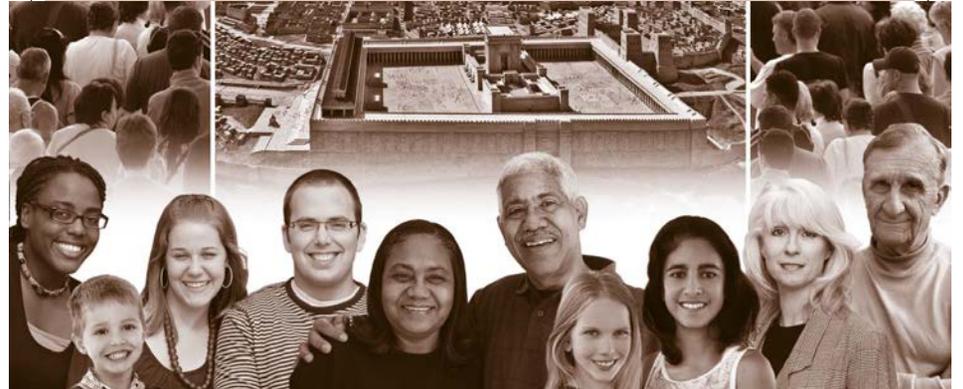


# **THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH**



**PROPHECIES FOR *TODAY!***

#### **ABOUT THE COVER**

The Book of Zechariah contains many gloomy prophecies for the immediate future of mankind, prior to Christ's Return, but it also has much to say about the Messiah's rule on and over this earth during the Millennium. At that time, there will be a physical temple in Jerusalem, and people all over the world will live in prosperity, peace and happiness.

This booklet is a free educational service, provided by the "Global Church of God" in the United Kingdom, in collaboration with the "Church of the Eternal God" in the United States of America and the "Church of God, a Christian Fellowship" in Canada. Printed in England 2009. Reprinted in 2018. This booklet is not to be sold.

Scriptures in the booklet are quoted from the New King James version ((c)1988 Thomas Nelson, Inc. Publishers) unless otherwise noted.

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## Introduction

### **Historical Background**

The book of Zechariah is an extraordinary and clearly inspired book of the Bible. **It shows us what will happen very soon. It is indeed a prophecy for our time!** It gives us some unique insight into the very workings of the mind of God, beginning even with the name of the book itself.

Zechariah's Hebrew name, "*Zekar-yah*," means "Yahweh Remembers," or "Yahweh Has Remembered." His name actually correlates to the message of the book, which is that God remembers His people and will not forget their work for Him, if they follow Him faithfully.

Zechariah was a prophet and a priest—the son of Berechiah, the grandson of Iddo the prophet (Zechariah 1:1; compare Nehemiah 12:16, which only mentions Zechariah as a descendant of Iddo, since his father Berechiah had apparently died at a young age). Iddo was also a priest who returned from Babylon with Zechariah, Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the High Priest. Iddo was, according to tradition, a member of the Great Synagogue (the governing body of the Jews before the Sanhedrin).

Zechariah was one of three prophets, along with Haggai and later Malachi, who ministered to the exiles returning from Babylon to Jerusalem.

The book of Zechariah was written during the effort of the ancient people of Judah to rebuild the Temple, which had been destroyed by the Babylonians. Jews had returned 18 years before Zechariah's appearance to lay the foundation of the Temple, but then the work had stopped. Two months prior to Zechariah, the prophet Haggai had begun to encourage the people to resume building the Temple, but that revival was very short-lived. Haggai's prophecies can be found in the book of Haggai. Two months later, the work of building the Temple had again stopped. The people had to be encouraged once more by Zechariah to complete the task of building the Temple.

Zechariah began prophesying during the months of October/November in the second year of the reign of Emperor Darius (520 B.C.). His last dated prophecy was delivered two years later, in 518 B.C.

The *Broadman Bible Commentary* explains:

“In contrast to most of the Minor Prophets, both Haggai and Zechariah are mentioned outside their own books. They are credited with being the driving forces behind the renewed efforts (ca. 520–515 B.C.) to rebuild the Temple (Ezra 5:1; 6:14)... According to Ezra 5:16 the returning Jews under Sheshbazzar had laid the foundations for a new Temple in Jerusalem in the year 538 B.C. with the permission which the Persian king Cyrus had granted them... However, the work was not completed. For a full 18 years the Temple continued in ruins...

“[By the time of the arrival of Haggai and Zechariah, the] enthusiasm of the pioneering and returning Jews [was]... gone. Quarrels, particularly with the Samaritans, difficulties with the rebuilding of the city, and several years of poor harvests... had dampened their spirits... At this time of low spirits, resignation, unhappiness and hopelessness, God proved his power by sending Haggai to warm the hearts... with new enthusiasm. He persuaded the Jewish community to begin work of the Temple again in 520 B.C. But his encouraging words came to an end after a short period. Zechariah took up his work. Ezra 6:15 records that the rebuilt Temple was formally dedicated in the spring of 515 B.C.”

While the prophet Haggai was a very old man at the time of his public appearance, Zechariah himself was still a “young man” when he began to prophesy. However, the term “young man” could still apply to a 28-year-old man (compare *Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible*, comment to Genesis 41:12: “... Joseph, when he was so designated by the chief butler... was 28”).

Zechariah’s encouragement to continue and finish the Temple was not only focused on the days of his time. Rather, he pointed the people to the glorious FUTURE of the very Temple they were to be eagerly rebuilding! Its completion would be followed by the First Coming of the Messiah, who would visit that same physical Temple, and then ultimately by His Second Coming, when He would visit a spiritual Temple—the Church of God—patterned after the physical Temple!

It should be noted here that this scenario could also correlate to

## Conclusion

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We hope you now have a better appreciation of the book of Zechariah—a book that many consider to be “ancient” and of no significance to us. We would like to encourage you to go back and spend some time reading the message God has sent through the prophet Zechariah, incorporating what you have just learned, and giving prayerful consideration to the tremendous value of God’s message to us, both as a nation and to you, personally.

The RETURN of the Messiah—as prophesied in the pages of the book of Zechariah thousands of years ago—is NEAR! Very much nearer than many may think today!

God speaks to us through the Bible and reveals to us things that will surely and SHORTLY come to pass. He speaks with authority and certainty as to what HE WILL DO!

The question remains: What will YOU DO with this priceless understanding?

the building of ANOTHER physical Temple just prior to the return of Christ—a temple which might be spared in the end-time destruction of Jerusalem and continue to exist on into the Millennium after Christ’s return.

Zechariah looked into the future and he communicated the sure prophecies to the people of his time. Today, we can read prophecies relating to events that have occurred by now, thereby finding comfort, assurance and renewed faith in the fact that the prophecies of future events will likewise occur, exactly as written in the book!

The *Ryrie Study Bible* explains that “Zechariah predicted more about [the] Messiah than any other prophet except Isaiah... [referring to prophecies] concerning His first coming... and prophecies to be fulfilled at His second coming.”

*Unger’s Bible Handbook* adds: “This book is unique in its messianic emphasis among the minor prophets and in its unfolding of events connected with the first and second advents of Christ. It has been called the most messianic, the most truly apocalyptic and eschatological of all the writings of the OT.”

The commentary of the *Scofield Reference Notes* elaborates:

“Both advents of Christ are in Zechariah’s prophecy... More than Haggai or Malachi, Zechariah gives the mind of God about the Gentile world-powers surrounding the restored remnant. He has given them their authority and will hold them to account; the test, as always, being their treatment of Israel.”

### **Who Wrote the Book?**

Some have questioned the authorship of the book of Zechariah, suggesting that it was written by at least two different authors at different times. However, there is no valid reason to doubt that the prophet Zechariah wrote the entire book. As is the case with objections to the single authorship of the book of Isaiah, for example, comments questioning the same regarding the book of Zechariah are to be rejected as well.

The *Nelson Study Bible* includes the following observation:

“Those who question the unity and single authorship of Zechariah usually argue that chs. 9–14 date from the Hellenistic period (331–167 B.C.) or the Maccabean period (167–73 B.C.). The reference to ‘Greece’

in 9:13 has often been cited as evidence for a late date, after Alexander's conquests (c. 330 B.C.). However, Greek influence was strong in the ancient Middle East as early as the seventh century B.C... Those who hold the unity of the book generally date its completion between 500 and 470 B.C..."

Rienecker's *"Lexikon zur Bibel"* agrees, adding:

"According to Jewish and Christian tradition, Zechariah himself is the author of the entire book; the gospel writers... and Jesus ... quote the prophet with that understanding... Some critics assume two different authors... But the disagreements among themselves show that their particular reasoning is not convincing."

Zechariah recorded many prophecies, which he received and penned under Godly inspiration, to persuade us that God is in control. Even in times of great personal and national trials and problems, God is not far from anyone of us, and He is always there to help us and to bless our efforts, when we diligently seek Him.

Basically, the book is divided into two parts—several visions which Zechariah received (chapters 1–6), and subsequent prophecies pertaining mainly to end-time events (chapters 7–14).

In this booklet, we will examine Zechariah's visions in depth, and discuss additional prophecies as they relate to both the First and Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the nations of Israel and Judah, as well as the City of Jerusalem.

in, they shall have no rain; they shall receive the plague with which the LORD strikes the nations who do not come up to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. (19) 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.

"(20) In that day 'HOLINESS TO THE LORD' shall be engraved on the bells of the horses... (21) Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of hosts. Everyone who sacrifices shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite [an unconverted, rebellious person] in the house of the LORD of hosts."

The entire book of Zechariah, with all its visions and prophecies, point to this most important event in the history of man—the return of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. He will come to establish the righteous and peaceful Kingdom of God on this war-stricken earth. May God speed THAT day, and let us pray, "Your Kingdom COME," while making sure that we are coming out of spiritual Babylon, lest we "share in her sins, and lest [we] receive of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4).

will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, the houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, But the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. (3) Then the LORD will go forth And fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle. (4) And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, Which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, From east to west, Making a very large valley... (5) Then you shall flee through my mountain valley... As you fled from the earthquake In the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Thus the LORD my God will come, And all the saints with [Him]... (7) It shall be one day Which is known to the LORD [God the Father]...

“(12) And this shall be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the people who fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall dissolve while they stand on their feet, Their eyes shall dissolve in their sockets, And their tongue shall dissolve in their mouths. (13) It shall come to pass in that day That a great panic from the LORD will be among them. Everyone will... raise his hand against his neighbor’s hand; (14) Judah will also fight at [better: against] Jerusalem [speaking of those Jews who escaped captivity by supporting the Gentile armies, compare Daniel 11:32]... (15) Such also shall be the plague On the horse and the mule, On the camel and the donkey, And on all the cattle that will be in those [military] camps. So shall this plague be.”

But Christ also tells us in the 14th chapter of the book of Zechariah what will happen AFTER His return—when He begins to RULE in Jerusalem, sitting on the throne of David (compare Luke 1:31–33):

“(Zechariah 14:8) And in that day it shall be that living waters shall flow from Jerusalem... (9) And the LORD shall be King over all the earth... (10) Jerusalem shall be raised up and inhabited in her place... (11) The people shall dwell in it; And no longer shall there be utter destruction, But Jerusalem shall be inhabited... (16) And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which 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. (17) 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 rain. (18) If the family of Egypt will not come up and enter

## Part 1

# The Nine Visions of Zechariah

(Zechariah Chapters 1–6)

## The First Vision

### The Horses

(Zechariah 1:8–11)

In Zechariah’s first vision, beginning in Zechariah 1:8, the prophet sees angels manifesting themselves both as men and as horses.

Notice the exact wording: “(8) I saw by night, and behold, a MAN riding on a red HORSE, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow, and behind him were HORSES: red, sorrel and white. (9) Then I said, ‘My lord, what are these?’ So the ANGEL who talked with me said to me, ‘I will show you what they are.’ (10) And the MAN who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, ‘These are the ones whom the LORD has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth.’ (11) So they answered the ANGEL of the LORD, who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, ‘We have walked to and fro throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is resting quietly.’”

