

Fascinated by Jesus in the End Times, Part 1

INTRODUCTION

I've spent several weeks on Zechariah 9. Chapters 9-14 are all about the great end-time drama the Holy Spirit is orchestrating to fascinate the Body of Christ worldwide. I'm going to title this, "Fascinated by Jesus in the End Times" from Zechariah 9. It's the Holy Spirit's strategy to fascinate the Church as part of His way of protecting us in terms of overcoming the attack of the enemy. Sin is escalating; sin is reaching heights unknown in human history. The enemy is going to come with the counterfeit power; the occult and the sinful supernatural will reach heights never known before. There will be all kinds of attack against the Body of Christ, and the Lord has a strategy: He's going to fascinate the Body of Christ with His Son.

"THE BRANCH OF THE LORD WILL BE BEAUTIFUL AND GLORIOUS"

Isaiah 4:2 talks about this. This is one of my favorite prophecies about the end times. Speaking of Jesus, the Messiah, he says, "The Branch of the Lord will be beautiful in that day" (Isa. 4:2, paraphrased). He will be seen as beautiful in that day. God is going to use the beauty of the Branch of the Lord, the beauty of the Messiah, Jesus. The revelation of the beauty of God will change the emotional chemistry of the people of God. We will live fascinated and awestruck.

King David touched a little of this. In Psalm 27:4, he said, "This one thing I do: I gaze on Your beauty all the days of my life" (Ps. 27:4, paraphrased). That's what the end-time church is going to do, in their identity as the Bride of Christ, as a cherished bride worshiping a passionate bridegroom whose beauty is unveiled in the wisdom of the Father. The Church will walk boldly into martyrdom and death with a lovesick heart, with a fascinated heart.

GOD WILL DESCEND FROM HEAVEN TO DEFEND HIS PEOPLE

Zechariah 9 touches this subject. This is really one of the key subjects of this chapter. Zechariah 9:1-8 is about a hostile army at the end of the age coming down from the north to attack and wipe out Israel. There's more about this in Zechariah 12 and Ezekiel 38-39. This army was paralleled in history by Alexander the Great, who also came down from the north. There was a partial fulfillment of this passage in 332 BC. Alexander the Great came down, and he was going to wipe out Israel. God protected Israel in a very powerful, supernatural way. That was only a picture, a down payment of a hostile army under the power of this one world leader, the man of sin, the man of lawlessness, commonly known as the Antichrist. He will come in hostility to wipe out the nation of Israel, and suddenly, in verse 9, the King appears with deliverance and victory.

Zechariah says, "Behold, your King is coming to you" (Zech. 9:9). This passage was fulfilled in part at the first coming, but verse 9 is really talking about the second coming, the King who comes in sudden victory. This mysterious King comes from the sky, as it says in verse 14. He's seen over the whole nation. He appears in the clouds, as Paul the apostle would tell us. This King comes in vengeance, power, and beauty to deliver the people of God in that day.

"HOW GREAT IS HIS GOODNESS, AND HOW GREAT HIS BEAUTY!"

Verse 17 is the real pinnacle of the chapter. This is what the Holy Spirit wants to produce in the understanding of four different themes in this chapter. Here in verse 17, the people of God cry out. It says in the New King James, "For how great is its goodness and how great its beauty" (Zech. 9:17)! There's a footnote there. In the

margin it has the accurate translation. Really this should say, “How great is His goodness! How great is His beauty!”

In verse 16, it talks about the Lord saving them in that day as the flock of His people. Then it says, “He shall lift them up like a banner over His land” (Zech. 9:16). “His people” and “His land” in verse 16 is the same “His” that belongs in verse 17. Here’s the point. There’s a response that happens when this is understood ahead of time, and when the outworking of these prophecies are seen in the unfolding of history; when they actually come to pass in history after being seen and anticipated through reading the Scriptures. It produces in us a response: “How great is His goodness! How great is His beauty!” This is the response that the Holy Spirit wants to produce in the people of God as they watch the unfolding of this mysterious plan of God.

