

## JERUSALEM A CUP OF DRUNKENNESS

### **Zechariah 12:1 (NKJV)**

**1** The burden of the word of the Lord against Israel. Thus says the Lord, who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him:

A **burden** is a heavy weight. It depicts a weighty message from God.

This message comes from YHWH – the covenant God of Israel. He further describes Himself as the One Who is the Creator of the heavens and earth.

He is the Creator of mankind. Our very souls were fashioned by Him. This underscores God as the sovereign, all-powerful Creator.

He not only has created these realities, He is about to create a new order in which Israel will be restored. The powerful Creator God is about to reorder things in the world in regard to Israel and Jerusalem.

For so long during The Times of the Gentiles (cf. Lk. 21:24), the world has had no regard for Israel – reflecting no regard for the God of Israel (cf. Ps. 2). But, that is going to change. The God of Creation is about to do something about it.

### **Zechariah 12:2 (NKJV)**

**2** “Behold, I will make **Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness** to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem.

YHWH – the Creator/Covenant God of Israel will “**make**” this happen. He has the power to make things, and He says He is going to “**make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness**”, which is to say, **that which causes reeling**.

This Hebrew word for **cup** (“*saph*”) is used only here in Scripture. It speaks of a cup which is only associated with intoxicating beverages. The cup in Scripture is often a common metaphor for God’s wrath (cf. Isa. 51:17, 21-22, Jer. 13:13, 25:15-28, 51:7, Ezek. 23:33, Rev. 14:10, 16:19).

Jerusalem is metaphorically pictured as a wine goblet from which the nations partake, suffering disorientation and reeling like an intoxicated person.

God is saying that those nations which attack Jerusalem will suffer a debilitating stupor, rendering them ineffective in their objective of overtaking

Jerusalem. They will be like a bunch of drunken soldiers unable to prevail in the objective of their battle.

This applies to all the surrounding peoples when they lay siege against Judah and Jerusalem. To lay siege is to encircle a city or area in warfare in an attempt to trap the people inside so that they cannot escape.

The irony is that the nations will think that they are going to have their way with Jerusalem; but in reality, God is going to use Jerusalem as an instrument of His judgment on those nations attacking.

### **Zechariah 12:3 (NKJV)**

**3** And it shall happen in **that day** that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for **all** peoples; **all** who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though **all** nations of the earth are gathered against it.

The phrase, **“that day”** is found **16 times** in chapters 12-14 (cf. 12:3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13:1, 14:2, 4, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 21). It is found **5 times** in 12:1-9.

“The Day of the Lord” is a broad designation referring both to the Tribulation Period and the Millennial Kingdom of Christ, when God openly intervenes in the affairs of mankind (cf. Isa. 2:11-12, 17, 4:2, 10:20, 11:10, 11, 12:1, Jer. 30:8, Ezek. 30:9, 36:33).

In view here, **“That day”** refers to the **“Day of the Lord”** judgment (the Tribulation Period), which will follow the Rapture of the Church and will culminate in the Second Coming. The order of things is as follows:

- Rapture of the Church
- Day of the Lord (Judgment)
- Second Coming
- Kingdom

In the Tribulation Period, God is going to make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples. All those who try to move it or dislodge it are going to be hurt. Jerusalem is an IMMOVABLE boulder. Those that try to heave it away will be severely injured in the process.

Then God adds, **“though all nations of the earth are gathered against it”**. Even though the entire world will rally against Jerusalem (cf. Zech. 14:2), they will not prevail. This is a ROCK too large for the entire world to move. And, they are going to get hurt badly in trying to do so.

This text shows that in the Last Days', anti-Semitism will be rampant throughout the entire world. This is where the world is headed – to all-out anti-Semitism under Antichrist (cf. 1 Jn. 2:18). It will come to the point where it is literally Israel versus the world. Where will Israel be able to look then? They will be forced to look UP to God; and when they do, He will be there for them. That is what Zech. 12-14 is all about.

For many years, God has allowed His people Israel to be a negative “byword” among the nations (cf. Deut. 28:37, Jer. 24:9).

The world is growing bold in its opposition against Israel, as is repeatedly seen in the actions of the United Nations. But, the nations have lost sight of God; and when they make this move on Israel, they will be in for a rude awakening.

The God of Israel is still the God of Israel, and He will intervene to the detriment of Israel's enemies who have the audacity to attempt to dislodge Jerusalem from the Jews!

#### **Zechariah 12:4 (NKJV)**

**4** In that day,” says the Lord, “**I will strike** every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness; **I will open** My eyes on the house of Judah, and will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.

The so-called Battle of Armageddon is not merely one battle, but really a series of ongoing conflicts that culminate in the Lord's coming (cf. Rev. 14:1-3, 16:16, 19:19). I believe that this escalating series of conflicts is in view here.

The military imagery is couched in language that Zechariah would have understood. Obviously, poetic language is being used in the context, as seen in Jerusalem being described as a “*cup of drunkenness*” in verse 2 (etc.).

The point is that God is going to strike the attackers with confusion and madness. It will be like military horses being struck with blindness and running scared and out of control. And, it will be like the riding warriors will be struck with madness. They will go crazy.

The war machines will be out of control and those who man them will go crazy. That is the picture. Total confusion will overtake the attacking world! It will be totally out of control mayhem for the enemies of God's people. It is never good to take on the God of Israel – He might drive you CRAZY! Never forget, He controls the “***mind keys***” (cf. Deut. 28:28).

Couched in the middle of the sentence is the phrase, ***“I will open My eyes on the house of Judah”***.

God will strike the attacking world, but Judah will be under His watchful care (cf. Ps. 32:8, 33:18). This speaks of God’s special intervening protection (cf. Zech. 3:9, 4:10, 9:8).

In the great showdown of the ages, it will be the world versus Jerusalem but the deciding factor will be the LORD who claims the city as His own and calls it “The city of the great King” (Ps. 48:1-2). And so it will prove to be!