The horses mentioned in this first vision, as well as other visions in the book of Zechariah, describe angels or spirit beings.

In our free booklet, *“Angels, Demons and the Spirit World,”* we have explained at length the fact that these horses are indeed angelic beings. We are setting forth below a few excerpts:

“Some Angels Look Like Horses

“We find additional accounts in the Bible, describing angels as

fiery horses. Note, for example, 2 Kings 2:11–12: ‘Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, “My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!” So he saw him no more.’

“A similar account can be found in 2 Kings 6:15–17: ‘And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, “Alas, my master! What shall we do?” So he answered, “Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” And Elisha prayed, and said, “LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see.” Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.’...

“The angel who spoke directly to Zechariah [in chapter 6] is described as a man [compare Zechariah 1:8, 10–11]. The horses walking to and fro throughout the earth are called ‘spirits of heaven.’ They are spirit beings, or angelic beings, that look like horses. In Revelation 5:6, some of those spirit beings are described as ‘seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits [better translated: “spirits” or “spirit beings”] of God sent out into all the earth.’...

“We find another description of angelic beings that look like horses in the famous passage in Revelation 19:11, 14, describing the return of Jesus Christ to this earth. Notice, however, what the Bible actually says in this little-understood passage: ‘Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war... And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.’

“We are told here that Christ and His armies in heaven will come, riding on white horses. These horses must be spirit beings, because they come from heaven down to this earth. The armies in heaven, riding on white horses, are angelic beings that presumably look like men... certain angels are ‘warriors.’ Their main function is to fight the forces of evil. Other angels, like those who look like horses, have different or additional functions, including the task to carry Christ and His warrior angels.”

Angels can appear or manifest themselves in the form and shape

strong nations Shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem And to pray before the LORD” (8:22). The Jews will be respected at that time—rather than still harboring anti-Semitic feelings, Gentile nations will ask the Jewish people to show them the way to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (8:23).

In Zechariah 9:9–10, we read about Christ’s First AND Second coming to Jerusalem. At His First Coming, He rode peacefully on a donkey (verse 9). At His Second Coming, He will also bring peace to the city—by DESTROYING all the weapons of war (verse 10)—and by DESTROYING those who want to destroy the city.

Just prior to His return, Christ will make Jerusalem a cup of drunkenness to all the surrounding peoples, when they lay siege against it (12:2). Verses 3 and 4 tell us: “And it shall happen in that day that I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all peoples; all who would heave it away will surely be cut in pieces, though all nations of the earth are gathered against it. In that day... I will strike every horse with confusion, and its rider with madness... and will strike every horse of the peoples [soldiers] with blindness.”

Verses 8, 9 and 11 continue: “In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem... It shall be in that day that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem... In that day there shall be great mourning in Jerusalem...”

When Christ returns to Jerusalem, He will “cut off the names of the idols from the land” and He will “cause the [false] prophets and the unclean spirit to depart from the land” (13:2). We also read that two-thirds of all the inhabitants of the land of Judah will die, and that the remaining one-third will be refined in fire; that is, they will repent during the “Great Tribulation” and the “Day of the Lord,” and become converted (13:8–9).

The last chapter of the book of Zechariah (chapter 14) gives us, without doubt, the great crescendo or final climax of the fate of the city of Jerusalem—picturing first its terrible future destruction, and then its subsequent glorious destiny.

Note these highlights from chapter 14, which bring into focus, in a coordinated fashion, the various statements quoted in this chapter that pertain to Jerusalem’s future: “(1) Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, And your spoil will be divided in your midst. (2) For I

strike the city, destroying a tenth part of it, and 7,000 people will die in that earthquake (verse 13).

We also read that sacrifices will be given in Jerusalem until the king of the North, the man of sin and the Gentile armies put a stop to them (**Daniel** 11:31; 8:9–14).

**Joel** 3:2, 11–14 reveals that at the time of Jesus Christ's return, ALL nations—referring to their armies—will move to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, just outside Jerusalem, in order to fight there. **Revelation** 16:14, 16 tells us that they will first assemble at a place called Armageddon—but, according to the book of Joel, they will then move toward Jerusalem. At that time, the modern nations of Israel and Judah will have already been defeated in war and will have become captives of Gentile powers (**Joel** 3:1, 6; compare **Jeremiah** 30:10). The **book of Joel** informs us further that Jesus Christ will return to Jerusalem to fight for it—and THEN “Jerusalem shall be holy” (verse 17). He and His saints will overcome all of God's enemies, including the king of the North, the man of sin and their armies, and their attempt to fight Christ and His saints will be defeated (**Revelation** 17:14).

With this brief background, let us now focus on what is stated in the **book of Zechariah**, regarding the return of Jesus Christ and the end-time fate of Jerusalem.

The LORD or Jesus Christ, the Messiah, tells us that He will return to Jerusalem with MERCY, and that His house shall be built in it (**Zechariah** 1:16). He assures us that Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls—that is, it will be peaceful (2:4). When God dwells in Jerusalem, it shall be called the “City of Truth, The Mountain of the LORD of hosts, The Holy Mountain” (8:3). Then, “Old men and old women shall again sit In the streets of Jerusalem... The streets of the city Shall be full of boys and girls Playing in its streets...” (8:4–5). The captives of Israel and Judah will be brought back to Jerusalem “from the land of the east and from the land of the west... And they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They shall be My people, And I will be their God, In truth and righteousness” (8:7–8).

As the modern nations of Israel and Judah will become a curse among the nations just prior to Christ's return, so they will become a blessing when Christ saves them (8:13). Christ is determined to do good to Jerusalem in the end (8:15). Then, “many peoples and

of animals, including horses, as well as men.

While most commentaries apply Zechariah's first vision strictly and exclusively to the time and circumstances of Zechariah, all nine of his visions deal mostly with the end time, just prior to Christ's return. Of course, some aspects ARE limited to the events in Zechariah's days but even then, there are some underlying principles that still apply to our time, as shown below.

### **A World at Rest**

In Zechariah's first vision, a picture is painted of a world “at rest” (notice verse 11).

As *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible* states to verse 11:

“There is general peace through the Persian empire, and other states connected with Judea; but the Jews are still in affliction; their city is not yet restored, nor their temple built.”

*Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible* adds:

“Wars, although soon to break out again, were in the second year of Darius for the time suspended [when Zechariah received his first vision]. The rest, in which the world was, suggests the contrast of the yet continuing unrest allotted to the people of God. Such rest had been promised to Israel, on its return from the captivity, but had not yet been fulfilled. Through the hostility of the Samaritans the building of the temple had been hindered and was just recommenced; the wall of Jerusalem was yet broken down...; its fire-burned gates not restored; itself was a waste...; its houses unbuilt...”

The *Ryrie Study Bible* explains:

“God's patrols report that the earth ‘sitteth still, and is at rest’; i.e., the heathen nations still flourished and were self-confidently secure, while Israel was downtrodden.”

### **A Short-Lived Rest**

The world's peaceful rest was short-lived. As mentioned above, wars would break out soon between the Persian and the Greek Empires. In any event, the peaceful rest of the Gentile nations was in opposition to the “downtrodden” condition of Israel.

In fact, the reaction of the angel of the Lord in verse 12 shows that this “rest” was detrimental to the condition of Israel: “Then the ANGEL

of the LORD answered and said, ‘O LORD of hosts, how long will You not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You were angry these seventy years?’”

We also read in verse 15 that the nations opposed to Jerusalem were “at ease”—unaware of the destruction which would come upon them.

### **God’s Anger for Seventy Years**

We read that God was angry with Israel for seventy years. What does this time period refer to?

*Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible* points out:

“This cannot mean the duration of the captivity for that was nearly twenty years past. It must mean simply the time that had elapsed from the destruction of the temple to the time in which the angel spoke. As the temple was destroyed in the nineteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar, and this vision took place in the second year of Darius, the term of seventy years was completed, or nearly so, between these two periods.”

The *Nelson Study Bible* agrees, stating:

“The seventy years refers to the period of exile during which the temple lay in ruins (586–515 B.C., see Jer. 25:7–14).”

It is important to note that Zechariah’s first vision—as is the case with ALL nine visions of Zechariah—is DUAL. The visions were applicable in his time, but also apply to those today who are not willing to obey their Maker, addressing us on both a national level and an individual level. God wants to get our attention!

### **Seventy Years of Anger Not Repeated in the End Time**

There is, however, no indication in prophecy that a period of seventy years of destruction of a physical or spiritual temple will apply to end-time events. That is, there is no indication in prophecy that the modern nations of Israel and Judah—after they have been defeated in war and captured by their enemies—will remain enslaved for seventy years before Christ returns to bring them out of slavery. Nor can we say that the spiritual temple—the Church—has been, or will be in ruins for seventy years prior to Christ’s return. In fact, just the opposite is true.

### **A Church at Ease**

The end-time Church of God was revived, beginning in the 1930’s.

## **The Fate of the City of Jerusalem at the Time of Christ’s Return**

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As mentioned, the book of Zechariah includes numerous prophecies relating to the return of Jesus Christ. What may be surprising to some is the fact that His return is closely connected with the city of Jerusalem.

Many passages in the book of Zechariah and in other places in the Old and New Testaments reveal that the city of Jerusalem will be facing a terrible time of destruction, but also that it will be subsequently blessed beyond human comprehension.

Jesus stated in **Luke 21** that Jerusalem will be surrounded by Gentile armies which will make the city “desolate” (verse 20). He added that the city will be “trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled” (verse 24). We read in **Daniel 11:41** that the “king of the North”—a military leader—will “enter the Glorious Land” and “plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain” (verse 45)—apparently establishing the city of Jerusalem as his new headquarters.

Paul adds in **2 Thessalonians 2:4** that the “man of sin” or the “lawless one”—a religious leader—will sit “as God in the temple of God,” claiming to be God. His powers will be given to him by Satan (verse 9). This passage indicates that a physical temple will be built in Jerusalem, and that the “lawless one” will be sitting in that temple. That an end-time temple may be built can also be seen in Zechariah 6:15.

**Revelation 11:1–2** seems to confirm that a physical temple will be built in Jerusalem, and that the Gentiles will tread the Holy City underfoot for forty-two months; that is, for three-and-a-half years. They will kill God’s “two witnesses” (verses 3, 7–8) in Jerusalem—a city which, by that time, is compared with the city of Sodom (verse 8). But God will resurrect the two witnesses, and an earthquake will

But it IS correct that the building of the spiritual temple—the Church—has not been completed yet, and the preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom of God must still continue.

Unfortunately, we are facing a situation now where many in the Church (*spiritual* Israel) have become disillusioned and frustrated. They have become bogged down by their own personal problems and have lost the zeal to finish the Work and to overcome sin in their own lives, rather than striving ever more for perfection.

In addition, we have also witnessed a terrible complacency within the modern nations of physical Israel—especially the USA. (For more information as to the identity of the modern houses of Israel and Judah, please read our free booklet, *“The Fall and Rise of Britain and America.”*)

Even though the handwriting of national disaster and calamity is clearly on the wall, many in the USA still believe in the “American way of life,” which they think is going to save them from all their problems. Their trust in themselves—rather than in God—will be their own downfall.

Relative peace or “rest” or a life “at ease” in this world has lulled the senses of many inside and outside the Church of God who are asleep. They are not aware of the storm soon to engulf this planet and bring “sudden destruction” (compare 1 Thessalonians 5:2–3).

### ***The Work Will Be Finished***

We read in Zechariah 1:13 that God answered the angel with “good and comforting words.” Verse 14 states that God is zealous for Jerusalem and for Zion; and verse 16 adds that He will return to Jerusalem with mercy and that His house, or temple, will be built there. The physical temple would, in fact, be finished during Zechariah’s time, within four years after his first vision. This shows us that when God intervenes to motivate His people to finish certain aspects of His Work, it will be done within a VERY SHORT time!

Again, these historical events foreshadow what is prophesied for OUR day and age. When the prophet Habakkuk announced sudden destruction, he quoted God’s words in Habakkuk 1:5: “Look among the nations and watch—Be utterly astounded! For I will work a work in your days Which you would not believe, though it were told you.”