THE PEOPLE OF GOD ARE THE JEWELS IN HIS CROWN

The King comes suddenly from the heavens in power with victory. I can’t emphasize enough the sudden mystery and the drama of all that’s happening. When He comes, He will fascinate His treasured people. In verse 16, which we will read in a few minutes, He describes His people as treasured people. They are to Him as jewels in a king’s crown. There are many places in the Scriptures where the people of God are set forth as so dear, rare, valuable, and precious to God that God Himself describes them as jewels in a king’s crown. They are the jewels in a crown at the coronation of a king. The day of the King’s glory—here they are. That’s how He describes His people: as the rare jewels in His crown. They are the treasured people who will be fascinated. They will cry out, “How great! How great is His goodness! How great is His beauty!”

It’s unfortunate that the New King James put “its beauty” and “its greatness,” referring to the land of Israel, when the subject is actually the King Himself. Again, in the margins, it makes it clear that it’s “His beauty” and “His goodness.” Whatever is happening, you can be sure of this: the Holy Spirit is orchestrating a response in the people of God of marvel and awestruck wonder.

As we understand Zechariah 9-14, this great description of the events at the end of the age, it’s not just a matter of graphing out the end-time events on a chart. “My graph is better than your graph or chart. I’m right and you’re wrong!” This spirit of debate is so prevalent among students of end-time prophecy. I don’t mean it’s wrong to discuss it and work through it; but if we have a debating spirit, the “I know more than you know” spirit, that’s not at all the spirit that God wants to produce in the heart of His people as they ponder these subjects. As they turn them over and over again, trying to understand what God is saying, they see what He makes very clear in verse 17: “This is what I want to produce in the students of prophecy. I want to produce in them this wonderment at God’s goodness. I want to produce in them an awestruck heart of worship. I want them to become lovesick worshipers before His beauty.”

In says in Isaiah 9:6, “They shall call Him Wonderful” (Isa. 9:6, paraphrased). Beloved, as I study these events, I don’t claim to drink deeply at this well, but as I catch a little glimpse of it, I’m drinking more than I ever have before. I want to drink deeply. I say, “Lord, wonderful, wonderful...” I just imagine the Holy Spirit whispering, “I told you that you would say that.”

“Wonderful. You fill me with wonder.” *Wonderful* means “filled with wonder.” I’m filled with wonder at this Man who is totally human and totally God. I’m wonder-filled; I’m filled with wonder. Wonderment overtakes me. We sang it today: Revelation 4:8 says that around the throne night and day, never ceasing, never ending, over and over and over again they say, “Holy, holy, holy.” Holy can be interpreted in a really practical way as

“transcendent beauty.” The word *holy* doesn’t translate that way; it’s what it means. It means “uniquely superior in Your beauty,” “infinitely superior,” “unique in Your glory and splendor.” That’s what the word *holy* means when sung around the throne about the person of the Father or Son.

HE WILL MAKE THE PEOPLE OF GOD A TROPHY OF GRACE FOREVER AND EVER

Beloved, we will be awestruck with His goodness. There are two different lines of thought that deserve a whole evening. Both of them deserve a whole eternity. I love this phrase, “How great is Your goodness!” That’s one line of thought. It’s the way God treats weak and broken people who resisted Him and even hated Him for a season. “How great is Your goodness!” He’s going to make the people of God a trophy of grace forever and ever. The devils are down in the pit seething in their anger and hatred against God. It goes on throughout eternity. Here we are in the city of God as trophies of grace and goodness. We will be a living testimony. Our own words will declare it. Our lives will display it: the goodness of God. The Lord is good, and His mercy endures forever. The Lord is good. Everything that He did in His leadership is good.

