

# OpenTheo

## Zechariah 14:6 - 14:21



### Zechariah - Steve Gregg

Zechariah 14 provides apocalyptic imagery and speaks of God's judgment upon Jerusalem, where only a remnant will be preserved. The chapter refers to the first day of the new creation, with spiritual and symbolic language throughout. While the temple built is not permanent, Christ's body is the center of worship and the church acts as a foreshadow of the Kingdom to come.

### Transcript

Now we're going to return to Zechariah 14 and finish up this book. Last time, I was mentioning that there are two very different approaches to this chapter. There is the popular approach that you find in most of the study Bibles and contents these days, is called the futurist approach, and it usually follows a dispensational scheme, where this is talking about the Tribulation period, Armageddon, the coming of Christ, the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom.

In other words, eschatology. This section is about the end of the world and the coming of Christ. I have said all through here that I'm not seeing it.

I'm not seeing any evidence that this is the case, nor am I seeing any arguments that can be made for it, because especially helpful in deciding this is chapter 13, verse 7, that said, "...strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered." Jesus said that was fulfilled in the Garden of Gethsemane. So we know the time frame of chapter 13 is the Garden of Gethsemane. And it says after that in verse 7 of chapter 13, "...then I will turn my hand against the little ones." And God's turning his hand against his flock, against Israel, because they rejected the Messiah.

They smote their shepherd. He's turning his hand against them. And he says he's going to wipe out two-thirds of them, but only one-third will be left.

And he's going to preserve a remnant who will not come under his judgment, but the majority, the two-thirds, will come under his judgment. Those who are his own people, the third that he spares will be tried, tested, refined, like gold is refined in the fire, but they will cry out to God, He is my God, and he'll say, these are my people. That's how

chapter 13 ends, and it goes directly into chapter 14.

Now chapter 14 is just continuing to talk about this thing coming upon the two-thirds that are destroyed. What happens when God turns his hand against his people. Now since chapter 13, verse 7 spoke of Christ being rejected and crucified and smitten by the people of Israel, and the same sentence in verse 7 goes on to say, and I will turn my hands against them, then we should assume that there's some direct connection between the crucifixion or the rejection of Christ on the part of Israel and the judgment that is here spoken of.

I can't imagine why we would assume that we must leap 2,000 years forward from the crucifixion of Christ and say, and here's the judgment he talked about, when in fact, a judgment did come on Israel, almost immediately after they rejected Christ, and I showed you scriptures yesterday where Christ himself spoke of their rejection of him, is like the refusal of the invitation of the king to come to his son's wedding, and so the king sent out his armies and burned down their city, and so forth, in Matthew 22, and in Matthew 21, the parable of the vineyard and the tenants, they killed the son, and so the master came and killed them, and gave his vineyard to someone else. This is referring to the fact that their city was going to be burned down and they're going to be judged, they're going to be killed, because they had done this to Jesus, and this happened in AD 70. This happened in the Jewish war, began in 66 AD, started in Galilee, and Galilean villages were wiped out, then Judean villages were wiped out, and then Jerusalem was besieged, and then Jerusalem was conquered, and in the opening verses of chapter 14, it says, Behold, the day of the Lord is coming, a term that is used throughout the scripture, somewhat generically, really, the day of the Lord is used in many prophetic passages, they're not talking about the end of the world, they're talking about the end of Babylon, or Edom, or Moab, or some other country, the end of them, God's judgment upon them is the day of the Lord, that is the day of the Lord's vengeance upon whoever is in view.

There's no question who's in view here, because it's the two-thirds that he said he was going to destroy, because they struck their shepherd. This is Jerusalem. The day of the Lord is coming, your spoil will be divided in your midst, that means your conquerors will take all your stuff, because they've conquered you, and I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem, again, all the nations is a hyperbole, but the Roman armies were represented by many nations that Rome had conquered.

Rome had conquered dozens of nations, and they were all represented in the armies of Rome, they were recruited into service, so all Gentile nations, or not every last one, but certainly a wide selection, came against Jerusalem. The city shall be taken, so Jerusalem is defeated. The house is rifled, there's people going plundering what's in the houses, and the women, essentially raped by the invaders.

Half the city goes into captivity, the remnant, which is again that third that is spared, will

not go into captivity, will not be cut off from the city. They continue to be Jerusalem, though the city is destroyed, they are the spiritual Jerusalem, they are the Jerusalem of God, the Mount Zion, which the writer of Hebrews calls the General Assembly and Church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven. Hebrews 12.22 refers to the church as Mount Zion, the city of God, the heavenly Jerusalem.

So, when the earthly Jerusalem is destroyed, the church, the spiritual Jerusalem, continues in its place. Now, we saw that, and I mentioned in verse 3 that when the Lord goes out to fight against those nations, that is not Jerusalem, but the other nations, this could easily be a reference to the warfare where the gospel comes and confronts the powers of darkness. It's a spiritual warfare, and God goes and makes war against the pagan nations to defeat them.

We have been defeated by Christ. We've been conquered. And He goes out and conquers the nations, the Gentiles, the church does, the Lord through the church.

And then it says, in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. I mentioned that this is very commonly mistaken to be a reference to Christ coming on the Mount of Olives, but that this is actually a reference back to an earlier prophecy in Ezekiel chapter 11 where God's feet stood on the Mount of Olives there too. In Ezekiel 11, because God was giving Jerusalem over to its enemies, the Babylonians in that case, God's glory left the city of Jerusalem, and we are told that He stood on the Mount of Olives, meaning outside the city.

He left the city gates of Jerusalem to the east and stood on the Mount of Olives. He had left the city. God left the city.

And because God left the city, there was no protection for the city, and therefore it was going to fall to the Babylonians. Now, that happened prior to Zechariah's time. Zechariah lived after that time.

Now the temple had been rebuilt, but it was going to happen again. God was going to leave Jerusalem again, and it's going to fall again, this time to the Romans. And so for God's feet to stand on the Mount of Olives is not a reference to Jesus coming back and standing on the Mount of Olives.