Habakkuk continued to state in verse 6 that God will raise the Chaldeans to bring punishment on others. But Paul later applied this passage in Habakkuk 1:5, of raising up an “unbelievable” work, to the work of preaching the gospel (compare Acts 13:41). Since the preaching of the gospel in all the world as a witness is a sign of Christ’s impending return (Matthew 24:14), we can see that a most powerful work of preaching the gospel must still occur—so unique that “you would not believe, though it were told you” (compare again Habakkuk 1:5).

Paul also explains in Romans 9:28 that this final work will be quick and short: “For He will FINISH THE WORK and CUT IT SHORT in righteousness, Because the LORD will make a SHORT WORK upon the earth.”

### ***Time Is Short***

When Christ does return, His bride—the Church—will have made herself ready, and she will be arrayed with fine white linen (Revelation 19:7–8). However, this does not mean that everyone “in the church” will be ready.

Rather, Christ warns us in Revelation 16:15: “Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.” Also, Christ warns His end-time Church in Laodicea: “[You] do not know that you are... naked. I counsel you to buy from Me... white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed” (Revelation 3:17–18).

The time is short (1 Corinthians 7:29). Satan knows it (Revelation 12:12). He knows that God will crush him under our feet shortly (Romans 16:20). He knows that all the things, which are written in the book of Revelation, must come to pass shortly (Revelation 1:1; 22:6). The question is: Do members in God’s Church know this, too? And if they know it, do they ACT accordingly?

Let us heed the prophetic warning of Zechariah’s first vision. He wrote it down for us today “upon whom the ends of the ages have come” (1 Corinthians 10:11).

shepherd in the land who will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand. But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces. (17) Woe to the worthless shepherd, Who leaves the flock! A sword shall be against his arm And against his right eye; His arm shall completely wither, And his right eye shall be totally blinded.”

When God intervenes, He will cleanse the inhabitants of Jerusalem from their sin and uncleanness (Zechariah 13:1). He will wipe out idolatry and cause the false prophets and their evil demonic spirits to depart from the land (verse 2). This shows the depth of deprivation that will have overtaken the land prior to Christ’s return, and WHY God made the following terrible pronouncement for our time and age: “(8) And it shall come to pass in all the land, Says the LORD, That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die, But one-third shall be left in it: (9) I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined and test them as gold is tested.”

Continuing in Zechariah 14:2: “For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; The city shall be taken, The houses rifled, And the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity.”

But then, we are told, beginning in verse 3, that God will intervene and fight for the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the modern peoples of Israel and Judah who have been brought into slavery and captivity because of their terrible sins, which cry to high heaven. God’s warnings are sure and certain, and they WILL come upon all of us very soon—unless we repent.

Even though the modern nations of Israel and Judah will not, in all probability, repent in time to prevent defeat in war and captivity, individuals can be spared. Those who turn to God and are willing to follow His direction in obedience to His law, have been promised protection from the evil and terrible times to come. And we DON’T mean some kind of supernatural secret rapture to heaven—a concept which the Bible does NOT teach. (For more information, please read our free booklets, “*The Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord*,” and, “*Is That in the Bible?—The Mysteries of the Book of Revelation!*”)

It is up to each and every one of us to heed God’s warning and to act accordingly, so that we can be “counted worthy to escape all these things that WILL come to pass” (Luke 21:36).

shall be as though I had not cast them aside... (9) I will sow them among the peoples, And they shall remember Me in far countries; they shall live together with their children, And they shall return. (10) I will also bring them back from the land of Egypt And gather them from Assyria [modern German-speaking peoples]... (11) Then the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, And the scepter of Egypt shall depart."

Another remarkable prophecy for our time, which is directed against the modern English-speaking nations (and the religious and political leaders) of the USA and the British Commonwealth, and their future captivity and slavery, can be found in Zechariah 11, beginning with verse 4:

"Thus says the LORD my God, 'Feed the flock for slaughter, (5) whose owners slaughter them and feel no guilt; those who sell them say, 'Blessed be the LORD, for I am rich; and their shepherds do not pity them. (6) For I will no longer pity the inhabitants of the land, says the LORD. But indeed I will give everyone into his neighbor's hand and into the hand of his king. They shall attack the land, and I will not deliver them from their hand.'"

Notice that this is written in a future tense and for a future time. It pronounces events which will still occur, and it was written AFTER both ancient Israel and Judah had already gone into captivity, and AFTER the tribe of Judah had already returned to Jerusalem and had begun to build the temple.

Notice the continuation of this prophecy, beginning in verse 8, referring to three powerful religious and/or political leaders: "(8) 'I dismissed the three shepherds in one month. My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me...' (14) Then I cut in two my other staff... that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel."

This indicates that in the times just ahead of us, the close relationship between the USA and Britain on the one hand, and the state of Israel on the other hand, will cease. The future will have to show who the three shepherds will be who will be "dismissed" "in one month."

God goes on to prophesy that a worthless shepherd—a political or religious leader—will arise apparently just after the dismissal of the three shepherds and just prior to Christ's return. This worthless shepherd will only care for himself.

We read, beginning in verse 16: "For indeed I will raise up a

## The Second Vision

### The Four Horns and the Four Craftsmen

(Zechariah 1:18–21)

As mentioned previously, Zechariah's nine visions must be viewed, foremost, as containing prophecies for us today and our immediate future.

Zechariah 1:18–21 states: "(18) Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were four horns. (19) And I said to the angel who talked with me, 'What are these?' So he answered me, 'These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem.' (20) Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen. (21) And I said, 'What are these coming to do?' So he said, 'These are the horns that scattered Judah, so that no one could lift up his head; but the craftsmen are coming to terrify them, to cast out the horns of the nations that lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.'"

While some commentaries understand this vision as strictly symbolic with no historical or prophetic meaning attached to the specific nature and identity of the four horns (compare the *Broadman Bible Commentary*), most commentaries agree that the four horns represent four kingdoms or powers (compare Daniel 7:7, 8, 24; Revelation 17:12) which fight against the house of Judah, the city of Jerusalem and the house of Israel. However, very few seem to understand that the vision relates not only to the time of Zechariah, but is primarily discussing events in the end time. Failing to appreciate this, they are bound to misidentify the real nature of the four horns.

For example, the *Ryrie Study Bible* writes that the four horns describe the "power of Gentile nations (perhaps Assyria, Egypt, Babylonia, and Medo-Persia specifically) which afflicted and scattered Israel." This understanding is echoed in *The Life Application Bible*. A similar, albeit equally wrong, interpretation is offered by *The Nelson Study Bible*,

stating: “The horns that persecuted Israel and Judah included Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia and later Greece.”

A better explanation is given by *Unger’s Bible Handbook*. That commentary seems to understand the end-time significance of the prophecy. It states regarding the four horns that they “represent hostile nations, i.e., the four great world powers of the times of the Gentiles (cf. [Daniel] 2:37–45; 7:2–8, 17–28), namely, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome (the latter to be revived at the end time, [Daniel] 2:42–44; 7:7, 8, 20; [Revelation] 13:1).”

A similar interpretation is offered by the *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary*, stating: “But the Spirit in the prophet looked farther; viz., to the four world powers, the only ones which were, or are, to rise till the kingdom of the Messiah, the fifth, overthrows and absorbs all others in its universal dominion. Babylon and Medo-Persia alone had as yet risen, but soon Graeco-Macedonia was to succeed..., and Rome the fourth and last, was to follow... The fact that the repairing of the evils caused to Judah and Israel by all four kingdoms is spoken of here proves that the exhaustive fulfillment is yet future.”

However, even these last two explanations do not capture the full significance of Zechariah’s vision for end-time events still ahead of us. The Bible foretold the existence of four world-ruling empires (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome), and also prophesied that the ancient Roman Empire would be revived ten times throughout history, culminating in the tenth and final revival just prior to Christ’s return.

It does not appear that the four horns refer to ancient powers which have long come and gone; rather, the emphasis is primarily directed at four powers in existence at the time of Christ’s return, which will have turned against the modern descendants of the houses of Israel and Judah, as well as spiritual Israel and Judah—the Church of God—and which will have been instrumental in a future occupation and destruction of the city of Jerusalem. (For more information as to the identity of the modern houses of Israel and Judah, please read our free booklet, “*The Fall and Rise of Britain and America.*”)

We need to realize that the Bible speaks of “ten horns” or ten kings or kingdoms, as existing contemporaneously in the future, and which will give their power and authority to a charismatic political and military leader (“the beast”) for a very short time (Revelation 17:12–13).

land of the west; (8) I will bring them back, And they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They shall be My people, And I will be their God, In truth and righteousness... (10) For before these days... There was no peace from the enemy for whoever went out or came in; For I set all men, everyone, against his neighbor... (13)... just as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, So I will save you, and you shall be a blessing... (14) Just as I determined to punish you When your fathers provoked Me to wrath... And I would not relent, (15) So again in these days I am determined to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah... (16) These are the things you shall do; Speak each man the truth to his neighbor; Give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and peace; (17) Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; And do not love a false oath. For all these are things that I hate...’”

Another aspect of God’s anger today over sinful Israel and Judah is their willingness and eagerness to fight wars—wars that are not approved of nor endorsed by God. However, God says that this will be changed, by Jesus Christ: “I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim [Great Britain] And the horse [symbolic for war machines like tanks] from Jerusalem [the state of Israel]; The battle bow shall be cut off...” (Zechariah 9:10).

God also pronounces His punishment against the religious leaders of ancient and modern Israel and Judah, in Zechariah 10:3: “My anger is kindled against the shepherds, And I will punish the goatherds [leaders]...” The context with verse 2 indicates that those religious leaders were engaged in (and that they approved of) idolatry, divination and the preaching of a false hope.

God continues to explain that He allowed His people to be defeated in war and become captives of war. This prophecy is most certainly dual and refers also to our time and age, as God points out that He will free them from their captivity and bring them back to the Promised Land. This did NOT happen in history, as the tribe of “Joseph” never returned.

Notice Zechariah 10:6–10: “(6) I will strengthen the house of Judah, And I will save the house of Joseph [the modern English-speaking nations of the USA and the British Commonwealth]. I will bring them back [out of captivity and slavery], Because I have mercy on them. They

Word of God proclaimed through God's modern-day servants.

God also explained that when He was "a little angry" with Zion and Jerusalem, nations "helped—but with evil intent," so that God became "exceedingly angry" with those nations (verse 15). Again, this prophecy is certainly dual and applies to our day and age as well.

God explained very clearly, in Zechariah 7:4–14, WHY He was angry with ancient Israel and Judah, and, at the same time, He tells us today WHY He is angry with the modern descendants of these ancient houses:

He says: "(4) Then the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying, (5) 'Say to all the people of the land, and to the priests: "When you fasted and mourned... did you really fast for Me—for Me? (6) When you eat and when you drink, do you not eat and drink for yourselves? (7) Should you not have obeyed the words which the LORD proclaimed through the former prophets when Jerusalem and the cities around it were inhabited and prosperous... (9) Execute true justice, Show mercy and compassion Everyone to his brother. (10) Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, The alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart Against his brother. (11) But they refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stopped their ears so that they could not hear. (12) Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the LORD of hosts. (13) Therefore it happened, that just as He proclaimed and they would not hear, so they called out and I would not listen, says the LORD of hosts. (14) But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations which they had not known. Thus the land became desolate after them, so that no one passed through or returned; for they made the pleasant land desolate.'"

Again, this prophecy is dual. It applied to ancient Israel and Judah, and it applies to us today. As God scattered ancient Israel and Judah "with a whirlwind"—invasion and war—"among all the nations," so God will scatter the modern houses of Israel and Judah.

In speaking of OUR present day, God tells us that the modern nations of Israel and Judah WILL repent, but only AFTER they have been held captive by foreign invaders.