THE ENEMY WILL LAUNCH HIS ACCUSATIONS AT THE VERY HEART OF GOD

You see, at the end of the age, there’s the unfolding of God’s judgments. The devil is going to raise up an accusation against the heart of God. The devil is going to say, “He’s not a good God; He’s not a God of love; He’s a God of cruelty. He’s a God of outbursts of anger. He’s a God who is imbalanced in His personality. He’s extreme; He’s disproportionately using His judgments against sins that weren’t that severe.”

That accusation is what the enemy wants to lodge in our hearts. He will lodge it in the nations against God. It says in Psalm 2, which is quoted in Revelation 11:18, “They will hate Him” (Ps. 2:1-2, paraphrased). They will be raging in anger because those accusations against God’s judgments will be lodged in the nations of the earth. They will hate Him perfectly for this. The enemy will come and whisper into the heart of the Bride of Christ, “It’s too severe. It’s too cruel. It’s not right. It’s not just.”

We will open our hearts and fully give ourselves to that great song of the ages, “The Lord is good and His mercy endures. He’s good in His judgments. He’s good in His leadership.”

THE MERCY OF THE LORD IS GREATER THAN OUR BROKENNESS FOREVER

The devil says, “He’s not good. He’s extreme; He’s harsh. He’s too severe. It’s unfair. It’s not friendly to human beings. Humans are too weak for this kind of severity.”

We will say, “No, no, no. The Lord is good. His plans are good. His leadership is good. The Lord is good! We resist this.”

The enemy will say, “Well, yes, maybe He’s leadership is good, but you’re disqualified.”

Then we will come in with the second part of the song, “His mercy endures my weakness and my sin forever. His mercy is greater than my brokenness. He’s good and His mercy covers everything that would cause me to be disqualified if I have a genuine yes in my spirit for Him.”

It’s noteworthy that this song, the great *hallel*, “The Lord is good and His mercy endures forever,” appears at such strategic times in the Old Testament. I don’t want to go through that right now, but they are really critical times. When the glory or the judgment of God appears, the redeemed with a heart of worship cry out, “You’re

good! Even when Your judgments are manifest, we understand that Your judgments are removing the things that hinder love.” Even in His judgments the Lord is removing the things that hinder love.

The Lord is good. The devil says, “He’s good. I’ll give you that. You’re disqualified.”

No. His mercy endures. That means it endures my brokenness. When my brokenness comes to the table, the God of mercy comes and says, “My mercy will endure what you bring to the table.”

The devil says, “Yes, but only for a season.”

No, forever. His mercy endures forever. We are safe forever in the arms of love, forever and ever.

Beloved, the enemy wants us to be offended at the leadership of Jesus at the end of the age. The enemy wants us to read Zechariah 9-14 and say that the Lord is harsh. No, no, no. We’re not even going to say He’s good. We will bow down and cry, “How great!” I have no doubt that we will even throw in an “Oh!” with 1,000 h’s. “Ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh! God, You’re good! Jesus! Ohhhhh, how great! Oh, Your leadership is brilliant, stunning, excellent, and impossible to improve! How great! How great!” This thing will lay hold of our hearts. The enemy, the Devil, will be raging in fury against this testimony. He hates it.

“How great is Your goodness! We trust You!” Many in the Church will walk right into the fires of martyrdom at the end of the age. I wouldn’t say the majority of the Church, but the numbers will escalate beyond any time in history. The numbers will be substantial. We will walk right into the fires of martyrdom singing, “The Lord is good! I love You; You love me! I want You; You want me! I trust You as You remove everything that hinders love in my life.” The great testimony of the end-time church is that the Lord is good.

GOD’S PEOPLE WILL TREMBLE BENEATH THE GOODNESS OF GOD

Hosea 3:5 tells us what the bride says in the bridal revelation. The people of God will tremble and be afraid in the awestruck trembling, not the negative spirit of fear. They will be afraid and tremble under the majesty of God. They will tremble before the Lord and before the manifestation of His goodness. God’s goodness will make the people of God tremble. We will look at it with a spirit of revelation when all the facts are on the table, and we will fear His goodness. This means we will tremble under the impact of the revelation and weight of the end of the age. It will dislodge all the offense in our hearts.

