

## The Book of Zechariah

### I. THE VISIONS OF THE PROPHET (ZECHARIAH 1-6).

Zechariah receives ten visions, all apparently during the same night.

- A. The rider on the red horse (1:7-17).
  1. Zechariah sees a heavenly rider on a red horse, surrounded by other riders, all mounted also upon various colored horses.
  2. This special rider on the red horse is probably Christ (1:12).
  3. The other riders are angels who have been sent by God to "walk to and fro through the earth" (1:10).
  4. The angel of the Lord (Jesus) then prays over the troubled state of Jerusalem and is reassured by the Father that "the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem" (1:17).
- B. The four horns (1:18-19). Zechariah sees four animal horns and is told that they represent the four world powers that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. These horns may symbolize Assyria, Egypt, Babylon and Medo-Persia.
- C. The four carpenters (1:20-21).
  1. The identity of these carpenters: These may refer to the four judgments spoken of by both Ezekiel (14:21) and John (Rev. 6:1-8). These judgments are war, famine, wild animals and pestilence.
  2. The purpose of the carpenters (1:21).
- D. The man with a measuring line (2:1-13).
  1. Zechariah sees a man carrying a yardstick in his hand en route to measure Jerusalem (2:1-3).
  2. Zechariah is assured of the following thrilling facts concerning the millennial Jerusalem.
    - a. That Jerusalem would someday be so full of people that some would have to live outside its city walls, yet dwelling in perfect safety (2:4).
    - b. That God himself would be a wall of fire protecting them (2:5).
    - c. That he would be the glory of the city (2:5).
    - d. That the one who harmed them, touched the apple of his eye (2:8). (See also Deut. 32:7, 10; Ps. 17:8.)
  3. In verses 8-9 of this chapter we have a remarkable Old Testament proof concerning the Trinity. Here the Lord of hosts says he was sent by the Lord of hosts (2:8-9).
  4. Palestine is referred to as "the holy land" in verse 12. This is the only place in Scripture where it is called by this name (2:12).
- E. Joshua, the high priest (3:1-10). This is undoubtedly the greatest single chapter on the subject of salvation in all the Old Testament. In this vision Zechariah sees Joshua, the high priest, dressed in filthy clothing, and standing before God in heaven. He is being accused by Satan because of his soiled clothing. Christ, however, rebukes Satan, removes Joshua's dirty clothing, and dresses him in clean apparel. Joshua then is challenged to serve God with his whole heart. He is promised that someday God's Branch will appear to cleanse the land of its sin. The following facts concerning salvation are brought out here:
  1. The enemy of salvation: Satan.
  2. The Person of Salvation: the Savior.
    - a. His names:
      - (1) The Branch (3:8).
      - (2) The Cornerstone (3:9).
    - b. His ministry:
      - (1) To clothe all believers in robes of righteousness (3:4).
      - (2) To make intercession for the believer against Satan's lies (3:2).
      - (3) To bring in and rule over the millennium (3:7).
  3. The purpose of salvation (3:7). This verse may be paraphrased as follows: "If you wilt walk in my ways and keep my charge, you [Joshua] shall not only have the honor of judging my house, and keeping my courts, but when your walk on earth is done, you shall be transplanted to higher service in heaven, and have places to walk among these pure angelic beings who stand by me, harkening unto the voice of my word." (See also Ps. 103:20-21; Eph. 2:4-10.)
- F. The golden lampstand and the two olive trees (4:1-14). Here Zechariah sees a sevenfold golden lampstand, supplied by a reservoir of olive oil. On either side of the lampstand was a carved olive tree.
  1. A lampstand in the Bible represents God's witnesses in this world.
  2. The olive oil is, of course, a symbol for the Holy Spirit. (See Lk. 4:18; Acts 10:38; Heb. 1:9; 1 Jn. 2:20). Note the words of God in Zechariah 4:6 at this point: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."
  3. The olive trees refer to two famous teams:
    - a. The historical team of Zerubbabel and Joshua (Hag 1:1, 12, 14).
    - b. The prophetic team of Elijah and Moses (Rev. 11).
- G. The flying scroll (5:1-4). Zechariah sees a flying scroll, fifteen feet wide by thirty feet long. This represented the words of God's curse going out over the entire land of Israel.