There's nothing in the Bible anywhere that says Jesus will come back to the Mount of Olives. It's commonly preached, but it doesn't say it anywhere in the Bible. You will not find any scripture that says Jesus will come back and stand on the Mount of Olives.

The reason people say it is because they take this scripture to be a reference to Christ's coming, and they say, see, He's going to stand on the Mount of Olives. But this doesn't say Christ. It doesn't say the Messiah.

It says Yahweh. I mean, of course we can say, but Jesus is Yahweh. Well, we can say

that, but that's not plainly stated in the Old Testament.

It's not expected to be understood in this passage. Yahweh standing on the Mount of Olives here is no different than Yahweh standing on the Mount of Olives in Ezekiel. He has left Jerusalem to its own defense, and it doesn't have sufficient defense.

In Ezekiel, it was the Babylonians that would destroy Jerusalem, because God had left and was on the Mount of Olives instead of inside the city. And in this case, that's in the past. This is the next time that happened, when the Romans came.

And the reference to the mountain splitting and making a valley, I mentioned there's other references in the Prophets, including Zechariah, to mountains doing things that mountains don't usually do. Melting, being removed and becoming a plain in Zechariah 4. So this mountain that's before Zerubbabel will become a plain, referring to the mountain of difficulties, the mountain of obstacles to his project. A mountain moving, a mountain splitting, a mountain melting.

These are apocalyptic images. It's not talking about literal things. This image is that a mountain, which usually is an obstruction to travel, will be removed so that the righteous in Jerusalem can escape.

And the mountain splits from north to south, making an east-west valley, which means if you were trying to flee to the east from Jerusalem, you'd hit the Mount of Olives. You'd have to go around it or go over it, and that's difficult and time-consuming. It's like God's going to make a way for his people to flee to the east, symbolized by splitting the Mount of Olives and making a pathway for them there.

It's no more literal than when John the Baptist, quoting Isaiah, said that he had come to make way, a smooth way for the Lord, and that every valley will be exalted, every mountain will be brought low, the crooked places will be made straight. He's not talking about physical, topographical changes. He's talking about spiritual things, that he's coming to pave the way, to smooth the way for the Messiah to come.

Here also God is paving or smoothing the way for the remnant to flee from Jerusalem, and they did. When the Romans had not yet arrived, but God had left the city, God, as it were, on the Mount of Olives, outside the city, he did not leave the entire city at the mercy of the Romans. He allowed for that third that he was going to spare to flee.

And it's as if he provided a route without obstacles. He removed a mountain that was in their way, made a valley for them to flee. And therefore, as I understand it, those verses up through verse 5, which we have covered, are talking about the destruction of Jerusalem.

Now, what about the rest of the chapter? Well, there's a subtext to this. In addition to destroying Jerusalem, he's saving a remnant. This remnant is not simply said to be

different from Jerusalem, but they are the continuation of Jerusalem.

This is what we saw in chapter 13, verse 8. In talking about the judgment on Jerusalem in the second half of chapter 13, verse 8, he says, Two-thirds in it, that is in Jerusalem, shall be cut off and die, but one-third shall be left in it. The surviving remnant is said to be left in Jerusalem, though not literally. The city is taken by the enemies.

The faithful remnant are not going to live there. The houses are rifled, the women are ravished, the city is taken, people are going to captivity. The remnant doesn't literally live in the city of Jerusalem.

It's gone, it's knocked down, not one stone left on another. What are the remnant going to be doing living there? No, they remain in Jerusalem in the sense that Jerusalem, they are the remnant of Jerusalem. Jerusalem continues only in the form of this remnant.

They are the spiritual core, the faithful remnant of Jerusalem. Jerusalem exists as them now. They are Jerusalem, and that's why the writer of Hebrews says, We have come to Mount Zion.

We have come to the Jerusalem that is the church. And so this is how the New Testament writers speak, and that's implied here too. Likewise, even in chapter 14, when it says in the latter part of verse 2, half of the city will go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

Well, they certainly left the city. They weren't cut off from it. They weren't wiped out in it.

They still, in a sense, remain citizens of the city, the true city of Jerusalem, which had its type and its shadow and an actual fortress with walls and a geographical location. The church is the continuation of Jerusalem. And in the rest of Zechariah 14, Jerusalem, I believe, is the church.

That is, it is the remnant of Jerusalem that fled and escaped and continues to exist in the form of those who they have evangelized, who are their, you know, the church is one. We're the same church that they were, same body. It's just continuous.

So, the church is this Jerusalem that is discussed after this point. Now, I'm going to suggest some division of this latter part. Verses 6 through 11, I believe, is simply talking about the church in figurative terms.

This is apocalyptic imagery. We're not going to be using literal language here. But it's talking about the present age and the present spiritual Jerusalem and its ongoing activity, which brings us even to our present time in history.

But then verses 12 and 13 is going to be, or I say 12 through 15, is sort of a description

of how the enemies of the church ultimately will fail and be judged by God. Again, in very symbolic language, I believe. And then the last part, 16 through 21, is going to be, well, especially through verse 19, is talking about the Feast of Tabernacles, which I consider to be viewing the church from another angle.

All the Gentiles are coming to observe the Feast of Tabernacles. But again, this, I believe, is the spiritual fulfillment of the Tabernacle, not the ritual feast of Israel. And then the last two verses are talking about how everything in the New Jerusalem will be holy, not just a few things.

All the people are holy, not just the high priests. Everything, cups, bowls, bells on the horses, they're all holy to the Lord. Because in the Old Testament, some things were designated as holy to the Lord.

Other things were common. The things that were common weren't the Lord's. Things that were holy were the Lord's.

In the New Order, everything is the Lord's. It's all about the Lord. There's not certain categories that we withhold from the Lord and give Him His due.

On the other hand, everything is given to God. It's a total surrender to Him. Everything is holy.

Verse 6 and 7 are quite difficult to translate, judging from the different translations that exist. It says in verse 6, It shall come to pass in that day that there will be no light. The lights will diminish.

It shall be one day, which is known to the Lord, neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen that it will be light. Now, what does this mean? It's very confusing.