The devil knows that if we get offended at Jesus’ leadership, if we lose our spirit of trust, then we can’t grow in love. He knows that if he can undermine our confidence, then he can nullify love. That’s what he’s trying to do in your lives right now: the enemy is trying to get you to undermine confidence in Jesus’ leadership. If the Lord appears too distant, negligent, uninterested, severe, or unfair, it will quench and nullify in you the spirit of worship, the spirit of love. It’s a very simple strategy, and it works all the time. How many times have you heard the story of the man who was walking fiery with the Lord ten years ago, and then the money didn’t come, the healing didn’t happen, and the tragedy took place? He has been mad at God ever since and doesn’t want to have anything to do with Him. He’s still mad at the Lord. It’s so tragic, because when we lose our confidence in His leadership, when we lose confidence in His goodness, it does shut down in us the spirit of worship. A spirit of worship is our only protection to live in lovesick worship, to live with a fascinated heart.

Satan is causing immorality to explode. He has things beyond anything that we can imagine. I talked to these men who are addicted to pornography. I tell them, there's something more fascinating. It will change your emotional chemistry. The beauty of the Branch of the Lord is coming. It's coming. It can hold us steady before escalating sin. It can hold us steady before the judgments of God, when multitudes even in the Body of Christ are dying. They die and their lives are cut short. Even members of the Body of Christ will be swept away in some of the terrifying shakings that will happen, but they'll step right into the glory of God. Don't imagine that because people love the Lord they won't sometimes be in the plane that goes down or the bomb that goes off or the earthquake that shakes the city. The history of wars tells us that. Ezekiel 20 tells us that the righteous are sometimes swept away with the wicked, and they are righteous (Eze. 20:47). Billions of years later, they say, "Well, I have no regrets. I love God. Whether I've been here a billion and five years or a billion and twenty years, I don't really care right now."

We don't understand that stuff, and the enemy is going to come and accuse God in our hearts to shut down the spirit of worship. When we cease to be fascinated, when we cease to be lovesick and don't grow in our worship, the enemy cuts it off in our lives. We become so much more vulnerable to sin, offense, scheming, competing, and manipulating. Beloved, we don't have to manipulate and scheme in ministry, because we've already connected with the thing that's real while we're alive: to be lost in the splendor of His goodness.

IN THE LATTER DAYS WE WILL FEAR THE LORD AND TREMBLE AT HIS GOODNESS

Hosea 3:5 tells us that in that day we will live in that holy fear and trembling before the manifestation of His goodness. We will say, "We thought we knew, but we didn't know. We thought we understood, but we didn't understand Your goodness." There we are, the trophies of God's goodness forever in the eternal city. Devils and demons are raging in hell, in the lake of fire, saying, "God isn't good!"

We will say, "We testify that He is!" Not that we will dialogue with them, but they'll have this rage going on. We will be singing around the throne, "For the Lord is good and His mercy endures forever!" Ephesians 2:7 says that in that day, after we have been exalted, the question will be asked, "Why did You do it?"

It's the unspoken question in Ephesians 2:7, after we have been forgiven and raised to the right hand of Christ and seated in heavenly places in verse 6. In Ephesians 2:7, Paul is answering the question that he knows will be asked: "Why?"

The Lord says, "In order that in all the ages to come, His kindness will have been manifest" (Eph. 2:7, paraphrased). That's it: "In order that for all the ages to come, the kind God had an outlet for kindness."

Beloved, that's you and me. I'm a trophy of His kindness. A billion years from now, raging devils in the fire will be saying, "He's false. He's evil."

