



The Inspiration of Zechariah in the Gospel According to Matthew

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Inspiracje Zachariasza w Ewangelii św. Mateusza

STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł koncentruje się na problematyce cytatów z Księgi Zachariasza obecnych w Ewangelii Mateusza oraz na głównych aluzjach, które nawiązują do proroctw Zachariasza. Wizje, które opisuje Zachariasz, i jego wezwania do nawrócenia i posłuszeństwa Bogu są ważnym elementem w nauczaniu Jezusa, który przypomina, że to grzech i nieposłuszeństwo Bogu sprowadzają nieszczęścia, a niepohamowane ambicje doprowadzają do rozlewu krwi niewinnych osób. Bóg chce cały czas wszystkich przyciągnąć do siebie z najbardziej oddalonych stron świata dzięki osobie Zbawiciela. W Ewangelii Mateusza Jezus wjeżdża do świątyni jak król, który przynosi pokój i harmonię, który sam jest cichy i pokorny. Mateusz opisuje tę scenę, wykorzystując fragment z Zachariasza, i przytacza go w tłumaczeniu, które jest bliższe Biblii Hebrajskiej niż Septuagincie. Jezus przynosi nowe prawo, które, wypływając z wiary, cechuje się miłością i miłosierdziem. Zapowiadając własną śmierć, Jezus przepowiada także rozproszenie uczniów. Będzie ono jednak tylko chwilowe, bo przez swoją mękę, śmierć i zmartwychwstanie Jezus znów ponownie przyciągnie wszystkich do siebie. Jezus ponownie stanie się pasterzem, który gromadzi rozproszone i zagubione owce. Obrazy, cytaty i aluzje zaczerpnięte z Zachariasza Ewangelista adaptuje i dostosowuje do konkretnej sytuacji, ale zachowuje przy tym idee przekazywane przez tekst hebrajski. Przez nawiązanie do Księgi Zachariasza Mateusz kładzie akcent na mesjańską, zbawczą i ponadczasową misję Jezusa.

Słowa kluczowe: Zachariasz, cytaty, król, zbawiciel, mesjasz, Mateusz

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1. Introduction

This article is devoted to selected passages from the Book of the Prophet Zechariah (Zc), which may have inspired the Gospel of Matthew in its description of the life and mission of Jesus Christ. Some of these passages are also present in the other Gospels, but in this article, I will exclusively analyze those found in Matthew.

According to the information given at the very start of the book (1:1), the prophetic activity of Zechariah began at the end of 520 B.C., when Darius I was king of Persia, reigning from 521 to 485 B.C. Zechariah began his mission shortly after the prophet Haggai spoke¹. As a prophet, Zechariah is mentioned in The Book of Ezra (5:1; 6:14), in which he is identified with the same name as his grandfather: ‘son of Iddo’, rather than that of his father, probably because he was already dead². The book of Zechariah has traditionally been divided into two parts: 1-8 and 9-14. Nowadays, however, it is more common to divide the book into three parts, on the basis of its content and style: chap. 1-8; 9-11; 12-14³.

Zechariah’s prophecy is the inspiration for a time of renewal in Israel upon the return of the deportees from various locations in Babylonian after the edict of Cyrus (c. 538 B.C.) and focused on the reconstruction of Jerusalem and her Temple, which was the wish of Cyrus himself (Ezr 1:2; 3:7; 6:3.14). Zechariah announces the renewal of the people of God, for whom God will once again be the center of their life. The reconstruction and renewal of worship goes hand in hand with the moral renewal of society, consisting in the restoration of a proper hierarchy of values, which is enriched by the messianic hopes aroused by the prophet and the conviction that it is God himself who will work for the salvation and happiness of his people. This messianic and universal dimension of Zachariah’s vision directs our attention to the time of Jesus Christ and the fulfilment of these prophecies in the NT.

In the subsequent sections of this article, I will try to bring out the inspiration of Zechariah that is revived again in the Gospels, especially its resonance in the Gospel of Matthew. Since there are few literal quotations

¹ Cf. Al Volters, *Zechariah* (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 15; Mark J. Boda, *The Book of Zechariah* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2016), 521.

² Volters, *Zechariah*, 36.

³ Erich Zenger, „Il libro dei Dodici profeti”, in *Introduzione all’Antico Testamento*, ed. Erich Zenger (Brescia: Queriniana, 2005), 869; cf. Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 2011), 474; André Lacocque, „Zacharie 9–14”, in *Aggée, Zacharie 1–8, Zacharie 9–14, Malachie*, Samuel Amsler, André Lacocque, René Vuilleumier (Neuchatel: Delachaux & Niestlé Éditeurs, 1981), 134; Carol L. Meyers, Eric M. Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14* (Doubleday: The Anchor Bible, 1993), 33; Mike Butterworth, *Structure and the Book of Zechariah* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 72.

(it is generally accepted that there are only two: Zc 9:9 in Mt 21:5; Zc 13:7 in Mt 26:31), I will also focus on those significant allusions and similarities that are closest to Matthew in terms of language.

From time to time this subject attracts scholars who review and try to reinterpret all the connections between Zechariah's theology and language of Matthew⁴, however it is not easy to establish what was in the mind of the Gospel writer, and the sources of quotations, allusions or echoes are frequently unclear. Certain topics or comparisons are common to more than one prophet, so it is worth looking at particular words or phrases in different contexts to bring out their originality and profound significance. I would like to shed some light on this matter, tracing the influence of Zechariah on Matthew starting from the first chapter and going through the whole Book of Zechariah until the last.