It gets even more confusing when you compare the different ways it's translated, because apparently the Hebrew is obscure in some respects. Let me give you a series of ways that it is translated. This New King James that I just read says, It shall come to pass in that day that there will be no light.

The lights will diminish. Let me read that same line in different translations. The New American Standard says, In that day there will be no light.

The luminaries will dwindle. Now, that's not very different than the New King James, but when you get to the New Living Translation, it says, On that day the sources of light will no longer shine. Shortens it quite a bit.

The ESV adds another aspect. It says, On that day there should be no light, cold or frost. Which sounds like it's saying there will be not only no light, but there will be no cold or frost.

Now, where did the cold and frost come from? These other translations don't mention any cold or frost. They're just talking about light, no light. But this says there will be no light, no cold, no frost.

Now, the ESV is a reasonably good translation. I'm not really sure why the Hebrew is rendered this way by them. And when you look at the NIV, the New International Version, it says, On that day there will be no light, no cold or frost.

Same as the ESV. And then, the New RSV, the New Revised Standard Version, it says, On that day there will not be either cold or frost. Doesn't even mention light.

Just cold and frost. No light. Doesn't say anything about the light.

But in a footnote of the New RSV, it says, There shall be no light. So, what's up with this? What's up with this is it's vague, difficult to understand. But most of the translations agree with the one we're looking at that says there will be no light.

The lights, that is the heavenly lights, apparently will diminish. They'll go dark. Now, this idea that the heavenly lights go dark is so common in Scripture as to not worry us too much.

Because if it were literally true that the sun didn't give its light, the moon didn't give its light, and the stars fell from heaven, as is commonly spoken of in the Prophets, that'd be the end of the universe. In fact, stars falling from heaven to earth is not a possibility. The earth is smaller than any star.

A star cannot fall to the earth. It would be thousands of times bigger than the earth. You can't have multiple stars fall to the earth, certainly.

This is a figure of speech. What does it mean? Well, it's used often in Scripture of judgments of certain nations in history that essentially their lights go out. They won't be seeing the sun and moon and stars anymore.

They're disappearing from history. The common phenomena will be no longer in their lives of seeing sun, moon, and stars. In Isaiah 13, it is describing the fall of Babylon to the Medes and the Persians.

This happened back in 539 B.C. And in Isaiah 13.10, it says, For the stars of heaven and their constellations will not give their light. The sun will be darkened, and it's going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine. Sun, moon, and stars dark? When? When Babylon fell to the Medes and the Persians.

It went dark for them. For Babylon, that is. From Babylon's point of view, it went dark.

In Ezekiel 32, a prophecy about the fall of Egypt to the Babylonians, to Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Egypt, and this is predicted in Ezekiel 32. Ezekiel 32.7 says,

When I put out your light, I will cover the heavens and make the stars dark.

It goes on and says, And the moon shall not give her light. And the bright lights of the heavens I will make dark over you. Over Egypt.

When the Babylonians conquered them. Now, this is figures of speech, of course. This is not literal.

When Edom was judged, it says in Isaiah 34, Isaiah 34. Now, Edom was destroyed centuries before Christ. This prophecy about it says this about them.

It says in Isaiah 34.4, All the hosts of heaven shall be dissolved. And the heavens shall be rolled up like a scroll. All their hosts, meaning the stars, shall fall down as the leaf falls from the vine and the fruit falling from a fig tree.

This is poetry. This is not literal. All the stars falling like figs from trees.

The heavens rolled up like a scroll. This is when Edom was conquered. That was centuries before Christ.

You see, this is the commonplace imagery that the scriptures use when they're talking about a judgment of some great entity. In Joel, it actually talks about the judgment on Jerusalem in 70 AD. Joel chapter 2. It begins in verse 28.

It shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your old men shall dream dreams.

Your young men shall see visions. Also on my men servants and my maid servants will I pour out my spirit in those days. That's Pentecost.

And then it says, and I will show wonders in the heavens and the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. So when the city was burned and blood was running through the streets, this is the judgment on Jerusalem. The sun shall be turned to darkness, the moon to blood before the great, the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.

And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Peter quoted this whole passage and said it was in the process of fulfillment right there. The pouring out of the spirit was already happening.

The judgment would be shortly thereafter, of course. And so the dimming of the lights is associated with the destruction of a great empire. In this context, in Zechariah 14, it's certainly Jerusalem.

And Zechariah's not the only prophet that said such things in association with Jerusalem. Joel did as well. So in a sense, we have the destruction of Jerusalem, the darkening of it.



And yet, it says at the end of verse 7, at evening time it shall happen that it will be light. What? It's the darkness for one entity. It's the dawn for another.

As the old covenant order and its temple and its rituals and its apostate system goes down and it goes dark for them, there's a new light rising. There's a new light shining. There's a new day dawning.

It says in verse 7, it shall be one day which is known to the Lord. Now, I mentioned that one day should be translated day one. At least in Hebrew, literally, it shall be day one.

And this could be a reference to the creation. This is the first day of a new creation. Paul said if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

The church, the new Jerusalem, is a new creation. And with the lights going out for the old Jerusalem, it's the beginning of a new creation. The lights are coming on for another.

It's evening for the old, but there's light still shining because there's a new day of a new Jerusalem. So that at evening time, it'll be light. Evening for one entity, light for the other, it seems to me.

Now, I'm not saying you have to see it this way. If you can see another really good way to see these verses, you are my, be my guest. I've wrestled with this passage for a very, very long time, and I'm working on it.

If someone sees it more clearly than I do, I'm more power to you. But this is what I think this is probably saying. And in verse 8, in that day it shall be that living water shall flow from Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea, half of them toward the western sea.

In both summer and winter it shall occur, and the Lord shall be king over all the earth. In that day it shall be the Lord is one, and his name is one. There's not one God for the Gentiles and one for the Jews.

He's not just the king of the Jews. He's the king of all the earth. Jesus said all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me.

In Matthew 28, 18. He's the king of all the earth now. Not just the king of Israel.