I'll say, "He's kind. He's good. He chose the human race as an outlet for that volcanic kindness in His being, that self-replenishing, never-ending ocean of kindness that's in His personality." He chose the human race as His outlet for that kindness, to vent the full-force of His raging kindness upon His people who would take it. It's volcanic; it's exploding out of His being. It sent His Son to lay aside the form of God, who always possessed deity. He laid aside the privileges of deity for a season. He came to the earth, became human, and took upon Himself the form of a Man. He was crushed by the wrath of God, because God has this volcanic impulse within His being to express in fullness His kindness upon the human race. How great is His goodness!

There's a lot of judgment going on in Zechariah 9. In verse 11, there are prisoners. Even the righteous ones find themselves in prison—Joseph in a pit, for example, and David in a cave. When it's all said and done, even the prisoners and those in the caves say, "How great is Your goodness! I get it! I get it! The full force of Your kindness exploded upon my life! I get it! Yes! Yes! Yes!"

That's what understanding end-time prophecy is all about. If you don't mind, I'm making this thing personal. I'm taking this stuff personally. In Revelation 19, when we're all around the throne on the wedding day, what happens? The first order of business on the wedding day is unspoken but implied. The Lord says, "What do you think of My Son's leadership at the end of the age, with so many lying dead across the earth?" The judgments of God will shake everything that can be shaken. "What do you think of My Son's leadership?"

Here it is on the wedding day. Four times in a row, in Revelation 19:1-4, we cry, "Alleluia!" It's the only time in the New Testament that the word *Alleluia* is mentioned. The subject is the leadership of the Bridegroom, and all the saints from all the nations cry out, "Alleluia! Just and true are Your righteous judgments. They were good. We understand."

Everyone around the throne will be in full agreement of the judgments that Zechariah 9 is talking about; the judgments that Revelation 17 and 18 are talking about, right before the wedding day in Revelation 19. This is just a little foretaste right here in verse 17: "How great is the goodness of God!" It's not just about His leadership and His treatment of us. His goodness focuses on how He leads human history and the Body of Christ, and the way He relates to us in our weakness and brokenness. He even uses the pit, the prison sentence (Zech. 9:11). Has anyone ever been in a prison sentence? I don't mean a natural prison sentence, but that as well. I'm talking about Joseph; you're stuck in that dungeon. You're David; you're in that cave in the wilderness. You're Moses in the wilderness. The Lord has already planned the prison sentences and seasons for all of us to learn and be trained, but even then, as prisoners, we learn to be lost and preoccupied in the revelation of His great goodness by the way He deals with us. When it was all said and done, Joseph and David said, "No complaints here."

"David and Joseph, would you guys have done it all over again?"

"Yep."

"Joseph. you were in that prison twice."

"I would do it all over again. It was brilliant. Brilliant." We will say it's worth it.

"David, would you have gone through the wilderness?"

"Absolutely."

"Moses?"

"No question."

“End-time church?”

“Yes.”

THE SELF-GIVING TRIUMPH OF THE BRIDE OVER ALL THE POWERS OF DARKNESS

Daniel 7:21-25 is pretty terrifying. Verses 21 and 25 tell us that part of the strategy of God the Father, the Ancient of Days, at the end of the age to triumph over Satan is to allow martyrdom to reach the highest numbers in history. Way back in the ministry of the prophet Daniel, around 600 BC, God told Daniel that at the end of the age, 2,600 years from now, He would use the martyrdom of His people to triumph over the kingdom of darkness. It will cause them to triumph in love.

Beloved, I’ll tell you this. In the midst of prison sentences, martyrdom, judgment of the nations, everything being shaken that can be shaken, we will say about His leadership and His treatment of our individual lives, “How great is His goodness! How great!” It’s more than His leadership and treatment of us as individuals, or His treatment of our friends and families. Let’s go on beyond the way He leads us and treats us; look at the way He set into motion the scenario of Daniel 7, where martyrs will increase at the end of the age. We will say, “He is great in goodness.”

