target of destruction and persecution, the LORD has preserved them as a people through their affliction. He has worked miracles on their behalf in reestablishing them as a nation. He has humbled nations who have sought to destroy His people. Their continued existence as a distinct people is a testimony to the truth of God’s word and His power and authority in this evil world. The time is coming when they will possess the fullness of His strength and blessing to the glory of YHWH.