2. The Visions of Zechariah 1-8

The first part of the book of Zechariah consists of eight visions that resemble the prophetic mode of Jeremiah and Ezekiel because of the activities, symbolic persons and objects that embody the content of the prophetic message. These visions of Zechariah are associated with a strong and decisive call to conversion and an obedience to the word of God. A reference to Zechariah, son of Barachiah, is found in Matthew 23:35, where Jesus sharply criticizes the hypocrisy, formalism and lack of faith of the scribes and Pharisees. He calls them descendants of those who murdered the prophets sent to them by God, and calls Jerusalem itself the city that kills the prophets (Mt 23:37). Jesus' utterances are a strong call to repentance, for it is sin and disobedience to God that bring destruction (Zc 1:4-7). Jesus announces the punishment of the scribes and Pharisees for 'all the righteous bloodshed on earth, from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechariah' (Mt 23:35)⁵. Matthew in contrast to Luke (11:51), speaks of „innocent" blood, with an additional adjective through which he emphasizes the injustice done to Abel, thus making an allusion to internal, fratricidal conflicts and the innocence of the victims, whose spilt blood is calling out to God all the time from the earth (Gen 4:10). Jesus heralds the defeat that will come to

⁴ Cf.: Charlene McAfee Moss, *The Zechariah Tradition and the Gospel of Matthew* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008); Paul Foster, „The use of Zechariah in Matthew's Gospel", in *The Book of Zechariah and its Influence*, ed. Christopher Tuckett (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2003), 65-85; Clay Alan Ham, *The Coming King and the Rejected Shepherd: Matthew's Reading of Zechariah's Messianic Hope* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005).

⁵ Cf.: Hendrik G. L. Peels, „The Blood from Abel to Zechariah (Matthew 23:35; Luke 11:50f.) and the Canon of the Old Testament", *ZAW* 113 (2001): 583-601; Edmon L. Gallagher, „The Blood from Abel to Zachariah in the History of Interpretation", *NTS* 60 (2014): 121-138.

his own generation, the generation of people who will see the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Romans (Mt 24:1-2). The prophecy turns into Jesus' lament over Jerusalem (23:37-38). However, God's wrath is always a call to conversion and to a renewed relationship with God (Zc 1:2-3).

The Gospel, however, in recalling the name of Zechariah, does not strictly refer to the person of the prophet Zechariah, but to his idea of the destruction and rebirth of Jerusalem (Zc 1:14-17), and to the content of his prophecies. Zechariah, about whom Jesus speaks, was probably recognized at that time to be the most recent figure who was both priest and martyr. He may have also been recognized as such in rabbinical literature (*Tg. Lam.* 2.20; *Midr. Eccles.* 3,16)⁶. In Matthew, Jesus speaks very directly: „you have killed”, which sounds like an accusation, as though this event had happened quite recently, and as though the punishment would come soon. In the parallel text, Luke uses a different verb in the form of a participle, which makes the expression more impersonal: „the one who died” (11:51). This aspect of temporal closeness has allowed some exegetes, like Joachim Gnilka, to suppose that Matthew refers to the murder of Zechariah, son of Barea⁷, about whom Josephus Flavius speaks (*Bell.* 4.334-344). „The Wars of the Jews” tells the story of a very well respected inhabitant of Jerusalem, who was wrongly accused by the Zealots of collaborating with the Romans and was murdered by his accusers in the middle of the temple after a fictitious trial, and then thrown into a ravine. This event fits well with the context of Jesus' statement, but a precise relationship is nevertheless unlikely. Undoubtedly, Jesus indicates with this statement a sequence of events from the distant to the recent past, emphasizing how much innocent blood has been shed by human ambition and the arrogance and lack of cooperation with the Word of God shown by those who have tried to communicate it.

However, in an earlier biblical tradition, during the time of King Joash (835-796 B.C.) we can find the story of Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, who, in the prophetic spirit, rebuked his contemporaries, in particular the king and the elite of Judah gathered around him, because they had abandoned the temple of Jerusalem and the God of their fathers for the cults of statues and idols. He called for the conversion of those who had departed from God and his commandments, and he also announced that God would abandon them too, by order of the king he was stoned to death in the temple courtyard (2 Ch 24:17-23).

Jesus' reference to Zechariah's innocent blood is a reminder that turning away from God and His commandments can lead to a national disaster,

⁶ Craig L. Blomberg, „Matthew”, in eds. Gregory K. Beale, Donald A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 85.

⁷ Joachim Gnilka, *Il Vangelo di Matteo, parte seconda* (Brescia: Paideia, 1991), 443.

and also foreshadows His own death and the responsibility for it which will fall on the scribes, Jerusalem's elite, and an entire generation (Mt 23:36; cf. Mt 27:25). In view of the fact that Matthew gives the name of Zechariah together with that of his father, it may be that for the Evangelist, he is simultaneously a definite person, a man after God's own mind and speaking according to God's will, but also a symbolic figure embodying all the wrongs suffered by people in the temple, upon His holy mountain. Jesus' reference to the priest and prophet Zechariah is also a prefiguration of how he will be treated by the authorities of Jerusalem and the announcement of his tragic death (Mt 23:32).

In chapter 2 of the Book of Zechariah, we read that God acknowledges that it was He who allowed the dispersal of Israel, but now He wants to bring everyone back and take care of the Holy Land and Jerusalem once again (2:9.16). In this chapter Zechariah uses the expression: „like (as) the four winds of heaven”⁸ (2:10). This is understood as a synonym for the four edges of the world, or a metaphor for complete dispersal to the whole world (Zc 2:10; Mt 24:31; cf. 1 Ch 9:24; Rev 7:1). This phrase is a rather late idiom, as it is used in the Book of Daniel (8:8; 11:4) and is rare in other books of the OT. On the other hand, the connection with Dn emphasizes the apocalyptic and messianic character of the whole speech of Jesus about his second coming and end of the world. Rüdiger Lux believes that this is an editorial gloss, an element of prose that breaks down the poetic structure of Zechariah's text⁹. Nevertheless, the idiom has an important function in both the Old and New Testament.

The vision of a young man with a measuring line (Zc 2:5-9) is the announcement of the rebuilding of Jerusalem on such a grand scale that it will not need walls, because it will be so densely inhabited. The city will not need them because God Himself will be a fiery wall for her, a sufficient and reliable defense, and a guarantee of safety. Jerusalem will become a dwelling place of the glory of the Lord, and it is God Himself who will grant a new beginning to Jerusalem and Judah who will reign. All those whom God has previously scattered, God will now call to return, announcing that countless nations will desire to live in Jerusalem because of God's presence there, which will be a cause for great joy in all Jerusalem and in the other nations too.