All authority in heaven and earth is Christ's. He's the king of all the earth. But what about these living waters flowing from Jerusalem? We have at least two other passages in the Old Testament that speak of this waters flowing from Jerusalem.

One of them is again in Joel. We looked at Joel a moment ago and saw Pentecost, and we saw the destruction of Jerusalem. That is the old Jerusalem, but what about the new Jerusalem? In Joel 3, 18, which I think is talking about the church age.

I'll tell you. I believe that after talking about the destruction of Jerusalem at the end of Joel 2, we now have chapter 3 as the church age. And in verse 18 it says, It will come to pass in that day that the mountains will drip with new wine.

Again, not literal. Mountains do unusual things in the prophets. The hills shall flow with milk.

You don't have to milk cows anymore. Just milk the hills. And all the brooks of Judah shall be flooded with water.

A fountain shall flow from the house of the Lord and water the valley of Acacias. Now, the fountain that flows from the house of the Lord is a river flowing out of Jerusalem, right? And that's what Zechariah said. In that day it shall be living water shall flow from Jerusalem.

Some toward the east and some toward the west. Now, to the east of Jerusalem is the Jordan River serving as a boundary to the country. In Joel, it says it will water the valley of the Acacias.

And according to Joshua, that's in Moab. East of the Jordan. Here we have a river originating in Jerusalem, traveling east, passing over the Jordan, or crossing it and watering the other side, the land of the Acacias on the other side.

Two rivers can't cross each other. It's physically impossible. They can merge.

Two tributaries can become one bigger river, but you can't have them crossing perpendicular to each other and both of them flowing continuously. Water doesn't act that way. This is not literal.

Why? It's living water. Living water is not H<sub>2</sub>O. Living water is a symbol for something spiritual, as we know from what Jesus said.

Jesus told the woman at the well, if you had asked, I would have given you living water. And she mistakenly thought he meant real water, too. She said, give me this water so I don't have to come draw water at this well anymore.

But he was talking about something spiritual. Living water is not regular water. And if you look at John 7, there's another reference to living water, and this time we're told what it is.

By John himself. In John 7, verses 37 through 39, it says, on that day, that great day of the feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, as it turns out, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.

But this he spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in him would receive, for

the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Now, the Holy Spirit was given to the disciples after Jesus was raised from the dead. And Jesus said that living waters will flow out of the hearts of his believers.

And he means the Spirit. So a river of living water is not real water. It's the Holy Spirit.

What's more, Jesus said, as the Scripture has said. That line in verse 38 is very telling. John 7, 38, He who believes in me, as the Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow out of him.

But what Scripture is there that says living water will flow out of the believer? Well, there's none that says it in those terms, but there's one Scripture in the Old Testament that Jesus could be referring to, and only one, which does speak about rivers of living water flowing from somewhere. And that's Zechariah 14, 8. In that day it shall be that living waters will flow from Jerusalem. Well, if Jerusalem by this time is the church, the believers, then in fact the Scripture does say that from the believers will flow rivers of living water.

Jesus said, if you believe in me, as the Scripture has said, living waters are going to flow from you. This is the only Scripture he could possibly be alluding to. So, he is identifying Zechariah 14, 8 not as something in some future millennial kingdom, but as what would happen when Jesus was glorified.

His spirit would be given to his disciples. That's what John interpreted to mean. Therefore, that confirms a number of things.

One, that the living water is the Holy Spirit. Two, that Jerusalem is a reference to the believers in Christ, the church. Three, that the time frame we're looking at is one that Jesus and John identified as the time after the spirit was given, after Jesus rose from the dead, the church age.

So, this is the time frame we're talking about here. And it's continuous. It's not seasonal.

It's in summer and in winter. It goes east and west. And at the same time, the Lord shall be king over all the earth as he is today.

In verses 10 and 11, it says, All the land shall be turned into a plain, from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be raised up and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate to the place of the first gate, and the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananiel to the king's winepress. The people shall dwell in it, and no longer shall there be utter destruction, but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

Now, if this is taken literally, then this is talking about a time when the hilly country of Judah will be no more hilly. It'll be just graded. It'll be all flat, just a plain.

And people will dwell in Jerusalem there. And it gives all these markers. These are city landmarks in the older Jerusalem.

They aren't there now in the present city of Jerusalem in the Middle East. These are landmarks that were destroyed long ago and are not there anymore. So this is not to be understood literally of some future Jerusalem where these landmarks don't exist.

Nor would there be any good reason to even suggest a literal interpretation since the whole chapter, the whole book, for crying out loud, is full of symbolism and apocalyptic imagery. To insist, oh, we're going to be literal here. This is literal Jerusalem in the last days in the millennium.

Why? On what basis would we say that? What this sounds more like is that the Jerusalem is going to be the only elevated area. The land around it will all be plain. Now, it was back in Zechariah, the same book, in chapter 4, that God said to Zerubbabel, or with reference to Zerubbabel, it says, who are you, O mountain? Before Zerubbabel, you will become a plain.

Mountains being removed, the land becoming a plain. This is not literal in Zechariah 4, 7. There's no reason for it to be thought literal in Zechariah 14, 10. More likely, it is saying the same thing that other prophets said, like, let's say, Isaiah, in Isaiah chapter 2. In those opening verses of Isaiah 2, the prophet sees a vision of the messianic kingdom age.

Some identify the kingdom age as an age that will be inaugurated at the second coming of Christ, the millennial kingdom. Others, the church throughout most of history, believe the messianic age was inaugurated at the first coming of Christ and is the same as the age of the church. However, of course, the language must be seen in a spiritual and symbolic way, somewhat.

But why not? These are written in poetry. Poetry is often symbolic. And it says in verse 2, Isaiah 2, 2, Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house, now the Lord's house in the New Testament is the church where the temple of the Holy Spirit made of living stones.

The mountain of the Lord's house is Zion, which is the church, shall be established on top of the mountains, that is, above the mountains, it will be the tallest mountain, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all the nations shall flow into it. The Gentiles will come into it. Many people will come and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob.