1. The scope of this judgment. Although only two of the original commandments are mentioned here, that of swearing (the third, Ex. 20:7) and stealing (the eighth, Ex. 20:15), they nevertheless covered the entire moral code of God.
  2. The accused at this judgment. All unsaved Israelites throughout history. (See Rom. 9:6; Mt. 23:1-12; 1 Thess. 2:15-16; Ezek. 11:21; 20:38.)
  3. The time of this judgment. After the tribulation and just prior to the millennium (Mt. 25:1-30).
  4. The penalty of this judgment. It will apparently include both physical and spiritual death.
- H. The woman in the ephah (5:5-11). The prophet views a flying bushel basket (ephah) covered by a heavy lead top piece. When the lid is lifted he sees a woman seated inside. He is then told:
1. The woman inside represents sin and wickedness. Often in the Bible iniquity is symbolized by a woman. (See Mt. 13:33; Rev. 2:20; 17:1-7.)
  2. The heavy lead cover probably symbolizes the restraining power of God over evil.
  3. The destination is said to be Babylon where it (evil and wickedness) would "be established, and set there upon its own base" (5:11). Thus, this is where it officially began (Gen. 11) and where it will end (Rev. 18).
- I. The four chariots (6:1-8). Zechariah sees four chariots ridden by four heavenly spirits proceeding from two brass mountains. Each chariot is pulled by a different colored team of horses. These colors are red, white, black, and gray. The various symbols here would seem to be as follows:
1. The two brass mountains speak of God's judgment.
  2. The angel-driven chariots represent God's agents to effect various judgments upon Gentile nations.
- J. The crowning of Joshua (6:9-15).
1. Zechariah is told that three Jewish exiles will soon return to Jerusalem from Babylon, carrying gifts of silver and gold from the remnant there. Zechariah is instructed to make a golden crown from these gifts and place it upon Joshua, explaining to him that he represents the future Branch of Israel, the Messiah himself (6:10-12).
  2. This blessed Messiah will someday function both as Priest and King. He will also build the Temple of God (6:13).
  3. Zechariah is told the three returning exiles represent many others who will someday come from distant lands back to Palestine (6:15). (See Isa. 56:6-8.)

## II. THE VANITIES OF THE PEOPLE (ZECHARIAH 7-8). 2 years later (1:1; 7:1)

- A. A group of Jews had come to Jerusalem from Bethel to ask the priests there if they could set aside their traditional custom of fasting and mourning each year during the month of August (7:1-7).
- B. God tells them through the priests that it doesn't really make much difference what they do, for their hearts are insincere. He admonishes them to be honest in their dealings with both their God and their neighbors (7:8-11).
- C. He promises that, because of his grace, their fast days will someday be feast days, and their sorrow turned into singing (8:3-5, 8, 19, 22-23).

## III. THE VICTORIES OF THE GREEKS AND JEWS (ZECHARIAH 9).

- A. The success of Alexander the Great over Tyre (9:1-8).
- B. The success of the Maccabean Jews over the Syrians (9:13-17).

## IV. THE VISITATION OF THE PRINCE (ZECHARIAH 10-14).

- A. The first coming of the Prince.
  1. He came to feed the flock as his Father had instructed him to do (11:7).
  2. The false shepherds of Israel, however, rejected him (11:8).
  3. He thus broke one of his two staffs and set Israel aside for awhile (11:10). (See Mt. 21:19, 44-46; 23:37-39.)
  4. He finished his ministry by the triumphal entry into Jerusalem (9:9).
  5. He was sold for thirty pieces of silver (11:12), the price of a slave, which had been gored by an ox.
  6. This price, contemptuously given, was then cast aside with additional contempt, for the word "cast" used here is a gesture of disgust (11:13; Mat. 27:7, 10).
  7. He then broke his second staff, signifying perhaps the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in A.D. 70. This tragedy ended all unity, which existed in Israel (11:14).
  8. He was finally crucified (12:10).
- B. The Second Coming of the Prince:
  1. The bloodletting of the false shepherd.
    - a. Because they rejected their Good Shepherd at his first coming, Israel will be given over for awhile to the cruel antichrist shepherd just prior to the second appearing of their glorious Shepherd (11:15-17).
    - b. Two out of three will die in this horrible purge (13:8).
    - c. However, the one-third shall be saved (13:8-9).

2. The bereavement of Israel (12:10-14). When he comes again, Israel will finally recognize him and mourn their heinous national crime of regicide; the killing of one's own King.
3. The battle of Armageddon (12:1-9; 14:1-3, 12-15; Rev 16:16).
4. The bow of victory (10:4). This bow is, of course, the Son of God. We are assured of his deity because of the Father's statement in 13:7: "The man who is my fellow, said the Lord of hosts." This is literally translated, "the man who is my equal." From the bow of God this avenging arrow comes to earth.
5. The blessings of God (10:6-12; 12:8; 13:1; 14:8-9, 16, 20-21).
6. Christ will stand on the Mount of Olives (14:3-4).