A similar theme to that of the meeting of the Elect, is found in Mt, where Jesus announces the coming of the Son of Man again, with special signs in the sky. „He will send out His angels with a loud trumpet call, and

⁸ See: MT: כְּאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם ; LXX: ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων τοῦ οὐρανοῦ; Mt: ἐκ τῶν τεσσάρων ἀνέμων.

⁹ Rüdiger Lux, *Sacharija 1–8* (Freiburg: Herder, 2019), 224.

they will gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other” (Mt 24:31). Matthew clearly uses Zechariah’s phrase of the four winds, but he expands the adjective „heaven” to describe them as blowing „from one end of heaven to the other”. He stresses that the winds of the sky have unlimited range, boundless horizons and do not cover earthly reality alone. Therefore, it is probably not a compilation of verses Dt 13:8; 30:3; Jr 12:12 as Robert H. Gundry¹⁰ suggests, but a concept typical of Matthew and close to the Hebrew text, although this idiom is connected with the verb: „to gather” in the LXX: συναξω – „I will gather”, and in Mt: ἐπισυναξουσιν – „the angels will gather”, while in Hebrew it reads: פָּרַשְׁתִּי – „I have spread you abroad as...”. According to MT, God who scattered his people now is calling them back because is coming to Jerusalem to take possession of Judah and to dwell in Zion. In the LXX we have an accent on the idea that God will gather his people. In Mt we have an accent on the eschatological gathering of all the elect spread throughout the world, those who have believed in Jesus taken from all nations (cf. Zc 2:15; 1P 2:9).

The wind is the carrier of the invigorating spirit that brings the bones back to life in Ezekiel’s vision (37:9). The Son of Man will gather everyone around Him from the farthest reaches of the world, from both the earthly and heavenly reality. In Matthew, the expression „from one end of heaven to the other” evokes the great works of God in the OT and draws attention to the presence of God who saves, liberates, reveals himself, enters into a covenant and remains close to those he has chosen (cf. Dt 4:32 n.). God reveals himself as the one who loves and disperses, but then gathers and leads to himself from the farthest corners of the earth, crossing all horizons (cf. Dt 30:4).

Chapter 7 of the Book of Zechariah presents a situation in which certain people of Bethel, through priests and prophets, ask God for details about whether the traditional fasting should be continued. The answer is given by the prophet Zechariah, who gives and recalls several principles of social life that should be preserved in the first instance. The first one is: „Execute true justice, show mercy¹¹ and compassion¹² towards one another” (Zc 7:9). Mercy and compassion, we can understand as a hendiadys, one strong command to have compassion and the other to be forgiving. This injunction has a gentle echo in Matthew chapter 23, when Jesus reproaches

¹⁰ Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew. A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church under Persecution*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 489.

¹¹ Heb. חֶסֶד; gr. ἔλεος – kindness, mercy, faithfulness, graciousness. Cf. HALOT, I, 337; Rudolf Bultmann, „ἔλεος”, TDNT, II, 477-487.

¹² Heb. רַחֲמִים; gr. οἰκτιρισμός – deep compassion, tender mercy, pity. Cf. HALOT, III, 1218; Rudolf Bultmann, „οἰκτιρῶ”, TDNT, V, 159-161.

and criticizes the hypocrisy of the Pharisees who, focused on the legalistic fulfilment of the law, overlook its essence, what it is meant to serve: „justice, mercy and faith” (Mt 23:23). According to Zechariah, alongside just judgments the people should remember kindness and mercy. Zechariah also speaks about compassion, thus emphasizing the obligations towards the other that arise from the Law and contribute to the good of the whole nation. Zechariah’s focus is on social issues, due to his historical context. Jesus, in addition to justice and mercy, talks about faith. In doing so, he draws attention to the spiritual dimension of the Law, the fulfillment of which should be rooted in the faith and not only in the customary duties, which are fulfilled only externally (see Gal 2:16; 3:5-14; Heb 11:3-39). Matthew also emphasizes that the prophecies of the OT are to lead to faith in Jesus.

3. The King and Messiah (Zc 9.1–11.17 and Mt 21.5)

The most recognizable quotation of Zechariah in the Gospel of Matthew is the announcement of the coming of the exceptional King.

Zc 9:9 TM		Zc 9:9 LXX	Mt 21:5	
גילי מאד	Rejoice greatly,	χαίρε σφόδρα	εἶπατε	Tell
בת ציון	O daughter of Zion!	θύγατερ Σιών	τῇ θυγατρὶ Σιών·	the daughter of Zion:
הריעי	Shout aloud,	κήρυσσε	–	–
בת ירושלים	O daughter of Jerusalem!	θύγατερ Ιερουσαλημ	–	–
הנה מלךך	Behold, your king	ἰδοὺ ὁ βασιλεύς σου	ἰδοὺ ὁ βασιλεύς σου	Behold, your king
יבוא לך	is coming to you,	ἔρχεται σοι	ἔρχεται σοι	is coming to you
צדיק	righteous	δίκαιος	–	–
ונשע הוא	and victorious.	καὶ σῶζων αὐτός	–	–
עני	Humble,	πραῦς	πραῦς	humble,
ורכב	riding	καὶ ἐπιβεβηκῶς	καὶ ἐπιβεβηκῶς	riding

עַל-חֲמֹר	on an ass,	ἐπὶ ὑποζύγιον	ἐπὶ ὄνον	on an ass,
וְעַל-עֵר	on a colt,	καὶ πῶλον νέον	καὶ ἐπὶ πῶλον	and on a colt,
בֶּן-אֲחֻזַּי	the foal of an sheass.	-	υἱὸν ὑποζυγίου.	the son of a beast of burden.

Zechariah in this chapter solemnly announces the arrival of a new king who will remove everything to do with war and violence, such as chariots, horses and bows, and declare peace. The prophet invites everybody to rejoice, and restores hope that the turmoil of war will disappear from the streets of Jerusalem, that the time of violence, occupation and uncertainty will end, and that there will be universal peace between all nations. The new king will rule „from sea to sea” and his reign will extend from the river to the ends of the earth (Zc 9:10). This ruler will be the Messiah, who will be so unique that God himself will act fully through him.