Okay, let's go up to the mountain of the Lord. That's what the writer of Hebrews says. You have come to Mount Zion.

You have come to the city of Jerusalem. You, Christians, have. Why? Because the

Jerusalem in question is the church.

The nations, the Gentiles, are flowing into the church throughout this age because the mission of the church to the Gentiles is harvesting Gentiles, and they're all coming into the new Jerusalem, the body of Christ. And what are they doing there? Well, they're coming so that He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths. Isn't that what the church is doing? Jesus said, Make disciples of all nations, teaching them to observe My ways, all things I have commanded you.

This is what Jesus inaugurated. Go to the nations, bring them in, baptize them into this fellowship, and teach them to walk in My ways. That's what Jesus said.

That's what these people are doing. For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. That is Christ's instructions, the commands of Christ, the word of the Lord, will go forth from this church, from this Jerusalem, and He shall judge between the nations and so forth.

Now notice, it speaks of Jerusalem being elevated above all others. I think that's what Zechariah 14.10 is implying, when all the land around Jerusalem will be turned to a plain. Everything is made low compared to Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is exalted. The church is God's exalted people, the body of Christ, the temple of the Holy Spirit, the new Jerusalem, the new Mount Zion. This is what the New Testament writers identified as, and I think that the reference to all these other areas going down is simply in contrast to Jerusalem, which is elevated in these images.

Micah 4 had exactly the same prophecy that Isaiah 2 did about the very same thing. So I believe, really, in terms of symbolic changes to topography, it's like the mountains of olive splits. The saints escaped there.

And then there's a fountain coming out of Jerusalem. That's really a topographical change, if it was literal. A new river shows up on the landscape.

And now, land is lowered, the city is elevated. This is all talking about spiritual changes. It's like a revolution on the surface of the earth.

But it's really, those are the terms it's using, just like the light's diminishing and the light's shining are symbolic. Like the heavens and the earth are undergoing revolution. God is shaking up not only the earth, but also the heavens, symbolically speaking.

But this is all about spiritual things. Now, likewise, the judgment on the wicked is, I believe, in equally symbolic terms, is verses 12 through 15. It says, And this shall be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem.

That is, those who persecute the church during this age. There have been a lot of them,

and they've all fared poorly in the long run. The Roman Empire, the Papal States, the communist nations, the Nazis, you name it.

Every time an empire or any kind of a power fights against the church, you can be sure that it's going to come out badly in the end for that persecutor because God's on the side of the church. And this is the kind of thing, this gruesome judgment coming upon them. It's given in gruesome poetic terms.

You should not look too much for absolute literal correspondence. Remember, this is in poetry. Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet.

Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, and their tongues shall dissolve in their mouths. It should come to pass that day that a great panic from the Lord will be among them. Everyone will seize the hand of his neighbor and raise his hand against his neighbor's hand.

Judah will also fight at Jerusalem, and the wealth of all the surrounding nations shall be gathered together, gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance. Judah and Jerusalem, I believe, is the spiritual entity, the church, and it's fighting spiritual warfare, and it's gathering in the wealth of the nations. The wealth is actually in terms of people.

Paul talked about building the church with gold, silver, and precious stones, referring to people. Malachi spoke of the remnant of God's people as his jewels that he would gather from the burning house before he burns down the house. He's talking about the remnant of Jerusalem escaping in Malachi 3. His people are like jewels.

They're wealth. The wealth of the Gentiles are being collected into the kingdom of God through the evangelization efforts of the church. This is what I think is referred to here.

The wealth of the surrounding nations shall be gathered together, gold, silver, and apparel in great abundance, simply referring to valuables, which I believe is an image of people being added to the church, the gold and silver and precious stones that Paul talked about in 1 Corinthians 3. Such also shall be the plague on the horse and the mule, on the camel and the donkey, on all the cattle that will be in those camps, so shall the plague be. So, not only the enemies, but all that they have comes under God's plagues and judgment. Now, having said that, we now turn back to the life of the Christian community during this age.

It is described in terms of the nations, again, the Gentiles, coming to Jerusalem, the church, and it's described in terms of keeping the Feast of Tabernacles. It says in verses 16 and following, It shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. And it shall be that whichever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts,

on them there will be no reign.

If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter in, they shall have no reign. They shall receive the plague with which the Lord strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles.

Now, they're coming to Jerusalem, that is, they're coming into the church, people being converted, coming into the spiritual Israel, spiritual Zion. There they keep the Feast of Tabernacles. Now, Christians are not obliged to keep Jewish feasts, and Tabernacles is a Jewish feast.

Paul makes it very clear in Colossians 2, in verses 16 and 17, that we do not keep the Jewish feasts. He says, let no one therefore judge you concerning the keeping of, he says, festivals, that's these Jewish feasts, or new moons or Sabbaths. He said, these are a shadow for the time being, but the body is of Christ.

These Jewish feasts, they served a purpose until Christ came. They foreshadowed Him. Now He has come.

Therefore, don't let anyone judge you about whether you keep these festivals or not. Yet, Zechariah talks about people being judged if they don't keep the festivals. So, either, as the dispensationalists say, this is a future millennial kingdom when the festivals are reinstated in the Jewish order.

Remember, dispensationalists say that when Jesus comes back, they're going to accept the Jewish temple in Jerusalem, animal sacrifices offered by Levitical priests, the keeping of festivals, that all the Jewish law is going to be observed again according to the rituals of sacrifice and all that in the millennium. Why would they say that? That's so contrary to what the New Testament says in the book of Hebrews. That all those things were temporary.

They all pointed forward to Jesus. He has come. He has offered the final sacrifice once and for all.

There's never going to be any more sacrifices. Why would any group of Christian teachers say that these things are all coming back in the millennium? Partly, they do because they take this passage to be out the millennium. They assume it's about the millennium.

They assume that Jesus came back at the beginning of this chapter and now we're looking at the millennial reign. And since it talks about the Feast of Tabernacles, I guess we're going to start doing that again. And also, by the way, in verse 21 it talks about people offering sacrifices.