Let’s go on to the next point: “How great is His beauty!” This is good. This goes beyond even His leadership of natural history and the way He treats us. This is the very essence of His being. It’s transcendent beauty. It’s really what the four living creatures are saying in Revelation 4:8. They’re saying, “Transcendent beauty.” They’re really saying, “How great is Your beauty. How great is Your beauty.” This is because the word *holiness* means, “set apart.” They’re saying, “Lord, Your beauty is set apart from all the created order. Your beauty is so set apart in quality that it’s infinitely superior to all the created order. Set apart is Your beauty—infinitely superior.”

What are we going to do? We will feed our spirits on the revelation of goodness; we will tremble before His goodness and beauty. How can you tremble before beauty? In Revelation 4:8, they fall down before Him. They don’t get up for a long time. Here are these four living creatures around the throne in Revelation 4:8, and they get a glimpse of the beauty of the Father or the beauty of the Son. It so overwhelms them; it so blows their circuits that with one set of wings they cover their eyes. They have three sets of wings. Then they fall and bow down and say, “Holy!” or “Transcendent beauty!” as the power of that revelation is racing through their being. They recover from it; they look up again to a new discovery and then they go down again, forever, unending. They never cease to sing it; they never cease to look up and say, “Transcendent beauty!” Then they go down again.

Beloved, we will tremble at His beauty (Rev. 4:8). We will tremble at His goodness (Hos. 3:5). Here’s another thing about the goodness of the Lord. I realize we’re not getting very far tonight. I’m taking you to the end result of the chapter. The reason that God revealed this is to produce a down payment of this adoration in us now. Then, when it actually unfolds in history, it’s an overwhelming response of an awestruck, lovesick worship.

“YES, I WILL REJOICE OVER THEM TO DO THEM GOOD”

One more verse that I want to quote about the goodness of God is Jeremiah 32:38-42. I don’t know how many times—maybe five to seven times in a row it talks about how at the end of the age God’s goodness will be

magnified. Jeremiah 32:41 says that they'll come. The fear of the Lord will touch them as they see His goodness. It's the same idea as Hosea. Actually, Jeremiah was a disciple of Hosea, so much of Hosea is quoted in Jeremiah. There he is in chapter 32:41; he's all but quoting Hosea 3:5, that we will be terrified; we will be filled with the fear of God. We will tremble before the manifestation of His goodness.

Things are getting scary. Yes; they are getting scary. The devil's rage is going to increase; God's judgments are going to increase. Those are two entirely different things, although sometimes God will take advantage of the devil's rage, and it will become part of God's judgments. God's judgments and the devil's rage don't always overlap, but sometimes they do. They're two separate ideas in the Scripture that sometimes overlap. It's scary. It's scary if we don't have an equipped heart. It's scary unless we have revelation. But it isn't scary if we have revelation. Our hearts will have a, "How great!" in them. Remember the great song, "How Great Thou Art." We will have a "How great!" while trembling with confidence before goodness. We will have a trembling before beauty, like around the throne. Those who are nearest God and around the throne tremble most at His beauty. We're a people who are studying the Scriptures. We're fasting and praying. We're giving ourselves to this so that we can be filled with the download of this revelation. I want to be a man absolutely lost in the realm of God's goodness, His leadership, and the way He treats me and those I love. I want to be lost in the realm of the essence of His beauty. I want to live with a fascinated, trembling heart.

THE KING'S DOMINION WILL EXTEND FROM SEA TO SEA

Some of you are from out of town and are saying, "Wait, you didn't even give us the briefest outline here." I'll give you a brief outline of chapter 9; then we will look at the details next week. The first thing that they are going to marvel at is in verse 10. Verse 9 is the great King. He's coming: this mysterious, victorious King. We see in verse 10 that the first thing that we're really going to marvel at is the scope of the victory. It's worldwide. There are so many cool verses about this. His dominion is from sea to sea. Nothing will prevail against this King. This is the scope of His victory.