The Daughter of Zion is an idiomatic expression standing for Jerusalem, the personification of the city as a woman and a daughter since the noun „city” in Hebrew is the feminine. This phrase underlines the special personal relationship between God and Jerusalem, which, symbolically, as a daughter, has privileges but is also obliged to show respect and total obedience to God. Sometimes this phrase also refers to the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Zc 2:11). The expression is characteristic of the books of the prophets and Psalms and is thus also linked to the Messianic promises in which God Himself acts as the savior of His people.

Zion, the place which God has chosen for His dwelling (Zc 2:14; Ps 9:12; Is 8:18), is a special concern of God (Is 62:11). Jerusalem is a city of which God is the Deliverer (Is 61:3), but which has also suffered greatly from its disobedience (Lm 2:8.18). It is a place established by God in which God’s people will seek salvation (Is 14:32). Zion is a symbolic name¹³ that has more a theological than a geographical significance because of God’s presence in the Temple (1 K 8:27). It is the name of the city of the great King, which he himself strengthens forever (Ps 48).

The parallel expression „the daughter of Jerusalem” appears only five times in HB (2 K 19: 21 = Is 37:22; Lm 2:15; Mi 4:8; Zp 3:14; Zc 2:2) and aims to reinforce the strength and the meaning of the call to joy, as we see in the prophet Zephaniah. In this second exhortation the focus is on Jerusalem

¹³ Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, Temper Longmann III, *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1998), 980.

and especially on the temple and the temple hill¹⁴. The messianic dimension is underlined using these phrases by the prophet Micah (Mi 4:8; cf.: 4:1). Various peoples will come to seek wisdom there because „the law comes from Zion and the word of the Lord – from Jerusalem” (Mi 4:2) the royal authority will also return to it. In the context of the books of the prophets and psalms, it is God who is the King and Savior (Is 6:5; 33:22; 63:9; Jr 31:7; 46:18; 48:15; 51:57; Ps 10:16; 24:10; 47:3.8; 98:6; 145:1; cf. 1 Sam 8:7).

Zechariah adds that the coming king is „righteous and victorious” (cf.: Ps 11:7; 119:137; 129:4; 145:17; Jr 12:1; 23:5; Lm 1:18; Dn 9:14; Zp 2:15), but it is God who brings salvation: „There is no other god beside me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me” (Is 45:21). Zechariah no longer makes reference to an earthly king, but to God himself. The Hebrew word: *נִצַּח* in this form occurs only once in HB and is a passive participle of the nifal conjugation. The basic meaning of this verb is: to be saved, to be victorious, receive help¹⁵, but in the Zc 9:9 the preferred translation is: be victorious¹⁶. Twice we meet it in Isaiah in the form of a nifal perfect, which prophetically refers to the salvation of Israel: „Israel will be saved by the Lord with everlasting salvation” (Is 45:17; cf. Is 45:22; Dt 22:29). In any case this verb underlines the fact that salvation and victory come from God.

For Zechariah, it is the victorious King who brings salvation. The verb used in this sentence is an imperfect from the root *בָּאָה*: to come. This form indicates the future, but it also emphasizes the fact that the action is going on but has not yet happened. This form may also indicate a near or distant future. The reality is ongoing, but it has not yet been fulfilled. This is the aspect of an action that has not yet been completed, but which is close to being completed, as we see in the translation of this verb into Greek in the LXX and in the NT, where the present tense is used: *ἔρχεται σοι*. This verb together with the personal pronoun means: „he is coming to you”.

Then we have a description of who is coming. The Hebrew adjective: *עָנִי* has many meanings, so the choice of word in translation often depends on the context: humble, quiet, gentle, modest, meek, poor¹⁷. This adjective refers to a person who is modest and humble and relies on God alone, the opposite of someone who is proud and boastful (cf. Zp 3:12). This modesty was characteristic of Moses (Nb 12:3; cf. 2 M 15:12). The king’s delicacy is recalled by the prophet Isaiah and the announcement of the Servant of the

¹⁴ Carol L. Meyers, Eric M. Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14*, 122.

¹⁵ David J. A. Clines, *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol. 4 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 335. The translator of Septuagint used an active participle that can act as a noun, which is why we have the word „Savior” in the LXX.

¹⁶ See: HALOT, II, 448.

¹⁷ See: HALOT, II, 856.

Lord, who will not raise his voice: „He shall not break even a bruised reed or snuff out even a dim wick” (Is 42:2-4; cf. Mt 12:20).

The final element of this verse points out that the king is riding on a donkey. The author is trying to describe it precisely using three different words. The LXX is limited to two: „on a donkey, a young foal”. The donkey in this verse has a symbolic meaning. Unlike horses and chariots, which are symbols of war, the donkey is a symbol of peace, quiet work, and lasting prosperity. Riding a donkey is also a symbol of royal dignity, it characterizes a king who ensures peace and security, and is close to his people¹⁸. Donkeys were used often by rich people to travel (Gn 12:16; Nb 22:21; Jg 10:4; 1 S 9:3.5; 10:16). Kings of Israel travelled on donkeys or mules during official ceremonies or events connected with the performance of their functions¹⁹, rarely seen white donkeys were particularly valued (Jg 5:10; 2 S 16:2; 18:9; 1 K 1:38). Riding a young donkey, dynamic and full of energy, heralds a new beginning, a rebirth and a return of energy to rebuild what was destroyed by the invader. On the other hand, it symbolizes the humility, lowliness and meekness of the king.

In conclusion, we can deduce that this whole verse shows the emerging eschatological and messianic hopes, which are replacing the fading expectations for the coming of the earthly ruler of the house of David, who, under God’s inspiration, would lead to the rebirth of the Kingdom of Israel. Zorobabel was only the governor (538-521 B.C.) and while responsible for the reconstruction of the Temple, he failed to rebuild the Davidic dynasty.