We read in Zechariah 8:7–15: "(7) Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Behold, I will save My people from the land of the east And from the

However, these ten horns—symbolizing kings or kingdoms—are not totally united in approach and goal, and some will be more powerful and influential than others. In the book of Daniel, we read that these last ten kings will be "partly of potter's clay and partly of iron," showing that the last "kingdom shall be divided... [and] be partly strong and partly fragile... [and] they will not adhere to one another" (Daniel 2: 41–43). It is therefore likely that some—apparently four—of the ten future kings or kingdoms will be more powerful than the rest and instrumental in persecuting and attacking modern physical and spiritual Israel and Judah.

It is also possible that one of the four horns refers to the "kingdom" (compare Daniel 2:41) of the last revival of the ancient Roman Empire, consisting of ten nations or groups of nations, which will be led by the "beast." The other three "horns" could then refer to three most powerful allies of the Beast power, which will fight together with the Beast power (the revived Roman Empire) against physical and spiritual Israel. An end-time confederacy of several nations against Israel is described in Psalm 83:5–8. Besides "Assyria"—a reference to modern Germany, who will lead the coming last revival of the ancient Roman Empire—countries like Edom (Turkey), Ammon (part of Jordan) and Moab (perhaps part of Iraq) are mentioned (countries which are specifically identified in Daniel 11:41, as not being overthrown by the king of the North or the end-time Beast power).

As is the case with the identity of the four horns, commentaries are equally confused, and perhaps even more so, regarding the identity of the four craftsmen, who will "cast out" the four horns who had lifted up "their horn," signifying agreed-upon unified action against the land of Judah.

A few commentaries suggest that some of the horns turned into the craftsmen. For instance, *The Nelson Study Bible* writes: "The craftsmen or 'smiths' destroyed the horns (v. 19). Historically, Babylon destroyed Assyria, Medo-Persia conquered Babylon, Greece conquered Medo-Persia, and Rome overcame Greece." Similar, but equally unconvincing, is the explanation in *Unger's Bible Handbook*, even though it does allow, at least, for a future end-time fulfillment. It states:

"The Lord then shows the prophet four smiths... These artisans (technicians) symbolize kingdoms which the Lord used to cast

down the persecutors of His people Israel. Three of these ‘smiths’ (Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome) were horns, which in turn became smiths. The fourth smith is the kingdom set up by the returning King of [kings] and Lord of lords ([Revelation] 19:16) who destroys the ten-kingdom confederation of the end time ([Daniel] 2:44).”

The problem with this explanation is at least two-fold: First, Zechariah’s vision does not seem to allow for the concept that the horns turn into craftsmen. Rather, we read about four craftsmen who will destroy the four horns. If horns would turn into craftsmen, then, following that rationale, the last or fourth craftsman—allegedly the kingdom of God that Christ will establish here on earth—would have been a prior “horn.”

Secondly, the prophecy deals with the end-time fulfillment of the destruction of all four horns by the four craftsmen. Contemporaneous horns and craftsmen are described—not one horn following another horn and one craftsman following another craftsman. In other words, at the very end, four existing craftsmen will destroy four existing horns at approximately the same time. Based on this understanding, we must conclude that the four craftsmen are four mighty and powerful angelic beings who will—in unison with Jesus Christ—destroy the four horns which will fight against the modern physical descendants of the houses of Israel and Judah, as well as spiritual Israel and Judah—the Church of God.

We read that Christ will return with His mighty angels to take vengeance on those who persecuted God’s people and who did not obey the gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:7–8). He will destroy the modern Babylonian system with the help of angels. (Our free booklet, *“Angels, Demons and the Spirit World,”* explains in more detail the role and function of “warrior” angels—such as the archangel Michael—who assist God with the execution of His judgment over disobedient people and kingdoms.)

Zechariah’s second vision, pertaining to four horns and four craftsmen, shows that God and His angels are in charge. When the time comes, they will intervene and destroy all enemies of God and of God’s people. When we apply the vision to Christ’s disciples—spiritual Israel—it should be a source of great encouragement and hope for the future—knowing that God cares for His people and that their blood is precious in His sight.

## Terrible Godly Punishment on the Modern Houses of Israel and Judah

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Many prophecies in the book of Zechariah deal with the Second Coming of the Messiah. Just prior to the return of Jesus Christ, God will inflict terrible punishment on the MODERN descendants of the ancient houses of Israel and Judah.

We understand that the modern descendants of the houses of Israel and Judah include the peoples of the USA, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, as well as the modern Jews, who live both inside and outside the present day state of Israel. (For more information, please read our free booklet, *“The Fall and Rise of Britain and America.”*)

The Bible contains many prophecies dealing with the sins and punishment of these nations. However, we will limit our discussion here to the book of Zechariah.

When God challenged ancient Judah at the time of Zechariah, to get involved in the Work of God, He explained to them that they were suffering at that time because of their SINS. God’s values have not changed; therefore, His anger toward ancient Judah and Israel because of their sins applies equally to modern Israel and Judah today, as they are engaged in the same kinds of sins and transgressions.

God spoke through Zechariah to ancient Israel and Judah, saying that He had been very angry with their fathers. He cautioned them not to be like their fathers, to whom the former prophets preached, encouraging them, but without success, to repent. God also stated that His laws and commandments “overtook” them (compare Zechariah 1:2–6).

Amazingly, ancient Judah did finally repent in response to that challenge (verse 6, second half), even though their repentance was short-lived. It is to be hoped—though very unlikely—that MODERN Israel and Judah will also repent of their evil ways when they hear the

# The Third Vision

## The Measuring Line

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(Zechariah 2:1–5)

While commentaries are divided as to the intended timing of some of Zechariah’s nine visions, virtually all agree that the third vision of the “measuring line” applies to the future Millennium—when God’s Kingdom will be established on this earth.

Zechariah 2:1–5 reads as follows: “(1) Then I raised my eyes and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. (2) So I said, ‘Where are you going?’ And he said to me, ‘To measure Jerusalem, to see what is [better: will be] its width and what is [better: will be] its length.’ (3) And there was the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, (4) who said to him, ‘Run, speak to this young man, saying, “Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. (5) ‘For I,’ says the LORD, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’””

We will expand on these five verses to give a clearer understanding of what is the intended meaning.

As stated, virtually all commentaries agree that this is foremost a millennial prophecy.

*Unger’s Bible Handbook* states: “This vision presents Jerusalem in millennial glory... [The surveyor’s] activities intimate the growth and prosperity of Jerusalem... ultimately to be fulfilled in the Kingdom Age.”

The “*New Scofield Reference Edition*” contains the following annotation: “The measuring line (or reed) is used by Ezekiel (40:3, 5) as a symbol of preparation for rebuilding the city and Temple in the Kingdom Age. Here [in Zechariah 2:1–5] it has that meaning... The subject of the vision is the restoration of nation and city. In no sense has this prophecy been fulfilled.”

*The Nelson Study Bible* agrees, stating that “These words refer ultimately to the future Jerusalem under the rule of its glorious king...”

Charles Feinberg writes in *“The Minor Prophets,”* page 280: “Surely it will not be denied that the fulfillment of this prophecy is in millennial times.”

We are also told in this vision that Jerusalem, which will be largely destroyed just prior to the return of Christ, will be rebuilt, and Jerusalem’s boundaries will be enlarged because of the multitude of people and livestock in it. This shows that the prophecy does not deal with the New Jerusalem, which will come down from heaven AFTER the Millennium and the Great White Throne Judgment period, a time when there will be no more physical beings and animals, but it describes the rebuilt or restored city of Jerusalem at the time of the Millennium.

Regarding its future boundaries, *Matthew Henry’s Commentary* states: “... it shall extend far beyond the present dimensions.”

In addition, we read that the city of Jerusalem will have no physical walls. This is confirmed in Ezekiel 38:11–12, where not only the city of Jerusalem, but also the entire Promised Land, is described as a “land of unwalled villages,” which are occupied by “a peaceful people, who dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates... a people gathered from the nations, who have acquired livestock and goods, who dwell in the midst of the land...”

Even though the city and the entire country will not have physical walls or gates for defense purposes, it won’t be helpless or defenseless. In fact, we read in Ezekiel 38 that, at the very beginning of the Millennium, Asiatic hordes will attempt to invade and occupy the Promised Land. But God will intervene and defeat this enemy by fire (Ezekiel 38:22; 39:6). We find a similar event occurring at the very end of the Millennium, when God will destroy invading armies with fire (compare Revelation 20:7–9). And so, it is God who is described in Zechariah’s vision as “a wall of fire” for His people, indicating His ability and willingness to supernaturally defend His people.

Whatever physical “walls” or “gates” may exist surrounding Jerusalem and the entire Promised Land (compare Isaiah 60:10), they will not exist for the purpose of defense, and their gates will be continuously open (Isaiah 60:11). We read in Isaiah 60:18 that, with the exception of the attack of the Asiatic hordes at the beginning of the

prophecies dealing with the future. As Christ came as a humble servant to die for us, so He WILL come again as the KING of kings to rule for and with us (Revelation 5:8–10; 20:4, 6; Daniel 7:13–14, 26–27). He said time and again that He WILL return—and soon (John 14:3; James 5:8–9; Revelation 22:12, 20).

The fulfillment of that prophecy is recorded in John 12:14–15.

Zechariah 9:9 also shows that His entrance into Jerusalem would be triumphant, as we read: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem!” This prophecy was fulfilled just prior to Christ’s betrayal and arrest, compare Mark 11:8–10.

In Zechariah 11:12–13, we are told that Jesus would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver (compare Matthew 26:14–16), and that the money would be thrown into the house of the LORD—the temple—for the potter. This was fulfilled, exactly as stated (compare Matthew 27:3–10). Please note that Matthew 27:9 says that Jeremiah, too, gave this prophecy in advance. But it says that Jeremiah the prophet SPOKE those words, apparently, without writing them down in the book of Jeremiah. The prophecy was RECORDED, however, in Zechariah 11:13, as we have seen.

Zechariah 12:10 refers to the fact that the Messiah would be pierced. We are told in the New Testament that a soldier pierced Christ’s side with a spear, causing His death on the cross (John 19:34–37). (For the exact manner of Christ’s death, please read our free booklet, “*Jesus Christ—a Great Mystery*,” pages 78–79.) The passage in Zechariah 12:10 is quoted in Revelation 1:7, referring to Jesus Christ.

Another possible reference to the piercing of Christ’s hands at the time of His crucifixion (compare John 20:25) can be found in Zechariah 13:6, where we read, in the *Authorized Version*: “And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.”

Finally, Zechariah 13:7 foretells that all of Christ’s disciples would leave Him at the time of His arrest, prior to His crucifixion and resurrection: “... Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered...” Compare, for the exact fulfillment of that prophecy, Matthew 26:31–32 and Mark 14:27–28.

It is truly remarkable how these and many other Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus Christ at the time of His First Coming. Jesus Himself insisted that ALL prophecies written about His earthly life were, and had to be fulfilled (Luke 24:25–27, 44–46; compare Matthew 26:51–56).

Based on this testimony of Scripture regarding things that are in the past, we can have complete and total confidence in the infallibility of

Millennium, and a similar event at its end, “Violence shall no longer be heard in your land, Neither wasting nor destruction within your borders; But you shall call your walls Salvation, And your gates Praise.”

In addition, God will be “their glory in [Jerusalem’s] midst.”

The commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* offers the following explanation:

“The same combination of ‘glory and defense’ is found in Isaiah 4:5, alluding to the pillar of cloud and fire which defended and enlightened Israel in the desert... As God is to be her ‘glory,’ so she is to be His ‘glory’ ([Isaiah] 62:3).”

With this insight into Jerusalem’s glorious future, Zechariah, who is described as a “young man” (Zechariah 2:4), was inspired to encourage the people at his time to become zealous and diligent in fulfilling their obligation and duty—to rebuild physical Jerusalem.

The *Broadman Bible Commentary* explains:

“This message has direct application to the task at hand. If the most important aspect of the rebuilt and reinhabited city will be the presence of God, attention to the building of the house must command top priority.”

In the same way, God’s people today must be diligent to fulfill their task and commission—to preach the gospel of the glorious Kingdom of God in all the world as a witness, announcing the time soon ahead of us when the Messiah, Jesus Christ, will restore and rebuild Jerusalem here on earth and make it His royal dwelling place during the Millennium (compare Isaiah 2:1–4).