There's a false leader being raised up by God—by God—to separate the wheat and the chaff. There's a false leader being raised up by God. He will have supernatural powers from the kingdom of darkness, from the abyss itself. He'll have a counterfeit worldwide government and a counterfeit worldwide worship movement. It's only the counterfeit. It will pass away soon. There's coming a real king, the eternal King. He will have a worldwide government and worldwide worship movement that knows no end.

That's the first thing that we will marvel at with respect to His goodness and His beauty: the scope of His victory is worldwide. It's a fascinating doctrine, the doctrine of His 1,000-year worldwide reign on planet earth, and then His eternal reign after that. He wants an earthly triumph in the realm of flesh and blood. The King who went into Jerusalem on a donkey will come on a white horse in the sky. He will come again; He will set up a kingdom that will go across the whole earth. As we study it, as we contemplate it, and especially as we see it, we will say, "How great! How great! Oh, how really great! How good! How great! Ohhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh! God is really good! This is awesome, awesome, awesome!"

IT WILL BE MARVELOUS IN THE EYES OF THE REMNANT OF THE PEOPLE IN THAT DAY

In Zechariah 8:6, Zechariah was telling them, "When this whole thing unfolds, you will say, 'This isn't possible.'" You can read it later. The Lord says, "Do you think this thing is marvelous? It will be marvelous in your eyes when you see it" (Zech. 8:6, paraphrased).

It's interesting that with the word *marvelous* in the Hebrew is the same word as *difficult*. "Do you think this thing is difficult for Me?" *Marvelous* and *difficult* mean "way out there" or "really hard." That's the point. Something that causes marvel is really hard. It's really unique; it's extreme. Then in Zechariah 8:6, He says, "Is it difficult in your eyes for Me to do this?" You can put *marvelous* or *difficult*. One translation says one and another says the other, but they all agree that it's the same word.

It's what Gabriel said to Mary. He said, "Is this hard for God? Nothing is impossible with God" (Lk. 1:37, paraphrased).

"RETURN TO THE STRONGHOLD, YOU PRISONERS OF HOPE"

Beloved, this thing is marvelous in our eyes. Number one: the scope of the victory is marvelous in our eyes. Number two: the way of the victory in verses 11-13. He uses weak and broken prisoners who have no resource. He brings His worldwide dominion through weak and broken prisoners who have no money and no resource, absolutely backed up against the wall. He breaks in with power. I love the verse in Jeremiah 9:23: "Don't let the wise man glory in his wisdom; don't let the strong man glory in his might. Don't let the rich man glory in his riches. Let him who glories glory in this: that he knows Me, the Lord, filled with mercy and goodness" (Jer. 9:23-24, paraphrased). They know the good God, filled with mercy and goodness. The wise, the rich, and the mighty aren't necessary to God; He doesn't need them to pull off His worldwide kingdom. He wants their hearts.

He takes these prisoners in the waterless pits in verses 11 and 12, prisoners of hope. They aren't the wise counselors of the governments, the presidential offices and kingly offices. They don't have the wisdom of the nations. They don't have the military might of the armies of the earth. They don't have wealth or riches. They do know this: they know the Lord is filled with mercy and goodness. That's what they glory in. Beloved, that's what I'm going for. I'm going for knowing these things, so that they can resonate within my being. The second thing that causes us to see His great goodness and beauty is the way of His victory. He uses these weak prisoners.

Number three. This is really a fun one. Look at verses 14 and 15. It's the way of His coming. It says that the Lord will be seen over His people with arrows going forth like lightning, with blowing trumpets and "whirlwinds from the south" (Zech. 9:14). When He comes back on that white horse, He's not coming on a donkey like He did in Jerusalem. He's coming on a white horse. He'll be seen in the sky over all His people sounding the trumpet of God with the shout of the archangel. 2 Thessalonians 1 says there will be flaming fire and all the angels. He's coming in whirlwinds and trumpets. Habakkuk describes "the shining of [His] glittering spear" (Hab. 3:11)—His swords and His arrows like lightning. We'll look at that next week.