How does Matthew use this quotation? Above all, Matthew uses it to demonstrate how the ST prophecies are being fulfilled by the key events of Jesus’ life. According to Matthew, Jesus commands His disciples to go to Bethphage and bring a she-ass and her colt, which indicates Jesus’ extraordinary knowledge of what is going to happen and that He wants to fulfil what was written about Him in the Prophets. Matthew underlines this by invoking the formula for the fulfilment of the words of the prophet, and here he refers to Zechariah (9:9). He uses this quotation, however, not to call for joy, instead his message is kerygmatic, he uses the command: „Tell the Daughter of Zion!” instead of „rejoice!”. Matthew solemnly announces, communicates, and wants all present and later readers to pay attention to what is happening (21:4-5). The evangelist thus imitates the style of the prophet Isaiah, when he had announced the coming of the Savior (Is 62:11). Matthew declares the coming of the Messianic King, while the time of joy will come after the resurrection.

¹⁸ Boda, *The Book of Zechariah*, 570.

¹⁹ Philip J. King, Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 115.

The evangelist points out that the disciples brought both the donkey and foal, a detail not found in Mark or Luke. This fact was interpreted allegorically by St Justin as a symbol of the Jews and Gentiles²⁰, but it may also herald, from a contemporary perspective, the unity of the Old and New Testaments. The memory of both the donkey and the colt may also result from Matthew's special predilection to present different characters in pairs, for example when he speaks of two blind people (20:30) or two demonpossessed men (8:28)²¹. We also meet the she-ass and the colt in the prophetic blessing of James, when he speaks to Judah, announcing to him unwavering authority and prosperity (Gn 49:10-12). Matthew is certainly allegorically referring to that story. The quotation in Mt can also be interpreted messianically²², as an announcement of the coming of the King and Messiah. This type of young donkey in Mt could, though being mature enough to ride on, be a bit impetuous or unbridled (cf. Jg 10:4). The Gospel of Mark adds that no one had ever ridden it before (Mk 11:2), which underlines the particular importance of the choice Jesus made as Lord of all creation, and the destiny of this young donkey to serve Jesus „without blemish” (Mt 8:26-27; 28:18).

After announcing the arrival of the king, Matthew omits the phrase „just and victorious”, because Jesus' entry into Jerusalem is not the announcement of a judgement or a call for rebellion, but the beginning of the time of salvation which will be achieved through the cross and the resurrection. The final victory will come when Christ comes again. For now, Matthew emphasizes that the coming messianic King is silent, meek and humble. The Greek adjective *πραῦς* is equivalent to the Heb. *עָנִי* (Zc 3:12; 9:9; Is 26:6; Jb 24:4; 36:5), and it means: meek, quiet, gentle, kind, humble, unassuming²³. This word occurs 4 times in NT and is characteristic of Matthew (Mt 5:5; 11:29; 21:5; 1 P 3:4). Matthew pays attention to the silence and meekness of the King. Jesus himself teaches his disciples this attitude when he encourages his disciples: „Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am humble (*πραῦς*) and lowly in heart” (Mt 11:29). The meek (humble, gentle) are blessed with a special blessing, as Jesus solemnly announced in his Sermon on

²⁰ Clay Alan Ham, „The Minor Prophets in Matthew's Gospel”, in *The New Minor Prophets in the New Testament*, eds. Maarten J. J. Menken, Steve Moyise (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 53.

²¹ Wim Weren, „Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem: Matthew 21:1-17 in the Light of Hebrew Bible and the Septuagint”, in *The Scripture in the Gospels*, ed. Christopher M. Tuckett, (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997), 131.

²² Herbert W. Basser, Marsha B. Cohen, *The Gospel of Matthew and Judaic Traditions* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 538.

²³ Friedrich Hauck, Siegfried Schulz, „*πραῦς*”, *TDNT*, VI, 645-650.

the Mount: „Blessed are the meek (πραῦς), for they shall inherit the earth (Mt 5:5). In 1 P 3:4 he instructs us how precious it is in God’s eyes when a man can keep a „gentle (πραῦς) and quiet spirit” in his heart (cf. Is 66:2). The meekness that Jesus brings with him gives solace, relief, and comfort to all those who experience any kind of difficulty in life, his delicacy and sensitivity attract and heal at the same time.

The last element of this quotation tells us that the King is riding on a donkey, ἐπὶ ὄνον, which corresponds to the Hebrew מָוֹר. The Greek noun without the article is ambiguous because it can mean she-ass or he-ass²⁴. The parallel relations of Mk 11:2 and Lk 19:30 clearly speak about a colt (ὁ πῶλος). In the LXX, the word he-ass מָוֹר is translated using the male form with article or without. It is worth noting, however, that if in the Hebrew text she-ass is mentioned אָתוֹן, in the Greek translation the female article remains before the noun ἡ ὄνος. Matthew does not introduce a second animal in this verse but tries to keep strictly to the Hebrew text. The second element, which is an addition: on a colt, καὶ ἐπὶ πῶλον, is equivalent to the Heb. עֵיר . The last element of this quotation is an idiomatic expression: son of she-asses (בְּרֵךְ אֲתוֹנוֹת). In MT this phrase occurs only once, so it is difficult to determine its meaning. It probably describes a young animal for the transport of goods and people. In the Targum it occurs in the singular form while the LXX completely omits it. Matthew renders it using an expression, known from the LXX, υἱὸν ὑποζυγίου, which means „son of a draught animal”²⁵ in this context a donkey. The Greek term is neuter and refers to all kinds of draught animals. This word occurs in the NT only once in Mt and once in 2 Pt 2:16, where it is an allusion to Balaam’s donkey.

It can be assumed, as Gundry proposes, that the expression „son of a donkey” means a foal on which no one has ever ridden; an animal which is intended for work and for the transport of people and goods²⁶. The evangelist thus underlines the aspect of work and benefit to man (cf. 2 S 16:2). All these three terms refer to one animal, a young donkey, and indicate the special rank of this event, and emphasize the royal dignity of Jesus. Matthew uses and keeps his mind on the Hebrew text, uses a quotation from Zechariah, but adapts it to the realities of his time, preserving the MT structure and parallelism. I therefore agree with the

²⁴ Cf. Stephen C. Carlson, „The Jenny and the Colt in Matthew’s Messianic Entry, Part 1: Matthew 21:5 as a Reading of Zechariah 9:9 in Light of Mark 11:1-10”, *CBQ* 81, no. 1 (2019): 62-84; Stephen C. Carlson, „The Jenny and the Colt in Matthew’s Messianic Entry, Part 2: Matthew 21:7 as a Reading of Mark 11:7 in the Light of Zechariah 9:9”, *CBQ* 81, no. 2 (2019): 236-251.