Psalm 34:20 foretold that none of Christ's bones would be broken (compare John 19:33, 36).

Psalm 41:9 foretold that the Messiah would be betrayed by one of His friends who would eat bread with Him (Luke 22:21; John 13:18).

Psalm 69:21 prophesied that He would be given vinegar to drink for His thirst (John 19:28–30).

Psalm 78:2 foretold that the Messiah would speak in parables (compare Matthew 13:34–35).

Psalm 118:22–23 prophesied that the Messiah would be rejected by the builders, but that He would become the chief cornerstone for His Church (compare Matthew 21:42; Ephesians 2:19–22; 1 Peter 2:6–10).

Psalm 118:26 foretold in advance the exact words with which the people in Jerusalem would greet the Messiah (compare Matthew 21:9).

We find in the book of **Numbers** (24:17) that, in relationship to the birth of the Messiah, a star would come out of Jacob (compare Matthew 2:2).

In addition, a striking prophecy can be found in the book of **Micah** (5:2), referring to Christ's birth: "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting." (Compare the record of the fulfillment of this prophecy in Matthew 2:1–12.)

**Hosea** 11:1 foretold that the Messiah, as a child, would stay temporarily in Egypt (compare Matthew 2:14–15).

**Jeremiah** 31:15 told us in advance about the horrible murder of the Jewish children at the time of Herod (compare Matthew 2:16–18).

**Malachi** 3:1 prophesied the appearance of a messenger just prior to the manifestation of the Messiah's First Coming to prepare a people for Him. This prophecy found its fulfillment in John the Baptist, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (compare Matthew 11:7–10; Mark 1:2–4).

While the **book of Zechariah** deals primarily with the time of Christ's return—the Second Coming of the Messiah—it also contains several references to events that took place at the time of His First Coming.

Zechariah 9:9 reports that Christ—the just King offering salvation—would appear lowly, "riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey."

Isaiah 49:8–9 [and also Isaiah 61:1–2] foretold that the Messiah would preach the gospel and proclaim spiritual liberty (compare Luke 4:16–19).

Isaiah 50:6 prophesied that Christ would be beaten and spit on (compare Matthew 27:26, 30).

Isaiah 53:1 prophesied that the people would not believe the report or warning message brought by the Messiah (compare John 12:37–38).

Isaiah 53:3–5 prophesied that the Messiah would heal people, due to His own physical suffering and the stripes, which He would receive from the Romans (compare Matthew 8:16–17).

Isaiah 53:8 stated that He would be “taken from prison and from judgment,” foretelling that His “trial” and “conviction” would be illegal even according to human law (For more information on these startling prophecies, see Part 4 of our free booklet, *Jesus Christ—A Great Mystery*,” pages 41–65).

Isaiah 53:12 foretold that He would pray for the transgressors at the time of His death (Luke 23:34).

Isaiah 53:12 also stated that “He was numbered with the transgressors.” This was fulfilled in more than one way, by the two robbers crucified with Him, and by His own disciples, compare Matthew 27:38 and Luke 22:35–38.

Isaiah 53:12 also foretold that He would bear “the sin of many,” which found its obvious fulfillment in Christ’s death (compare Hebrews 1:1–3; 1 Peter 2:24).

The **Psalms** are also filled with prophetic references to Christ’s First Coming, a few of which are presented below:

Psalms 8:2 foretold that children would greet and welcome the Messiah at His First Coming (compare Matthew 21:16).

Psalms 16:10 foretold that the Messiah would not stay in the grave, but that He would be resurrected soon after His death so His body would not see corruption (Acts 2:25–35).

Psalms 22:7 revealed in advance that He would be ridiculed, while dying on the cross (Matthew 27:39–44).

Psalms 22:14, 17 prophesied that the Messiah would be crucified (Matthew 27:26; John 12:32–33).

Psalms 22:18 stated that soldiers would cast lots and divide His garment among themselves (Matthew 27:35).

## Interlude

### God’s Words in Zechariah 2:6–13

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As we have seen, Zechariah’s third vision of the “measuring line” clearly deals with prophetic events for us today and for our immediate future. It should, therefore, be self-evident that the statements immediately following that vision are likewise addressing events that will shortly come to pass.

Zechariah 2:6–13 reads: “(6) ‘Up, up! Flee from the land of the north,’ says the LORD; ‘for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven,’ says the LORD. (7) ‘Up, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon.’ (8) For thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye. (9) For surely I will shake My hand against them, and they shall become spoil for their servants. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. (10) Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,’ says the LORD. (11) ‘Many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. (12) And the LORD will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem. (13) Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!’”

#### **Who Is Speaking?**

This passage in Zechariah 2:6–13 is one of those remarkable passages in the Old Testament which prove that God is not just one Person. We read that the LORD says He will send the LORD. Notice carefully in verse 10 where the LORD says that He is coming and that He will dwell in the midst of His people—an obvious reference to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (more fully explained below). But

then, we read in verse 11 that God’s people will know that the “LORD of hosts” has sent “Me” [i.e., the LORD, mentioned in verse 10]. So we see that the FATHER—called the LORD of hosts—will send Jesus Christ—also referred to as the LORD—back to this earth. The word “LORD” in the Old Testament can therefore refer to either the Father or the Son—depending on the context.

*John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible* states that the Personage speaking here [i.e., the LORD] is “Christ, sent by [the LORD, i.e.] God the Father; and who will be known and owned by the Jews, as well as by the Gentiles...., when they shall be converted, and antichrist shall be destroyed.”

Our free booklet, “*God Is A Family*,” describes and explains this fact in more detail. Under the headline, “The Prophet Zechariah Understood,” the following is pointed out:

“Reading in Zechariah 4:8–9: ‘Moreover the word of the LORD [in Hebrew, ‘Yahweh’] came to me, saying: The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know That the LORD [in Hebrew, ‘Yahweh’] of hosts has sent Me [‘Yahweh’] to you.’

“We see in this passage that the LORD [‘Yahweh’] sent the LORD [‘Yahweh’]. The expression, ‘Yahweh,’ then is applied to both God beings. As we will see in more detail, both God the Father and Jesus Christ are referred to in Scripture as ‘Yahweh’—the ‘I AM’ (compare Exodus 3:14)—basically meaning, ‘the Eternal,’ or, ‘the Ever-living One.’ This fact alone proves that both the Father and Jesus Christ have always existed—that they are God beings, and that the Old Testament teaches that there is more than just one God being.

“Zechariah 6:9, 12–15 confirms this conclusion: “Then the word of the LORD [‘Yahweh’] came to me, saying... (v. 12) Then speak to him, saying, Thus says the LORD [‘Yahweh’] of hosts, saying: Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, And He shall build the temple of the LORD [‘Yahweh’]; Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD [‘Yahweh’]. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both. Now the elaborate crown shall be for a memorial in the temple of the LORD [‘Yahweh’]... Even those from afar shall come and build the

## Part 2

# Zechariah’s Additional Prophecies

(Zechariah Chapters 7–14)

## The First Coming of Jesus Christ

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Before we specifically address those Messianic prophecies in the book of Zechariah that pertain to the First Coming of Christ, we will briefly summarize some other Old Testament Scriptures that give precise details about the appearance of the Messiah about 2,000 years ago.

These passages can be found throughout the pages of the Old Testament—a fact which, alone, proves the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures.

For instance, we find literally dozens of biblical references to Christ’s First Coming in the **book of Isaiah**. We will quote here just a few selected examples:

Isaiah 7:14 states that “the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel (which means, literally, God with us.)” This prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus, as Matthew 1:18–23 tells us.

Isaiah 6:9–10 foretells the fact that the people would not listen to the Messiah’s preaching and warnings (compare Matthew 13:14–15).

Isaiah 9:1–2 states that the Messiah would stay temporarily in the land of Zebulun and Naphtali (compare Matthew 4:13–16).

Isaiah 11:1 foretold that the Messiah would be a descendant of Jesse and David (compare Matthew 1:5–6, 25; Luke 3:23, 31–32).

Isaiah 29:13 foretold that the people had rejected the commandments of God and replaced them with the traditions of men (compare Matthew 15:7–9).

Isaiah 42:1–4 foretold the exact manner of the Messiah’s preaching (compare Matthew 12:16–21).

temple “for salvation” (Hebrews 9:28).

He will be ruling as THE King and THE Priest—but He will be assisted by His spiritual temple—the immortal glorified members of the Church of God. At that time, true physical sacrifices will be brought “in righteousness” at a physical millennial temple in Jerusalem—a temple, which might have already been built just prior to Christ’s return.

temple of the LORD [‘Yahweh’]. Then you shall know that the LORD [‘Yahweh’] of hosts has sent Me to you. And this shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD [‘Yahweh’] your God.’

“Again, we see, that the God being, referred to as ‘Yahweh’ here, sent the second God being, also referred to as ‘Yahweh.’ It is ‘Yahweh’ who says that ‘Yahweh’ sent Him to the people. This passage does not refer to just a human messenger, or to an angel to convey the ‘word of the LORD,’ while the ‘LORD’ is speaking about Himself. Note that the New King James Bible capitalizes the word ‘Me’ in ‘...the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.’ They convey the intended meaning that the word ‘Me’ refers to one of the two God beings, and not to a human or angelic messenger.

“A third passage in the book of Zechariah, proving that the word ‘Yahweh’ applies to both God beings, can be found in chapter 2, verses 8–11. Again, we read what the LORD [‘Yahweh’] says, ‘And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD [‘Yahweh’] of hosts has sent Me to you’ (verse 11).”

### ***The Identity and Meaning of “Zion”***

We read in Zechariah 2:7 that “Zion,” which is “dwelling with the daughter of Babylon,” is to flee out of the “land of the north.” Who is Zion?

In the time of Abraham, the place where the city of Zion was built was known as Salem. It is from this city that Melchizedek reigned as king and priest of “God Most High” (Genesis 14:18). The meaning of Zion continued to expand in its usage throughout the Bible. Zion became synonymous with Jerusalem and Israel and was applied to the land and people that God had chosen, as well. For example, Jerusalem and its inhabitants are personified as the “daughter of Zion” (compare Isaiah 62:11; Zechariah 9:9; and, Matthew 21:5).

Zion is especially significant regarding the many prophetic statements concerning the establishment of God’s Kingdom on the earth and the location of His rule: “For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place: “This is My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it” (Psalm 132:13–14). Zion is called the “...city of God” (Psalm 87:3) and the “...city of the great King” (Psalm 48:2). Another reference states: “For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem” (Isaiah

2:3). Psalm 102, verse 16, explains: “For the LORD shall build up Zion; He shall appear in His glory.”

The physical location of Zion is the place on this earth where Jesus Christ will assemble those who will have a part in the first resurrection (or who are changed from mortal to immortal—compare 1 Corinthians 15:51–52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18): “Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father’s name written on their foreheads” (Revelation 14:1).

We see, then, that the meaning of Zion goes beyond its original designation as a Jebusite stronghold or fortress. Zion depicts the HEADQUARTERS for governmental administration of God’s rule in and from heaven; for a united Israel under King David; and eventually for the rule of God’s government over mankind. Notably, Zion also describes the people and the land of promise as a symbol of the hope that God has prepared for all nations!

As pointed out above, “Zion” can refer to the chosen people of God. This means that it can refer to and include, symbolically, the members of the New Testament Church of God. Christ will rule with His saints—those Spirit-born Church members—from Jerusalem. As “Zion” can refer to a physical location as well as the physical people of Israel and Judah, so it can also refer to the people of spiritual Israel—true Christians.

God’s admonition to “Zion” to flee out of the “land of the north” is to be understood mostly within this context. As we will point out below, God warns true Christians to separate themselves, spiritually, from the end-time Babylonian system, as He will destroy it in due time because of its sins.

### **Time Setting**

As stated earlier in this booklet, Zechariah’s prophecy addresses our time. For example, we read in Zechariah 2:11 that many nations will join God “in that day.” The phrase, “in that day,” refers ALWAYS to the time just prior to, or subsequent to Christ’s return. Another expression would be, “the day of the Lord.”