It talks about people who offer sacrifices. She'll come and take and cook them and so forth. So here, if this is literal and if it is future, if it is in the millennial kingdom, then God is reestablishing Judaism and I guess no more Christianity because Christianity and Judaism are not the same religion.

When Christianity came, Judaism came to an end. This must mean that Christianity comes to an end and Judaism's back. This cannot be if the writer of Hebrews knew what he was talking about or for that matter anyone in the New Testament because Paul said those things were a shadow.

The body is of Christ. What, are we going to get rid of the body and go back to the shadow? Are we going to get rid of Jesus and go back to animal sacrifices? Come on, give me a break. There's no reason to see it that way.

There's no reason to see it that way. It's spiritual. How do we know that? Well, look with me at 1 Corinthians 5. Verse 7 and 8. Paul said, Therefore purge out the old leaven that you may be a new lump.

Since you truly are unleavened, for indeed Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast. Now, what feast? He's referring to the Feast of Unleavened Bread. If you know the Jewish calendar, you know that in the spring, the Passover would be celebrated on a single day.

But the next seven days were the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For that whole time, the Jews could not have leaven in their bread. They spent a whole week of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, which followed the Passover.

So when he says, Christ our Passover has been sacrificed, so let's keep the feast. What feast? The Feast of Unleavened Bread, clearly. And then he says, Not with the old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Are we talking about real leaven here? Real bread? No. When we say leaven, we're talking about malice and wickedness. That's spiritual.

Spiritual leaven. And the unleavened bread is what? Sincerity and truth. These are spiritual.

This is a spiritual thing. He says we're keeping the Feast of Unleavened Bread, but he doesn't mean we're keeping it in the Jewish way. We're keeping it in the spiritual way.

Every one of the Jewish feasts had a spiritual meaning. The Jews had to keep it in the ritualistic way until Christ came. But now we keep it in the spiritual way.

We do keep the Jewish Feast of Unleavened Bread, but not really the Jewish Feast, but



the spiritual feast. The unleavened bread is sincerity and truth in our lives. It's not a seven-day celebration.

It's all our whole life. Seven days, the number of completeness, seven, it represents our whole life. Our whole life has got to be free from malice and wickedness and needs to be lived in sincerity and truth.

That's keeping the feast, Paul says, of unleavened bread. So what then might be the keeping of the Feast of Tabernacles? If the church is said to be keeping the Feast of Tabernacles, certainly it's on the same order. It's like keeping the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

It's not the Jewish feast. It's the spiritual meaning of the feast. When it says these people will have to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, this is no more a restoration of Jewish ordinances than when Paul says let's keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

He didn't reinstate the Jewish Feast of Unleavened Bread, but the spiritual counterpart. So in Zechariah 14, I am convinced, it is predicting the church age, the Gentiles coming into the spiritual Jerusalem, and keeping the Festival of Tabernacles in its spiritual meaning, its spiritual sense. What spiritual sense? What is its meaning? Well, when the Jews celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles, they were commemorating the time that they were wandering in the wilderness after the Exodus and before they came into the Promised Land.

That 40 years they wandered, they lived in tents or tabernacles or booths. It's sometimes called sukkoth. Sukkoth in Hebrew means booth or tent.

And the Hebrews, as they traveled through the wilderness, camped in tents. And the Feast of Tabernacles, forever after celebrated, was to remember that time. The important thing, though, was not that they were on a camping trip, but that God was in a tent among them, too.

God was camping with them. They were traveling with God between the stage from which they were saved out of Egypt to the stage that they would eventually settle into their ultimate promises. This period of time for the Jews, according to Paul in 1 Corinthians 10, was a type and a shadow of our lives.

If you read 1 Corinthians 10 on your own, in verses 1 through 6, Paul catalogs some of the things the Jews experienced when they came out of Egypt and lived in the wilderness. He said, these happened as a type of us. That is, the Jews wandering in the wilderness were a type and a shadow of us, Christians living now.

And then he goes on in verses 7 through 11 of the same chapter, 1 Corinthians 10, 7 through 11. He says, but let's not fall into the same errors they did. Let's not commit fornication like they did, and he slaughtered a bunch of them.

Let's not worship idols like they did, and he did this judgment to them. He says, and these things happened as an example to us. Again, a type, the word type is used in the Greek.

The experiences of the children of Israel in that 40 years between Egypt and the Promised Land is a type and a shadow of us between the day we were saved and the day we enter into our final settled state. It's our lifetime. Their wandering in the wilderness, their camping in tents is symbolic of this temporary journey we're on in our lifetime.

We get saved and we journey with God. He dwells among us. We're camping out.

Paul talks about our bodies as tabernacles. In 2 Corinthians 5.1, 2 Corinthians 5.1, Paul says, if this earthly tent of our tabernacle were to be destroyed, we will be someday in a house not made with hands. A tent is temporary.

A house is permanent. The Jews lived in tents while they wandered in the wilderness. They moved into houses when they came into the Promised Land.

We are presently in a tabernacle, our bodies, temporary bodies in this lifetime. Eventually we'll have a permanent, immortal house body. That's at the resurrection.

Therefore, the time of living in tabernacles with God among us is now in our Christian life. We're saved out of Egypt, as it were, at the cross, and we're entering into our permanent house when Jesus returns. In the meantime, we are camping.

We're in motion. We're strangers in a strange land. We are strangers in pilgrims.

Moving that, and God's camping with us. He's here tabernacled among us. That's our celebration.

That's our Feast of Tabernacles. That's the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles, meaning, I believe. Now, it says then, if any nations don't cooperate and don't come into this, there'll be no rain in their land.

Well, rain is already seen as a figure. Back in chapter 10, is it? Yeah, Zechariah 10.1. Zechariah 10.1 says, Now, I just want to say that the context of this statement, both what precedes and follows, does not encourage us to think he's talking about real rain and real crops. Let's talk about spiritual blessing from heaven.

Rain is an emblem of God's blessing because it comes from heaven, and it nourishes and sustains us. And prospers us. Especially agrarian societies are prospered by rain.