²⁵ Beast of burden, lit. under the yoke, in the biblical literature: donkey, ass. Cf. BDAG, 1037.

²⁶ Robert. H. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew’s Gospel with Special Reference to the Messianic Hope* (Leiden: Brill, 1967), 199.

view that this quotation has its origin in the Hebrew text²⁷, and it is unlikely that the Evangelist has used any revised version of Septuagint, as Maarten J.J. Menken²⁸ argues.

The image of Israel as a flock without a shepherd appears in many places ST (Nb 27:17; 1 K 22:17; 2 K 18:16; Ezk 34:5). Zechariah in chapter 10 speaks of the anger of God against shepherds and spiritual leaders who, through deceit, lies and false hopes, have contributed to the wandering of God's people and to weakening their faith and trust in God. The chosen people wandered like sheep without a shepherd (Zc 10:2)²⁹. However, the Prophet promises that the Lord of Hosts will visit Judah, bring salvation, and stimulated by mercy, make all those scattered return. The people will go through various tribulations, but the Lord will help and support them (Zc 10:6-12). These predictions are like the prophecies of Ezekiel (Ezk 34:11-15).

In a similar tone, the Evangelist describes the activities of Jesus, who teaches and preaches the Gospel about the kingdom, and heals all weaknesses and diseases. We find a certain echo of this situation in Matthew. Knowing how great the needs were to teach the people, to heal and support others in every difficult situation, Jesus took pity because he saw how vulnerable the people were and how much they needed good shepherds. Sheep without a shepherd wander around, scatter easily, and becoming weak. Hence, Jesus not only heals, but also calls the apostles, gives them power over unclean spirits and diseases, and takes them out „for the harvest“. Jesus appears in the Gospel as the Lord of the harvest and Shepherd who wants to gather the lost sheep (Mt 10:6).

We can detect another of Matthew's inspiration in chapter 11 of the Book of Zechariah, where once again we see harsh criticism of the authorities, the shepherds who have become sheep traders, for whom profit is all that matters, for whom sheep are only a commodity for killing. The prophet and the shepherd-traders grazed the sheep together for a short time but gave up suddenly and categorically. Then, despite this, he asked ironically to be paid, and they gave him thirty pieces of silver. That was the price of a slave's life according to the principles described in Ex 21:32, which is a very small amount³⁰. Such a sum was offered to Judas for giving Jesus up (Mt 26:15). Then Zechariah receives an order to throw the silver

²⁷ William D. Davies, Dale C. Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew. A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, vol. 3 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997), 119.

²⁸ Maarten J. J. Menken, *Matthew's Bible. The Old Testament Text of the Evangelist* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004), 116.

²⁹ Anthony R. Petterson, *Behold Your King. The Hope for the House of David in the Book of Zechariah* (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 155.

³⁰ Carol L. Meyers, Eric M. Meyers, *Zechariah 9–14*, 276.

into the treasury of the Temple³¹ (Zc 11:13). The prophet is not interested in money, his action emphasizes what will soon happen to Israel. Lack of obedience to God and care for His people will lead to internal divisions until finally the leader will be a man who will not care about anything but himself. This chapter ends with the announcement of a punishment that will come upon a useless shepherd who abandons the sheep (Zc 11:17).

In Matthew, the subject of the quality of leaders and the allusion to thirty pieces of silver returns when Judas, having decided to withdraw from the contract and give up the money, abandons it in the temple, and then commits suicide. The high priests take the money, but they cannot use it because it is a blood payment. They can, however, use it for public expenditure, but for such a small sum they can only buy land for a cemetery for foreigners – a potter's field later called the field of blood. Matthew ends his account with a quote introduced by the official formula of the fulfilment of the words of the prophet Jeremiah, while the idea itself is taken from Zechariah: „They took thirty pieces of silver, the price of him on whom a price had been set by some of the sons of Israel” (Mt 27:9; cf. Zc 11:13). The invocation of Jeremiah's authority is only intended to reinforce the tragedy and drama of the whole situation and to evoke various allusions to Jeremiah who prophesied against Jerusalem and its leaders (Jr 18:2-6; 19:1.6.11). Matthew, like Zechariah, is here alluding to the incompetent shepherds like high priests and scholars who were the social leaders. The thirty pieces of silver have become a symbol of corruption, intrigue, and betrayal.

4. Shepherd and his sheep (Zc 12.1–14.21 and Mt 26:31)

The three final chapters of the Book of Zechariah are prophetic and apocalyptic. God reveals Himself as creator and giver of life, the one who controls all events. These chapters focus on the renewal and support that God will give to Judah, Jerusalem, and the house of David. Jerusalem will become the center of extraordinary events. First, the prophet foretells the painful experiences that will befall her and that „all nations” will turn against her. However, Jerusalem will remain invincible. The Lord Himself will stand up for the city, He Himself will be the defense of Jerusalem, He will look graciously upon Judah, and He will greatly strengthen David's house (12:8). Before, there will be a time of mourning in Jerusalem and in all the country: „they will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will

³¹ There is still a discussion on how to interpret the word יִצְרָאֵל – the one that shapes, the creator, the founder, the foundry, the potter, the caster whether to correct and interpret this word as אִצְרָאֵל – the treasury. Cf. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel*, 122-125.

mourn for him as one mourns for an only child...”, a time which will fill everyone with great sorrow. This passage is used in John in relation to the death of Jesus (cf. Jn 19:37).