A similar description of the events just following Christ’s return and His rule in Zion [Jerusalem] can be found in Isaiah 2 (mentioned above). We read in Isaiah 2:2–4: “Now it shall come to pass in the

However, since the possibility of the building of a physical temple remains on the immediate horizon of prophetic events, occurrences may well happen that will lead to a more literal application of this prophecy. Indeed, the construction of the new Temple may be accomplished through the support of powerful groups outside of modern Israel. As it was in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, there might be great opposition to the Jews when they were to undertake the rebuilding of such a symbolic representation of the Jewish claims to the city of Jerusalem and the land of Israel.

### **“And This Shall Come to Pass...”**

As mentioned before, the phrase in verse 15, “Then you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you...” refers to the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Ultimately, people will know that God the Father sent His Son to die for the world, and that it is He who will return as the all-powerful and glorious King of kings and Lord of lords. The remainder of verse 15 is also quite interesting. It says:

“And this shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.”

*Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible* explains this phrase in this way:

“Not as though the coming of Christ depended upon their faithfulness, but their share in it. ‘Ye shall know (he had said) that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you;’ but whether this knowledge should reach to individuals, depends upon their obedience and their willingness to know...”

“‘For none of the wicked,’ Daniel says, ‘shall understand’ [Daniel 12:10]... So our Lord said, ‘If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of Myself’ [John 7:17]...”

The coronation of the High Priest Joshua is a remarkable prophecy for the return of the Messiah and the beginning of His millennial rule here on earth. Not until then will true justice and mercy, as well as peace, become known to and experienced by all men. The time of man’s misrule, under the deception of Satan, will have ended.

Christ is still building His spiritual temple today, allowing fallible human beings to build IN His temple, under His guidance and leadership. He will soon return to this earth and especially to His spiritual

“God the Father ‘so loved the world, that He gave His Only-Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life’ [John 3:16]; and God the Son ‘is our peace, who hath made both one, that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the Cross, and came and preached peace to them which were afar off and to them that were nigh’ [Ephesians 2:14, 16–17].”

*Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible* offers an additional explanation:

“... the counsel of peace shall be between... the Father and the Son... Or, rather,... Between... [the] priestly and kingly office of Jesus Christ...”

A similar explanation is given by the *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary*:

“Peace between the kingly and priestly attributes of Messiah implies the harmonizing of the [seemingly] conflicting claims of God’s justice as a King, and His love as a Father and Priest. Hence is produced peace to man... It is only by being pardoned through His atonement and ruled by His laws, that we can find ‘peace.’”

### **“Those From Afar Shall Build in the Temple”**

We are also told that “Even those from afar shall come and build [in] the temple of the LORD” (compare Zechariah 6:15).

The *Ryrie Study Bible* explains that this is a reference to the Millennium, when Gentiles will join in building the millennial temple.

However, *Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible* applies this reference to the spiritual temple, the New Testament church, stating:

“They who came from Babylon with offerings to God, became types of the Gentiles, of whom the Apostle says, ‘Now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off have become nigh through the blood of Christ’ [Ephesians 2:13];... and ‘the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call’ [Acts 2:39].”

A similar explanation is given by *John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible*:

“And they that are afar off shall come... Into the temple; not the material temple... but into the spiritual temple, the church; and [it] is a prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, who are said to be ‘afar off’...”

latter days That... all nations shall flow to it [the Lord’s house, verse 1]. Many people shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”

We also read, in Zechariah 2:6, that God has spread abroad Zion like “the FOUR WINDS OF HEAVEN.” This can be understood as a reference to the physical end-time descendants of the ancient houses of Israel and Judah who will be enslaved in many countries. Jeremiah 23:8 prophesies that Christ, when He returns, will free the remnants of Israel and Judah from their captivity:

“... ‘As the LORD lives who brought up and led the descendants of the house of Israel from the NORTH COUNTRY and from ALL THE COUNTRIES where I had driven them.’” Compare also Jeremiah 3:18; 16:14–15.

These passages could also refer to Christ’s disciples—members of spiritual Israel—the Church of God. We read in Matthew 24:31 that Christ, at His return, “will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect FROM THE FOUR WINDS, from ONE END OF HEAVEN to the other.”

### **Flee from Babylon**

We are told, in Zechariah 2:6–7, that the daughter of Zion is to flee and escape from the “land of the north”—the “daughter of Babylon.”

*Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible* explains that “The north country, although its capital and center was Babylon, was the whole Babylonian empire, called ‘the North’... because its invasions always came upon Israel from the north.”

End-time Israel will be conquered by the “king of the North” (Daniel 11:40–42). This king will be the last leader of the revived Holy Roman Empire. He is also referred to as the “beast” in the book of Revelation. He will be the military leader of modern Babylon.

Even though the end-time relevance of God’s admonition to flee from or escape out of the land of the north—i.e., modern Babylon—can be hardly overlooked, some commentaries try to apply this warning only to the Jews at the time of Zechariah. However, the New Testament repeats God’s warning that is addressed to His people in the

end time. Zechariah's admonition to Zion to escape from the "land of the north" is foremost directed at spiritual Israel—the "Church of God." So is the following warning in Revelation 18:4: "And I heard another voice from heaven saying, 'Come out of her [Babylon, verse 2], my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.'"

Additional end-time warnings pertaining to the same circumstances can be found in Jeremiah 50:8 and Jeremiah 51:6, 45.

God does not want His people to dwell with the "DAUGHTER OF Babylon"—the revived modern Babylonian system. The commentary of *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible* states: "... it may be rendered, '[Zion] inhabits the daughter of Babylon';... dwells in [her] cities, towns, and villages, belonging to it."

### **Be Silent, for God is Aroused**

Zechariah 2:13 tells us to be silent—to stand in awe and amazement—when Christ returns to this earth to take vengeance on the enemies of God (2 Thessalonians 1:6–10; Revelation 6:10).

The commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* explains:

"[God] is raised up out of his holy habitation—that is, out of heaven... to judge and avenge His people... the call to all to 'be silent' is... when God has come forth from heaven where so long He has dwelt unseen, and is about to inflict vengeance on the foe, before taking up His dwelling in Zion and the temple... God is now 'silent' while the Gentile foe speaks arrogance against His people; but 'our God shall come and no longer keep silence'; then in turn must all flesh 'be silent' before Him."

Zechariah's prophecy is most assuredly directed at us today. It contains a warning to separate ourselves—in conduct and in mind—from this wicked world and its environment, which will reach its evil culmination in a future revival of the ancient Roman Empire. The Bible calls this last revival "Mystery, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth" (Revelation 17:5). Christ will return soon to avenge His people and to spoil those who spoiled them (compare Zechariah 2:8–9). Until that time, God's true servants must be sober and of a sound mind, resisting the temptation of wanting to belong to and befriend the people of this world—this Babylonian system—in order to follow their bad example. After all, this present evil age, with its lusts and passions, will pass away very soon.

and priest, as it is said, 'Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedec.' When the Christ should reign, He should not cease to be our Priest..."

### **Crowns for a Memorial**

We should also take note of the fact that certain named individuals from Babylon brought gifts of silver and gold (verses 10 and 11) to be used for the construction of elaborate crowns for Joshua. These crowns were URGENTLY made "the same day" "for a memorial" (compare verse 14).

*Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible* states in this context:

"They brought a passing gift, but it should be for a lasting memorial in their behalf... When Midian had been smitten before Israel, and not one of Israel had been slain, they brought all the gold which had accrued to them, and 'Moses and Eleazar took the gold, and brought it into the tabernacle, a memorial for the children of Israel before the Lord' [Numbers 31:50, 54]. So the angel said to Cornelius, 'thy prayers and thy alms are come up for a memorial before God' [Acts 10:4, 31]."

*The Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary* adds: "... a memorial—deposited in the temple, to the honor of the donors; a memorial, too, of the coronation of Joshua, to remind all of Messiah, the promised antitypical king-priest, soon to come."

Our work for God is never in vain (Revelation 14:13)—even though it might sometimes seem to us that way (compare Isaiah 49:4). God does remember our hard labor and diligent service (Malachi 3:16–18). They are in God's memory—a memorial! He will not forget that we are "doers of the work" (James 1:25), and that through our work, we accelerate and HASTEN the coming of the LORD (2 Peter 3:12).

### **"Counsel of Peace Between Them Both"**

We also read in Zechariah 6:13 that Christ shall be a priest on His throne and that "the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

*Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible* points out:

"There is a counsel of peace between [Christ] and the Father whose temple He builds. The Will of the Father and the Son is one. Both had one Will of love toward us, the salvation of the world, bringing forth peace through our redemption."

would be completed by Zerubbabel (see 4:9), the temple referred to here may be the future temple of the messianic kingdom... The temple of Zerubbabel was a prophetic symbol of the temple that is still to come..."

#### *A Physical Temple Just Prior to Christ's Return*

It is also possible that the reference to a future temple, which will be built by the BRANCH, could relate to a physical temple still to be built in Jerusalem—just prior to the return of Christ. We know from Scripture that the Jews will bring sacrifices to Jerusalem. If there is a physical temple, then these sacrifices would be brought to that temple, until they are—temporarily—abolished by a European power.

As we discussed in our free booklet, *"Is That in the Bible?—The Mysteries of the Book of Revelation?"*, and as will also be pointed out in *Chapter 13* of this booklet, strong biblical evidence exists for the rebuilding of a temple in the modern Jewish nation of Israel.

It would also be possible that it is THAT temple which will survive the partial end-time destruction of the city of Jerusalem, which is described as the millennial temple in the book of Ezekiel.

#### **Crowns on Joshua's Head**

We also read in verses 11 and 14 that crowns were placed on Joshua's head. Even though the *New King James Bible* speaks of only one crown, the literal text says, "crowns," but uses a SINGULAR, not a plural VERB, in relationship to the crowns, signifying unity and harmony.

*John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible* states:

"... both the crown of the priesthood and the crown of the kingdom should meet in [Joshua's] antitype Christ, who is said to have on [His] head many crowns [Revelation 19:12]... The double crown is placed on Joshua's head, symbolizing that the true priesthood and the kingdom shall be conferred on the one Messiah... It was a thing before unknown in the Levitical priesthood that the same person should wear at once the crown of a king and that of a high priest..."

*The Nelson Study Bible* adds: "... In the Messiah the two offices of king and priest will be united..."

*Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible* emphasizes this important additional aspect in his comment to verse 13: "He shall be at once king

## The Fourth Vision The High Priest

(Zechariah 3:1–10)

As is the case with all nine visions given to Zechariah, the fourth vision of the high priest relates foremost to our days, even though it might also refer to an initial fulfillment at the time of Zechariah.

Zechariah 3:1–10 reads: "(1) Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the [angel] of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. (2) And the LORD said to Satan, 'The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?' (3) Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the [angel]. (4) Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, 'Take away the filthy garments from him.' And to him He said, 'See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes.' (5) And I said, 'Let them put a clean turban on his head.' So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put clothes on him. And the [angel] of the LORD stood by. (6) Then the [angel] of the LORD admonished Joshua, saying, (7) 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "If you will walk in My ways, And if you will keep My command, then you shall also judge My house, And likewise have charge of My courts; I will give you places to walk Among those who stand here. (8) Hear, O Joshua, the high priest, You and your companions who sit before you, For they are a wondrous sign; For behold I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH. (9) For behold, the stone That I have laid before Joshua: Upon the stone are seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave its inscription,' Says the LORD of hosts, 'And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. (10) In that day,' says the LORD of hosts, 'Every-one will invite his neighbor Under the vine and under his fig tree.'""