Where there's no rain, they go broke. All the blessings of God are likened to rain. You want rain from God? Pray.

Ask God, and he'll send you rain. He'll send blessing. In Zechariah 14, the nations that

don't participate in the Church will not have the blessing of God.

They will miss it. It won't rain on them. The rain, the blessing, the spiritual blessing that comes from God comes on those who are involved in the Church.

Who are followers of Christ. Who are camping with God. Who are in this celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles with us.

And then the last two verses of chapter 14. Let me quickly go over. In that day, verse 20 says, Holiness to the Lord shall be engraved on the bells of the horses.

The pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the Lord of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices will come and take them and cook in them.

In that day there shall be no longer a Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts. Now, this is all cast in the imagery of Old Testament worship because that's the only worship that people in Zechariah knew or could relate to. In the New Testament, it's all spiritual.

We don't offer animal sacrifices. They are referenced here, people who sacrifice. Of course, we offer up spiritual sacrifices.

We're a spiritual priesthood, Peter said in 1 Peter 2, 5. We're a holy priesthood offering up spiritual sacrifices. Paul identifies some of those sacrifices. We present our bodies, a living sacrifice.

The writer of Hebrews in Hebrews 13, 15 said, we offer the sacrifice of praise to God, the fruit of our lips. We offer spiritual sacrifices, not physical. The language is the language of Old Testament sacrifices, but the fulfillment is in the spiritual Jerusalem.

There's spiritual sacrifices, spiritual priesthood, spiritual temple, not a physical one. God doesn't dwell in temples made with hands. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit, the New Testament says.

So, this is talking about the church in terms reminiscent of the temple, but different. Because it says, holiness to the Lord shall be engraved on the bells of the horses. This phrase, holiness to the Lord, in the Old Testament, was engraved on a gold plate, attached by a gold chain around the head of the high priest, and it rested on his forehead.

If you saw the high priest in his regalia, he would have on all his fancy clothes, and on his forehead would be this gold plate that said, holiness to the Lord. The high priest was the holiest man in Israel. He could do what no other man could do.

He'd go into the Holy of Holies, and offer sacrifice. No other human being, no other priest could do that. This was the holiest of all men, and he wore engraved upon him, holiness

to the Lord.

But in this new order, the bells of the horses have that. What is more mundane than bells on horses? What is less spiritual? What is more physical and inconsequential than bells on horses? That's just the point. In the new order, it's different than the old order.

In the old order, some things belonged to God, some didn't. The high priest was holy unto the Lord. Well, the whole nation of Israel is holy in another sense, but not at the same level.

But there were many things that were not holy to the Lord. The tabernacle was a holy building, set apart for God. The furniture, the bowls and the spoons in it were holy.

They couldn't be used for anything but God. They belonged to Him. There were other bowls and spoons and buildings that weren't holy.

They were used for ordinary purposes. The temple and its stuff, not so much. Not at all.

If something is holy to the Lord, it means it's separate from the ordinary things. It's separated to God, where ordinary things are not. The tithe was given to God.

The other 90% of the income was not. Sabbath was a holy day. One day out of seven.

The other six days weren't especially holy days. In other words, in the Old Testament, some things were holy and some were not. Some things were offered to God, especially.

And some things were not particularly offered to God. Things that were holy belonged to Him. Things not so holy would be ours.

But in the New Jerusalem, in the church, we do not leave anything of our lives that's not devoted to God. Jesus said in Luke 14, 33, Unless you forsake all that you have, you cannot be my disciple. Not 10%.

Not one day out of seven. All that you have. You've got to be all in or you're not in.

You come all the way to Jesus or you haven't come. And when you do come to Jesus, you bring with you to Him everything. You're totally devoted to Him.

You've been bought with a price yourself. You are owned. You're not your own.

Your stuff is not your own. It's all the Lord's. Every day, every moment of your day belongs to God.

Every penny you have, everything you own belongs to God. Your children belong to God. You have nothing that doesn't belong to God.

If there is something you have that doesn't belong to God, you have not forsaken all that

you have to be a disciple. The normative Christian life is one where every aspect, even those things that seem mundane and secular, are not. Even your job is holy.

You may work at an ordinary job with other pagans, but you're there as a service to God. They're there just making money. You're there to serve God there.

You're a servant of Christ stationed there, sent there to work for God. Every part of life is sacred, and nothing is secular to the believer in the New Covenant. This is symbolically said by the bells of the horses having as much holiness as the high priest ever had.

If the bells of the horses are holy, what isn't? What is there less holy than bells of horses that you could say, oh, this is a category that, you know, isn't holy to the Lord? It says the pots in the Lord's house shall be like the bowls before the altar. That is, they'll be holy. Bowls.

And so forth. And those who offer sacrifices will come and take them and cook in them. That is, you can use ordinary stuff to offer your sacrifices to God.

Anything you have can be offered to God. Anything you possess, any secular thing, any physical thing, anything you own, whatever God has entrusted you, you're entrusted to steward for him and can be offered to him for his kingdom. That's what is the new order.

Instead of two classes of things, secular and sacred, as there were in the Old Testament, now all has been subsumed under the category of sacred. It's all God's. All of life is sacred, and everything belongs to him and should be used for him as an act of sacrifice or worship.

The last line says, there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the Lord. And a large number of translations feel that that should be translated, there shall no longer be a trader like a merchant. I don't know what the problem is with the Hebrew text.

Probably the same consonants are in Canaanite as are in the Hebrew word for trader, but in Zechariah there weren't any Canaanites in the house of the Lord anyway, but there were traders. We know because Jesus found them there and drove them out. The house of the Lord will not be a place for taking advantage of customers, using each other for one's own enrichment.

One is not going to make the house of God a house of merchandise, Jesus said. So, in the temple, the church, the New Jerusalem, it is not a place which is just for people to, like businessmen, make money off each other. Sure, we do business, and we might even do business with Christians.

That's a different issue. The point here is that the traders were there taking advantage of people who were worshiping God and making a buck off of them. Therefore, using religion as a means of gain.