We find a similar pattern in Zc 13, where the prophet announces a fountain which will be open to the house of David and the people of Jerusalem. This purifying spring will be God himself (cf. Ps 36:10; Jr 2:13; 17:13; Zc 14:8). God will be the one who instigates the cleansing from sins and all uncleanness. This cleansing will focus on the elimination of idols, the expulsion of fortune-tellers and the removal of the spirit of impurity (13:1-2). The false prophets will entirely disappear, they will be covered with shame because of their lies, they will no longer put on a coat of fur, but will say that they are farmers. This is a symbolic announcement of the messianic times when the prophecies will be over and will no longer be needed. God is ready to strike the „shepherd” whom he himself has chosen³², who is close to him. The interpretation of the phrase „my shepherd” has a long and difficult history³³. Most likely it refers to the leader – the king and messiah – the ruler or historical leader and the future Messiah³⁴. The sword in God’s hand is a symbol of God’s justice (Ps 7:12-13), warnings and admonitions, a call for faithfulness to the covenant and fidelity to God’s commands (Lv 26:25). The sword in this context means all life’s difficulties and adversities that at the end lead to purification.

Zc 13,7 MT	Zc 13,7 LXX ^B	Zc 13,7 LXX ^A	Mt 26,31
ךָ	πατάξατε	πάταξον	πατάξω
אֶת־הַרְעָה	τοὺς ποιμένας	τὸν ποιμένα	τὸν ποιμένα,
וְהַפּוֹצֵיץ	καὶ ἐκσπάσατε	καὶ διασκορπισθήσονται	καὶ διασκορπισθήσονται
הַצֹּאן	τὰ πρόβατα	τὰ πρόβατα τῆς ποιμνῆς	τὰ πρόβατα τῆς ποιμνῆς.
וְהַשֶּׁבֶת	καὶ ἐπάξω	καὶ ἐπάξω	

According to the MT, God is clearly commanding „a sword” for action: „strike the shepherd!”. After the imperative we have a second verb

³² Cf. Stephen L. Cook, „The Metamorphosis of a Shepherd: The Tradition History of Zechariah 11:17 + 13:7-9”, *CBQ* 55, no. 3 (1993): 453-466.

³³ Cf. Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 200-209; John Nolland, „The King as Shepherd: The Role of Deutero-Zechariah in Matthew”, in *Biblical Interpretation in Early Christian Gospels. Volume 2: The Gospel of Matthew*, ed.

³⁴ For the other possibilities see: Volters, *Zechariah*, 444.

in the form of a qal imperfect 3 f. pl., which can also be considered as being in the jussive mood with the ordinary conjunctive *waw* at the beginning (וְהִפְּצֵם). This structure usually expresses purpose or effect³⁵. Therefore, the second part of this sentence can be translated as: „to disperse” or „and let them disperse”. The Greek text LXX^A rightly uses the verb διασκορπίζω – to disperse, but it uses the future tense in the 3 pl. passive voice: „and the sheep of the flock will be dispersed”. The Hebrew verb (פָּרַץ) and its Greek equivalent express the idea of the dispersal of the sheep (Ezk 34:5), or the enemies of God and any evildoers (Nb 10:35; Ps 68:2). The scattering seems to be an element and condition of purification. God will purify and forsake one third of the people, He will also try them and put them to the test. The remaining purified part will become the true people of God, the people of the renewed covenant (Zc 13:9; cf. Ezk 37:24-27; Jr 24:7; 32:37-40).

The noun צֹאן, used in MT, means: flock; small flock such as sheep and goats, as a whole, it is a collective term. In LXX, it is mostly translated by τὸ πρόβατον – sheep³⁶. The word ἡ ποίμνη – flock, standing for Hebrew עֶרְבָּ, is used in LXX only in Gn 32:17. More often we meet a similar word: τὸ ποίμνιον (Ezk 34:12; Jl 1:18). The expression „the sheep of the flock” is used in LXX^A and in Mt, while LXX^B does not use it because the version found in LXX^B it is not a translation, but an interpretation that has slightly different sense³⁷. The Targum speaks about the king in the place of the shepherd and the princes instead of the sheep: „slay the king and the princes shall be scattered”³⁸. The second part of this verse starts with the verb in first person sing.: „I will turn my hand against shepherd boys”³⁹. Now it is clear that it is God who will act, and that those who survive the time of affliction will be heard and become a people belonging to God in a special way.

How does Mt deal with this verse? In the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, this quotation appears after the institution of the Eucharist as the announcement of a new covenant linked to the sacrifice and blood of Christ. This blood is to be poured out for the remission of sins (Mt 26:28). The death of Christ is an announcement of salvific purification

³⁵ Thomas O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew*, 21st ed. (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2012), 119.

³⁶ Georg Waschke, „צֹאן”, *TDOT*, XII, 199.

³⁷ „Awake, O sword, against my shepherds, and against the man who is my citizen, says The Lord Almighty: smite the shepherds, and draw out the sheep: and I will bring mine hand upon the shepherds”. All imperatives are in plural.

³⁸ Kavin J. Cathcart, Robert P. Gordon, *The Targum of the Minor Prophets. Translated, with a Critical Introduction, Apparatus, and Notes* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1989), 222.

³⁹ Petterson argues in favor of the translation: „little once”, and not „shepherd boys”, see all discussion about of the meaning of the last word: Petterson, *Behold Your King*, 199.

and an anticipation of togetherness in the „kingdom of the Father“. The atmosphere of Jesus' common Passover with His disciples is elevated, and at the same time by adding the need to shed blood, Jesus foretells the time of doubt, dispersion and confusion which the disciples will experience. The presence of the shepherd gives the sheep a sense of security, the shepherd is a stable point of reference. When the shepherd is missing and the sheep do not see him in the face of danger, the sheep scatter. However, the dispersal will be only temporary. Jesus will once again lead the flock like a shepherd, give the apostles a new spirit according to which they will start a new mission together. The place of this new beginning will be Galilee⁴⁰.

Jesus begins his speech by introducing a quote with the words: „it is written“ but does not indicate its source. He also omits the poetic construction referring to the sword, gives up the command mode, and says straightforwardly: „I will strike the shepherd“ in the first person. In this way Jesus refers to the will of the Father (Mt 26:39.42), and as Kristen Stendahl aptly observes, „the activity of God is emphasized“ by this⁴¹. Jesus fulfils the plans of the Father in heaven and at the same time by the whole of his life reveals His salvific will (Mt 18:11). God is the one who scatters and who reunites his people as their only Shepherd. This thought clearly emerges from the Gospel narrative.