## **A Glimpse of the Millennium**

The nine visions of Zechariah are clearly pointing at the last days and the Millennium. Regarding the fourth vision at issue, we find obvious millennial descriptions. First, we read in Zechariah 3:2 that the LORD has chosen Jerusalem, which will occur when Christ returns (compare Zechariah 2:12). Zechariah 3:10 uses the phrase, “in that day”—an expression describing the time just prior to and subsequent to Christ’s return. That verse says that “in that day,” everyone will invite his neighbor under his vine and fig tree. This is a clear reference to the Millennium, which will begin after Christ has returned

Describing the “latter days” and the beginning of the Millennium, Micah says in Micah 4:4: “But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree...” This expression also points at a time of peace and security; the latter half of verse 4 continues: “And no one shall make them afraid.” As a temporary forerunner of certain millennial conditions, 1 Kings 4:25 describes peace and security under King Solomon in this way: “And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, each man under his vine and his fig tree... all the days of Solomon.”

The commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* adds: “under ... vine ...[and] fig tree’—[an] emblem of tranquil prosperity... Type of spiritual peace with God through Christ... and of millennial blessedness.”

### **“In One Day”**

Zechariah 3:9 quotes the LORD as saying that He will remove the iniquity of the land “in one day.” Again, this is a reference to the time of Jesus Christ’s return (1 Thessalonians 5:2, 4). He is also the “BRANCH,” mentioned in Zechariah 3:8 (compare also Zechariah 6:12, as well as Isaiah 4:2; 11:1; and Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15).

We read, in Zechariah 14:4, that “*in that day* His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives.” We are also told, in Zechariah 14:6–7, that “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 [God the Father]—neither day nor night. But at evening time it shall happen That it will be light.”

During this one day of 24 hours in length, Christ will “fight against those nations” which battled against Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:2–3),

We find a similar explanation in the *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary*: “Christ ‘builds the temple’... His people ‘build in the temple.’”

### **The New Testament Church**

Some commentaries understand the temple to refer to the New Testament Church that Jesus Christ promised to build.

*Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible* writes:

“The material temple was soon to be finished, and that by Zerubbabel, to whom this had been promised [Zechariah 4:10], not by Joshua. It was then a new temple, to be built from the foundation, of which He Himself was to be ‘the foundation’... as He said, ‘On this rock I will build My Church’... and in Him ‘all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple to the Lord’ [Ephesians 2:21].”

*John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible* concurs: “... and [He] shall build the temple of the Lord; not a material temple, but the spiritual temple, the Church...”

### **The Millennial Physical Temple**

Others conclude that the reference to the temple to be built by the BRANCH refers also—or primarily—to a physical temple in the Millennium.

The *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary* states:

“The promise of the future true building of the spiritual temple by Messiah... is an earnest to assure the Jews, that the material temple will be built by Joshua and Zerubbabel, in spite of all seeming obstacles. It also raises their thoughts beyond the material to the spiritual temple, and also to the future glorious temple, to be reared in Israel under Messiah’s superintendence... The repetition of the same clause [compare Zechariah 6:12 and 13] gives emphasis to the statement as to Messiah’s work.”

The *Ryrie Study Bible* adds: “The crowning of Joshua foreshadowed the crowning of Messiah, who at His second coming will build the (millennial) temple.”

*The Nelson Study Bible* agrees, stating:

“The Messiah Himself will build the temple of the Lord. Since the restoration temple (the second temple) was already being built and

nevertheless foreshadows a much more important event that will take place at the time of Christ's return. It is thus filled with symbolic references to the end time.

For instance, even the names listed in verse 10 are of deep symbolic significance. As the *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary* explains, Heldai means "robust" (or, according to *Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible*, "The Lord's World"—which would refer to the Millennium, as today, this is NOT God's world); Tobijah means, "the goodness of God"; and Jedaiah means, "God knows" (or, "God cares for," according to *Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible*).

In addition, several commentaries point out that Heldai was also called Helem (in verse 14), and that Joshua (which means, "God founds" or "God supports") was also called Hen (meaning "favor"), as the same person often had two names. Also, the meaning of "Zephaniah" (in verse 14) is, "The LORD hides."

### **The BRANCH**

It is obvious that the reference to the "BRANCH" in verse 12 describes Jesus Christ, the Messiah—the God of the Old Testament. This shows that the entire passage is millennial.

*Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible* states to verse 12: "Not for himself, but for Christ, whose name Joshua bare, and whose Priesthood and Princedom he represented, was the crown given him. The prophet had already foretold the Messiah, under the name of the Branch."

The correct understanding of the identity of "the BRANCH" as the Messiah (compare Jeremiah 33:15)—and not as Zerubbabel, as the *Broadman Bible Commentary* erroneously concludes—has consequences for the correct understanding of the remainder of the entire passage.

### **The Building of the Temple**

We are told in Zechariah 6:12 that it is the BRANCH—Jesus Christ—who will build the temple. Verse 15 says that some from afar will come to build IN the temple.

*Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible* explains verse 15 in this way: "And build in—or upon, the temple of the Lord... Not 'build it' for it was to be built by 'the Branch,' but 'build on,' labor on, it. It was a building, which should continually be enlarged..."

and the plague inflicted on them will be terrible (compare Zechariah 14:12–15). Christ will remove the iniquity of the land in one day (Zechariah 3:9) by destroying those who act wickedly.

We are also told, in Isaiah 66:7–9, that the Church of God will "deliver" her children in "one day." Spirit begotten Christians will then be born again—they will be immortal Spirit beings. At the moment of their resurrection, or change to immortality, they will be totally sinless—incapable of sinning anymore. Whatever iniquity they still had will be forgiven, washed away and extinguished.

### **The End-Time "Joshua"**

Since the context of Zechariah's vision of the "high priest" Joshua deals with the time of Christ's return and the Millennium, God's dealings with Joshua himself must also have prophetic and future application. Even though Joshua was a literal high priest at the time of Zechariah, the vision addresses foremost an end-time religious figure who obtains forgiveness of sins and who is given clean clothes—representing godly righteousness. "Filthy clothes," on the other hand, describe sinful conduct (compare Isaiah 64:6 and Proverbs 30:12).

### **Clean Clothes**

We read in Revelation 19:7–8: "Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints."

We read in the book of Revelation about a great multitude "of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands" (Revelation 7:9). These are those "who come out of the great tribulation, and WASHED THEIR ROBES AND MADE THEM WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB" (verse 14). In other words, they repented of their sins, accepted the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, obtained forgiveness and were clothed with clean garments, symbolizing God's righteousness.

Christ also tells the angel or leader of the end-time church of the Laodiceans to buy from Him "white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your

eyes with eye salve, that you may see” (Revelation 3:14, 18). As the leader of the church of Laodicea is portrayed as reflecting the attitude of the entire church of Laodicea, so Joshua’s unclean clothes reflect not just his own unrighteousness, but also the attitude and condition of the people whom he, as “high priest,” represents before God.

We can, therefore, conclude that the end-time “Joshua”—a spiritual leader in the Church of God—as well as many members of the end-time Church of God, will be spiritually cleansed. This might perhaps occur during the time of the Great Tribulation.

“Joshua” is described as “a brand plucked from the fire” (Zechariah 3:2); that is, he will be saved from Gehenna fire, which will burn up the incorrigibly wicked. Satan, the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10), will try to “object” to the role and function that God will bestow on “Joshua.” Satan will try to remind God of Joshua’s former sinful conduct. But God will respond by telling the devil that Joshua has received forgiveness, and that his former sins will be remembered “no more.”

#### *Inscription on the Stone*

At the same time, Joshua is reminded (compare Zechariah 3:7) to continue walking in the commandments of God, indicating that he might not have been that diligent before in doing so. If he proves faithful, God will engrave an inscription on the stone that He has laid before Joshua (compare Zechariah 3:9). This reminds us of Christ’s promise to His faithful disciples as recorded in Revelation 2:17: “To him who overcomes I will give... a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”

#### *The Seven Eyes*

In addition, we read in Zechariah 3:9 that there are “seven eyes” on the stone. These seven eyes are identified as seven angels or powerful spirit beings. We read in Zechariah 4:10: “... for these seven rejoice to see The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth.” That God refers in the vision of the high priest to these seven angels shows their role in guiding and protecting Joshua, since they are “ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation” (Hebrews 1:14).

## The Ninth Vision

### The Coronation of the High Priest Joshua

(Zechariah 6:9–15)

We mentioned earlier, when discussing the fourth vision of the High Priest Joshua, in Zechariah 3:1–10, that Joshua is a type—a forerunner—of Jesus Christ. This fact becomes even more obvious in the ninth vision, which describes the coronation of Joshua.

Zechariah 6:9–15 reads: “(9) Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying: (10) ‘Receive the gift from the captives—from Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, who have come from Babylon—and go the same day and enter the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah. (11) Take the silver and gold, make elaborate crowns [according to the literal text, see margin of the *New King James Bible*], and set [them] on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest. (12) Then speak to him, saying, “Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: ‘Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, and He shall build the temple of the LORD; (13) Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear the glory, And shall sit and rule on His throne; So He shall be a priest on His throne, And the counsel of peace shall be between them both.’” (14) Now the elaborate crowns [not “crown,” see comment above] shall be for a memorial in the temple of the LORD for Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen the son of Zephaniah. (15) Even those from afar shall come and build IN [as it should say, compare the *Authorized Version*] the temple of the LORD. Then you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. And this shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.’”

#### **Symbolic Names**

This passage, although describing a real event at the time of Joshua,

mountains of bronze or brass might picture God's firm and immovable judgment on disobedient nations.

We must point out, however, that the four spirit beings are sent out from heaven (Zechariah 6:5), eager to walk the earth (verse 7). Therefore, these two mountains ought to be understood as spiritual mountains in heaven—as the Bible records the existence of a spiritual Mount Zion in heaven (compare Hebrews 12:22–23; Isaiah 14:13–14; Ezekiel 28:14, 16).

### ***“Rest to My Spirit in the North Country”***

Commentaries are divided as to the meaning of Zechariah 6:8, saying that the angels have given “rest to My Spirit in the north country.” *Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible* seems to have the correct explanation, pointing out that the phrase should be translated as “‘These have quieted My spirit in the north country’ [compare *Authorized Version*], Or rather, ‘have made My anger to rest’ on, that is, have carried it thither and deposited it there, made it to rest upon them, as its abode, as John saith of the unbelieving, ‘The wrath of God abideth on him’ [John 3:36].”

The commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* agrees, stating that the angels “caused My ANGER to rest” on Babylon [Ecclesiastes 10:4; Ezekiel 5:13].”

God will destroy modern Babylon in His anger (compare Revelation 18:4–6, 8; 14:8). As we see in Zechariah's vision, He will do so with the help of His angels. This fact seems to be confirmed in Revelation 18:21, where we read: “Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, ‘Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore.’”

God's judgment on this disobedient world is sure and certain, and it will be swift. Most people will be caught unaware, but **God warns His servants today to be awake and to watch world events, so that they can be prepared and ready for Christ's return** (compare 1 Thesalonians 5:1–4; Luke 21:28; Matthew 24:32–33, 44).

### ***A Wondrous Sign***

Zechariah 3:8 identifies Joshua and his companions as a wondrous sign. *The Nelson Study Bible* writes: “Joshua and his companions were a sign because the reinstatement of the priesthood made public God's continuing intention to fulfill His promises to His people,” including the promise of the First Coming of the “Branch”—the Messiah.

But since Zechariah's prophecy deals foremost with end-time events, the activities of a future Joshua and his companions will be a public sign—a witness or proof—for the return of Jesus Christ.

### ***Judge in God's House***

We are also told that Joshua is destined to judge God's house and to have charge of His courts, and that God will give him places to walk among his companions (Zechariah 3:7). This seems to imply a high position in God's Kingdom, mainly in a priestly function. All of God's people are promised to become kings and priests in the Kingdom (Revelation 5:10), ruling in the Millennium under the King of kings and the High Priest—Jesus Christ. But some may have a more predominant role as kings (compare Christ's statements to the early apostles in Matthew 19:28), while others may fulfill primarily responsibilities as priests (which is apparently a task set aside for the end-time Joshua).

Joshua might be given an important role during the Millennium to judge “God's house”—which could refer to the physical descendants of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah. The Bible identifies the people of Israel and Judah as God's people; therefore, the house of Israel could likewise be designated, in that sense, as “God's house,” which is in need of God's judgment (compare Amos 9:8–10; notice also Micah 4:1–2).