The way in which He's chosen to come isn't just good. It's *really* good because He's using us; He's coming for His people. It's stunningly beautiful. Who would have thought of a grand entrance like this? The Lord says, "The same God who thought of the entrance of a baby in a stable." The same wisdom comes up with the plan. He's coming in the sky in flaming fire and the angels, with the shining of His glittering spear. I love that! He's coming with a sword drawn, and the host of the angels of God with Him. Oh, that's glorious! We will say, "You're good! You're really beautiful! You look really beautiful!" 2 Thessalonians 1:10 says that the saints will marvel at Him in that day. They'll say, "Wow, this is intense. He's our Bridegroom."

“TO HIM WHO OVERCOMES I WILL GRANT TO SIT WITH ME ON MY THRONE”

The fourth thing is in verse 16. It’s the reason for His coming: His precious people with whom He desires partnership. They are like jewels of a crown (Zech. 9:16). He’s going to establish them ruling and reigning with Him as part of the aristocracy of this city. He’s coming to put us on thrones, with crowns on our head, robes on our backs, and the scepter in our hand. We’re not only precious as jewels in a crown; we’re so dear to His heart that He’s going to share His authority with us. Revelation 3:21 is the most striking statement. He said, “As I overcame and sat on My Father’s throne, so you who overcome will sit with Me on My throne” (Rev. 3:21, paraphrased). Precious are His people.

Look at the very next verse, Zechariah 10:1; He says, “Ask for rain in the time of the latter rain. The Lord will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain” (Zech. 10:1, paraphrased). Even as He calls forth His people as precious jewels in verse 16, He says, “I promise you rain.” This is after the Lord comes and establishes His reign and kingdom on the earth. He says, “Even then I won’t release the rain until I hear your voice.” It’s partnership. It’s bridal partnership. Even in the millennial kingdom, even in eternity, God moves at the sound of our voice. God speaks and our heart is moved. We speak and His heart is moved. Even when He comes and sets up His kingdom in Jerusalem for 1,000 years, and then in the eternal reign after that, still the people of God ask Him at the proper times and only in response to Him speaking and moving their heart. Then they speak and move His heart. This is how His kingdom is administrated. Even then, He does it only in intimate partnership with us. The implications of that will cause us to say, “How great is Your goodness! How great is Your beauty!”

We’re done for tonight. We will have worship on and on and on. Amen. Let’s stand.

MINISTRY TIME

Oh, Lord, how great is Your goodness. Beloved, the Lord wants us to focus on this. He wants the focus to be on becoming students of God’s beauty and students of God’s goodness. King David was a student of God’s emotions.

We want to study the beauty of His heart, the goodness of His heart, the beauty of His personhood and all the facets. Let’s say to the Lord, “I confess. We need a ‘How great is Your goodness!’ in our spirit. We need a ‘How great is Your beauty!’ to be alive in our spirit.”

Lord, show us Your glory as a conquering king at the end of the age, that it might produce and awaken the revelation of goodness and beauty. Awaken the revelation of goodness and beauty. Awaken the revelation of goodness and beauty through sharing with us the end-time events and Your burning heart that’s behind them as You orchestrate them.

In your own words just say, “Lord Jesus, I want to become a student of Your beauty. I want to fill my being with Your goodness.”

Some of you are offended; your hearts are bruised. It’s a very normal thing. I’ve had that happen a few times in my day. I know what that feels like. Your hearts are bruised right now. You know the Lord is good. You’re saying, “The enemy got one in.” Your heart is bruised and you need a fresh revelation of His goodness and beauty. If you need prayer for that, I want to invite you to come forward right now.

You can come for that or anything. You're saying, "My heart is bruised." Maybe you're saying, "My heart isn't bruised, but my heart needs to get realigned with God's goodness. I need a new revelation of this." We will soak them in prayer. We will take time and pray for them and ask the Lord to renew their hearts. We're going to wait a short while before we even start, so that we can just worship for a few minutes.