The consequence of this „blow“ will be that „the sheep of the flock will be scattered“ (Mt 26:31). The passive form of the verb διασκορπισθήσονται also emphasizes God's action, for this scattering and temporary lack of confidence will result in new energy and the disciples' openness to a new understanding of what they have learned from Jesus, especially when they look at it through the prism of His passion, death and resurrection, to which they will also be witnesses. Matthew uses the full expression: „the sheep of the flock“, like LXX^A. In the Septuagint the word ἡ ποιμνὴ is used only 2 times – here in Zc 13:7 LXX^A and Gn 32:17. The addition of the word „flock“ provokes a deeper understanding of the essence of this comparison. The Gospel underlines the close connection between the Shepherd and the sheep of the flock, meaning Jesus and the disciples. They will also be put to the test by being scattered, and even more confused, they are called to go to Galilee.

It is unlikely that Mt depends on the Gospel of Mark as Gundry suggests, he is trying to find an original Greek version named „Ur-LXX^A“⁴².

⁴⁰ Richard T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 999.

⁴¹ Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and Its Use of the Old Testament* (Upsala: Gleerup, 1954), 82.

⁴² Cf. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel*, 26. Davies and Allison are also inclined towards LXX^A. Cf. W.D. Davies, D.C. Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 485.

In the Gospel of Mark, the order of the words is different: „I will strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered” (14:27). Mark builds chiasm⁴³ and reduces prophecy to a simple proverb, a situation known at the time (Acts 5:37), and also omits the word: τῆς ποιμνῆς.

Considering the different variants of the Markan text and variants of the LXX, given that it is not excluded⁴⁴, in my opinion, we can assume that the quotation in Mt is preferably based on the Hebrew text⁴⁵. The evangelist adapted the Hebrew text to the situation and gave it a theological meaning. The Greek word ἡ ποιμνῆ (flock), occurs 5 times in NT. We meet it three times in the Gospels: (1) in this quotation in Mt, (2) in Lk 2:8, where it underlines the relationship between shepherd and sheep, and the care of the shepherds for the flocks, and (3) in Jn 10:16 where it expresses the deep desire of Jesus to have one flock and one shepherd⁴⁶. In other parts of the NT it is used five times as a diminutive in the neuter: τὸ ποιμνιον, mainly in relation to believers and to the Church⁴⁷.

5. Conclusion

The Book of Zechariah is present in the Gospel of Matthew in a discreet but significant way. Quotations and allusions are precisely selected and used for a specific purpose. The evangelist or Jesus adopts and adjusts the quoted or alluded passage to the specific situation, preserving the ideas as they are transmitted from Hebrew. There is no clear evidence that Mt used the LXX directly or that he was dependent on other evangelists. Matthew remains faithful to the Hebrew Bible.

The symbolic Proto-Zechariah language (Zc 1-8) reappears again in the form of allusions that we can refer to the person of Jesus, whose fate is similar to that of earlier prophets who were rejected by the authorities. Fidelity to God’s word and to the Law has been ransomed by the shedding of their own blood. However, God’s plans are much more powerful than those of human beings, and God can do everything He intends, because He is Lord of everything that is done in heaven and on earth. Jesus appears as a rejected prophet betrayed and sold, who gives his own life and who, at the

⁴³ However, this argument might be not sufficient, because some manuscripts of the Byzantine tradition have the same word order as in Mt.

⁴⁴ For details of the discussion see: Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew*, 80-81.

⁴⁵ Theodor Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*, 4th ed. (Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung Dr. Werner Scholl, 1922), 699.

⁴⁶ In St. Paul: 1 Co 9,7.

⁴⁷ Cf. Lk 12,32; Ac 20,28; 1 P 5,2,3. In LXX τὸ ποιμνιον with similar frequency is the translation of Heb. צֶמֶד (25 times) and עֶבֶד (27 times). Edwin Hatch, Henry A. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998), 1169-1170.

same time, is the Lord of life and the one who scatters as he pleases, and when he wishes gathers in once again.

The first part of Deutero-Zechariah (Zc 9-11) announces that God will once more take possession of everything and that He will save his people, redeem them and bring back to himself those who have gone away like sheep without any shepherd. They will return, and God will be their power, and all useless and boastful shepherds will be removed. This saving action of God will be revealed by the coming of the humble and victorious King who will bring peace and hope. In the context of the Gospel of Matthew, it is an indirect announcement of the coming of Jesus as the Messiah and King who brings for the people peace, purification, and reconciliation with God. Jesus saves people from the power of sin, redeems them with his own blood and, through his humility and sensitivity to the needs and sufferings of others, finally through his death and resurrection, becomes the wellspring of life for all believers.

The second part of Deutero-Zechariah (Zc 12-14) is dedicated to Jerusalem, which God will take under His protection encircling with grace the house of David and the inhabitants of the city, who, like the whole country, will cry over their mistakes, over the one „whom they have pierced” (12:10). Yet God will turn everything to the benefit of the whole of humanity, because after the shepherd is struck, a cleansing and conversion will take place and a new people will be formed who will confess: „Lord, my God”.

In this way, Zechariah indirectly and enticingly announces certain facts that will take place in the life of Jesus, and Matthew recalls those prophecies, referring them directly to Jesus. Zechariah’s visions, prophecies, and oracles, which are characterized by an allegorical and symbolic language, contain the messianic message, often ambivalent or fragmented, with the person of Jesus Christ at its center.

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SUMMARY

This article, dealing in parallel with The Book of Zechariah and The Gospel of Mathew, is focused on the similarity of ideas and expressions common to both books. It concentrates on an analysis of the biblical text and the most significant allusions, highlighting the connection between the prophesies of Zechariah and their use in Matthew. In the Gospel, that which comes from Zechariah is focused upon Jesus, who is depicted as a humble king who redeems his people and is presented like an abandoned shepherd. The language and concepts through which Jesus is described are closer to the Hebrew thoughts than to Greek concepts.

Keywords: Zechariah, quotation, Messiah, king, shepherd, salvation, Mathew