That won't be going on in the true church, in the true body of Christ. That's forbidden. Paul said that in 1 Timothy 6, 5. They see religion as a means of making money and getting ahead themselves.

He says, from such withdraw yourself. There should be no more of that in the temple of the Lord. No more traders just trying to make gain off of religion.

Now, there are plenty of people in the institutional church who are doing that, and on Christian television, and Christian radio, and Christian big institutional churches, but that's just it. The institutional churches are not to be mistaken for the body of Christ. They are man-made organizations where some people in the body of Christ attend.

The body of Christ is made up of all the true followers of Christ, the true remnant, the true believers, who really are following Jesus. And they don't see religion as just a way to further their physical and economic agendas. They are worshiping God in spirit and in truth.

And so, this is what I think Zechariah is saying in these strange symbolic terms. Now, having said that, let's look back quickly over Zechariah, because we're done here. Remember that when Zechariah started, the temple was not yet built.

The Jews who had come back from Babylon came back to a city, Jerusalem, where there was no temple built. It had been burned down by Nebuchadnezzar 70 years earlier. But they laid a foundation and then they became discouraged.

And God raised up Zechariah and Haggai, the two prophets, in Jerusalem to encourage people to finish building the temple. Unlike other prophets before them, these prophets were successful. The people listened to them and obeyed.

And the temple was rebuilt. So, at the beginning of Zechariah, the first six chapters in particular, are about this period where the temple is being rebuilt. The last six chapters bring us to the point where the temple is destroyed again.

The temple they built would not be permanent. It would last for a while. And God would, in fact, preserve it against certain enemies.

In the days of Alexander the Great, in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, God preserved the temple, but not forever. Because, although God brought them back from Babylon, they were warned, you need to get that wickedness out. You need to not compromise.

You need not have that leprosy come back into that house again. Because if it does, the house is going to be dismantled. The stones and the timbers will be taken away.

And that's what happens as we come to the end of Zechariah. He looks beyond his own time, five and a half centuries ahead. He sees the Messiah coming, gathering the

remnant from Jerusalem.

And then, God bringing his final judgment on the apostate system and the bad temple, the temple that had gone away from God through its leadership. It was brought down. It has not been rebuilt.

And many people, dispensationalists especially, believe that it will be. People ask me, do I think the temple will be rebuilt? My answer is, well, it could be. If the Jews do rebuild the temple, it will not be a project that God smiles on.

God took the temple down because he ended its usefulness. The sacrifice of Christ was made. There's no more need for animal sacrifices.

The Jews ignored that, rebelled against that, and kept offering animal sacrifices in the temple until God tore down the temple. So they couldn't do that anymore. The fall of the temple was the judgment on Israel for rejecting Christ's sacrifice.

And God said, well, if you're not going to have that one, you're not going to have another one either. Now, if they build the temple again and start animal sacrifice again, they'll do it in rebellion. They're saying, well, we still don't accept the sacrifice of Christ, but we're going to have one by golly.

We'll make it happen. Building the temple again would be an act of rebellion against God, not something that God will favor. Will they do it? I don't know.

Some people think they will because they read passages like Zechariah chapter 14 and say this is in a future time. The temple will be rebuilt. There'll be feast of tabernacles again.

There'll be people offering animal sacrifices again. This is the dispensational vision of the millennial kingdom. But as I've tried to show, the visions of Zechariah don't really go beyond the destruction of Jerusalem except to say there will be this new order that continues.

It doesn't really ever extend so far as to look at the end of the world or the end of this present order. And even Jesus himself in Luke 21 had said that when the armies come against Jerusalem, which the disciples, he said, would see, he said, when you see, in Luke 21, 20, when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, some of those disciples did see the Roman armies surround Jerusalem. He says, then know that its desolation is near.

And then he said a few verses later, these are the days of vengeance that all things that are written may be fulfilled. So Jesus suggested that all things that were written in the prophets came to their fulfillment through the Roman armies coming and destroying Jerusalem and it becoming desolate. The last of the prophets, Malachi, spoke of this.

Zechariah, next to the last of the prophets, spoke of this. Haggai spoke of this, I believe. Isaiah and Jeremiah and Ezekiel spoke of this, I believe.

And so Jesus said, when this happens, all that is written will be fulfilled. And that would suggest that we are certainly correct to view these later chapters of Zechariah as predicting the very thing that Jesus said would be fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem. The Messiah came.

The Jews rejected him, for the most part. A remnant believed him and they became the Church, the new Jerusalem, the continuing Jerusalem. But the city that was apostate was taken down.

As far as I know, it will never be restored. There is a city of Jerusalem today, of course, with people in it. It's not what it was.

It doesn't have a temple. It's not a center of worship. It's not even a religious country.

Israel is a secular country and they say so. There are religious Jews there, but there's also atheist Jews and Buddhist Jews and New Age Jews and Gentiles and Arabs. There's all kinds of people there.

It is not the center of worship for godly people that it once was. It's not been restored. It's been physically rebuilt, but that's not the same thing as a restoration to what it was.

And whether it will ever be restored to what it was, I don't think the Bible predicts it. I believe that God has come up with something better. The old city was the type in the shadow and that which it foreshadowed has come.

Christ is the body and we are his body, the Church. And so this is the fulfillment. So that's how I understand Zechariah and his meaning.

And as you saw, I did all I could to cross-reference from the New Testament to show why I see it that way. When people say it's about the future millennium, they don't have any cross-references. There's nothing in the passage nor elsewhere in Scripture to say there's going to be a feast of tabernacles in the millennium.

They get it entirely from here, from their interpretation. There's nothing that says that in the millennium or when Jesus comes back, he's going to sit on the Mount of Olives. That's only in this passage.

There's no cross-reference. To make it futuristic, you cannot find cross-references to say, see, it also says it here is going to happen in the future. But when we do find cross-references, lo and behold, they all identify with the Church and the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

So I guess if we're going to let Scripture interpret Scripture, we only have one choice in



the matter. And that is the way that the New Testament identifies these prophecies as fulfilled, and Jesus himself also. All right, we're done then.

What's Zechariah?