That Joshua will also have charge of “God's courts” might refer to an important priestly position in the millennial temple, perhaps in a supervising capacity of physical Levites who will administer the temple service.

It is more likely, however, that God's invitation to the end-time Joshua to judge God's house and to have charge of His courts refers to a leadership position within the end-time Church of God, just prior to Christ's return. We read that “the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God”—the Church (1 Peter 4:17). Also, Paul wrote that the Church should judge those who are inside

(1 Corinthians 5:12; compare 1 Corinthians 6:2–3).

Further, the Church is called the temple of God (1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21). The physical temple included courts (Psalm 65:4; 84:2, 10). Psalm 116:18–19 states: “I will pay my vows to the LORD Now in the presence of all His people, In the courts of the LORD’s house, In the midst of you, O Jerusalem...”

### **Joshua is Symbolic of Jesus Christ**

The ultimate fulfillment of the events surrounding an end-time “Joshua” point to, and are symbolic of, the role of THE High Priest—Jesus Christ.

As the commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* points out: “The restoration of the glory of the priesthood is implied: first, partially, at the completion of the second temple; fully realized in the great High Priest Jesus, whose name is identical with Joshua [Hebrews 4:8], the Representative of Israel, the ‘kingdom of priests’ [Exodus 19:6]; once clad in the filthy garments of our vileness, but being the chosen of the Father... He hath by death ceased from sin, and in garments of glory entered the heavenly holy place as our High Priest [Hebrews 8:1; 9:24].”

*Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible* adds: “Clothed him with garments’... [is] Referring to the vestments of the high priest. The true high priest, who is over the house of God, will establish his office among them [the people of Israel and Judah], when they shall acknowledge him as their Messiah, and seek redemption in the blood of the sacrifice which he has offered for their sins; and not for theirs only, but for the sins of the whole world.”

The stone, mentioned in Zechariah 3:9, which is placed before Joshua, also points to Jesus Christ. *Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible* writes:

“Alluding no doubt to the foundation stone of the temple: but this represented Christ Jesus: ‘Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a Stone, a tried stone, a precious Corner Stone, a Sure Foundation,’ [Isaiah] 28:16. This means Christ, and none other; on him his whole Church rests, as a building does on its foundation.” Compare also Ephesians 2:20–21.

The *Scofield Reference Notes* explains further:

“The vision... speaks of the Lord’s judgments upon the Gentile nations north and south in the day of the Lord...”

The Day of the Lord refers to the time when God begins to intervene actively in human affairs by pouring out His wrath on disobedient humanity—commencing about one year prior to Christ’s return. (For more information, please read our free booklet, “*The Great Tribulation and the Day of the Lord.*”)

Note also the following comments in the *Ryrie Study Bible*:

“... the vision may also depict the final subjugation of the world, especially ‘Babylon,’ during the Tribulation days...”

Even though the commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* applies Zechariah’s vision foremost to the destruction of world-ruling empires in Old Testament times, it also allows for an end-time fulfillment. It points out that the “strong steeds” in verse 7 seem “to apply to all four horses, and here especially to the ‘red.’ Their office is to complete hereafter the work already in part executed by the previous three who have stilled Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Graeco-Macedonia; namely, to punish finally the last great foe of Israel, the final form assumed by the fourth world kingdom, Rome, which is to continue down to the second advent of Christ [and which is identified in Revelation 17 as the modern Babylonian system]. Hence they ‘walk to and fro through the earth,’ counterworking Satan’s ‘going to and fro in the earth’... in connection with the last awful development of the fourth world kingdom.”

### **Two Mountains**

We read in verse 1 that the four horses and their chariots came from “between two mountains” of “bronze” or “brass” (*Authorized Version*).

The commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* speculates that the “two mountains” might refer to “the valley of Jehoshaphat, between Moriah and Mount Olivet... or the valley between Zion and Moriah, where the Lord [will be, Zechariah 2:10], and whence He sends forth His ministers of judgment on the heathen...” The commentary continues that “bronze” or “brass” is “the metal among the ancients representing hard solidity; so [is] the immovable and resistless firmness of God’s people (compare Jeremiah 1:18),” implying that the two

### **Four Horses**

The Bible tells us very distinctly who and what the four horses with their chariots are. Zechariah 6:5 says that they are “four spirits of heaven,” that is, angelic beings.

A few commentaries accept this explanation. For instance, *Scofield Reference Notes* points out:

“That which is symbolized by the four chariots with their horses is not the four world-empires of Daniel, but ‘the four spirits of heaven which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth...’ These ‘spirits’ are angels...”

*Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible* agrees, stating:

“These are the four spirits of the heavens—They cannot be literal winds: for spirits, not winds, stand before God, as His servants, as in Job, ‘the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord’...”

### **North Country**

Since two of the four horses in Zechariah’s vision are sent into the “north country,” special emphasis is placed on its judgment. Most commentaries agree that the “north country,” as referred to in Zechariah 6:6 and 8, speaks of Babylon. The commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* states: “... ‘the north country,’ that is, Babylon...” The commentary adds: “The ‘white’ [horses] go after the ‘black’ horses to the same country [Babylon]; two sets being sent to it because of its greater cruelty and guilt...”

The commentary continues that the “south country” (mentioned in Zechariah 6:6) signifies “Egypt, the other great foe of God’s people.”

### **Judgment and Punishment of Gentile Nations**

We need to remember that the judgment and punishment of Gentile nations, as described in Zechariah’s vision, is mainly of future application.

The “north” country applies to MODERN Babylon, as described in Revelation 17 and 18. In addition, an interesting end-time reference to MODERN Egypt is found in Daniel 11:42–43, stating that “the land of Egypt shall not escape” the king of the North who will have “power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt.”

On the other hand, Zechariah’s prophecy cannot be understood as speaking exclusively of Jesus Christ. Certain statements just do not apply to Christ at all (compare Zechariah 3:6–7). In addition, Joshua is pictured as a SIGN for the coming BRANCH (the Messiah), showing that foremost, a human being is addressed who will arise in the end time.

Zechariah’s fourth vision of the high priest has great prophetic significance for us today and our future, since it addresses the time of Christ’s return and the establishment of God’s Kingdom on earth, when the Millennium begins. May God speed those days.

# The Eighth Vision The Four Chariots

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(Zechariah 6:1–8)

In Zechariah 6:1–8, Zechariah’s eighth vision is described as follows: “(1) Then I turned and raised my eyes and looked, and behold, four chariots were coming from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of bronze. (2) With the first chariot were red horses, with the second chariot black horses, (3) with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot dappled horses—strong steeds. (4) Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, ‘What are these, my lord?’ (5) And the angel answered and said to me, ‘These are four spirits of heaven, who go out from their station before the LORD of all the earth. (6) The one with the black horses is going to the north country, the white are going after them, and the dappled are going toward the south country.’ (7) Then the strong steeds went out, eager to go, that they might walk to and fro throughout the earth. And He said, ‘Go, walk to and fro throughout the earth.’ So they walked to and fro throughout the earth. (8) And He called to me, and spoke to me, saying, ‘See, those who go toward the north country have given rest to My Spirit in the north country.’”

Many commentaries try to explain this vision by identifying the four chariots and horses as the world-ruling ancient empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Or, they identify them as the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, i.e., religious deception, war, famine and disease epidemics. However, in doing so, they miss the entire point of the vision, and replace the clear biblical explanation with human reasoning.

Evaluating the meaning of this vision becomes clearer when we consider the following points:

told today to “Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues” (Revelation 18:4). In the future, wickedness will be placed “forever in Babylon” (compare *Geneva Study Bible*); that is, the burned and destroyed location and area of the modern city of Babylon will become a “house” for demons during the time of the Millennium.

As *Wesley’s Notes* put it, the house built for the personified wickedness is not going to be built “in mercy, but in judgment.” She will be “set there... on its base” (Zechariah 5:11); that is, she “shall be confined without hope of release.”

This reminds us that Satan, the one behind this evil system, will also be “bound” by an angel “for a thousand years.” He will be cast “into the bottomless pit” and he will be “shut up,” and a “seal” will be set on him, “so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years [of the Millennium] were finished” (compare Revelation 20:1–3).

Zechariah’s vision of the woman in the basket is meant to give us **hope for the future!** Even though wickedness and idolatry prevail in this present evil world, the time will come when Jesus Christ will make an end to wickedness. God WILL remember modern Babylon’s iniquities (Revelation 18:5). We read that God will judge “the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He [will avenge] on her the blood of His servants shed by her” (Revelation 19:2).

“Modern Babylon” will not be able to deceive people in the new world to come. No one following God will want to “dwell” there. Her future “house” or “home” will be reserved for demons and evil spirits. By contrast, each child of God will dwell “in the temple of... God” (Revelation 3:12).

## The Fifth Vision

### The Lampstand and the Two Olive Trees

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(Zechariah 4:1–14)

As we mentioned before, the nine visions in the book of Zechariah relate foremost to our days, even though some of them might also refer to a preliminary fulfillment at the time of Zechariah.

Zechariah 4:1–14 reads: “(1) Now the angel who talked with me came back and wakened me, as a man who is wakened out of his sleep. (2) And he said to me, ‘What do you see?’ So I said, ‘I am looking, and there is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. (3) Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left.’ (4) So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, ‘What are these, my lord?’ (5) Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, ‘Do you not know what these are?’ And I said, ‘No, my lord.’ (6) So he answered and said to me: ‘This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” Says the LORD of hosts. (7) “Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone With shouts of ‘Grace, grace to it!’” (8) Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, (9) ‘The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it. Then you will know That the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. (10) For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see The plumbline in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth.’ (11) Then I answered and said to him, ‘What are these two olive trees—at the right of the lampstand and at its left?’ (12) And I further answered and said to him, ‘What are these two olive branches that drip into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden oil drains?’

(13) Then he answered me and said, 'Do you not know what these are?' And I said, 'No, my lord.' (14) So he said, "These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth."

### **General Overview of the Meaning of the Vision**

*John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible* contains the following remarks: "... this [vision] represents, under the type of Zerubbabel building the temple, the building of the church by Christ; and which is done and finished, not by might or power of man, but by the Spirit, notwithstanding all opposition, and contempt of it... The temple was a type of the church, and Zerubbabel a type of Christ..."

A similar comment can be found in *Albert Barnes' Notes on the Bible*:

"For though in the first instance the words, 'the hands of Zerubbabel etc.,' relate to the building of the material temple, and announce its completion through Zerubbabel, yet the inference, 'and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you,' shows that the meaning is not exhausted thereby, but that here too this building is mentioned only as a type of the building of the spiritual temple; and the completion of the typical temple is but a pledge of the completion of the true temple [the Church of God, compare 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:19–22]..."

### **The Great Mountain**

Regarding the great mountain in Zechariah 4:7, which will become a plain, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible* points out:

"This is said in reference to those who opposed the building of the temple, as Sanballat, and others; or the Persian monarchy, and Babylon the capital of it; a mountain being a symbol of a kingdom, or capital city; so Babylon is called... hence the Targum paraphrases the words thus, 'how art thou accounted a foolish kingdom before Zerubbabel!' and may denote the opposition made to Christ, and to the building of his church... and may include all the enemies of the church and people of God, as sin, Satan, and the world; who, though they may look like high and great mountains, and make much opposition, and throw many difficulties in their way, yet in the issue will [be] of no avail..."

Babylonian goddess Ishtar [ancient name for Easter] [or]... the figure of a goddess representing idol worship in general."

### **Woman Called Wickedness**

The modern application of the woman in the basket, called wickedness, is explained by *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*, as follows:

"And he said, This is wickedness, ... particularly [referring to] the wicked one, the man of sin and son of perdition... that wicked lawless one, [2 Thessalonians 2:8] yea, wickedness itself, being extremely wicked, a sink of sin and of all abominations."

The man of sin, as described in 2 Thessalonians 2:3, refers to the future RELIGIOUS head of modern Babylon, who is also identified as the "false prophet" in the book of Revelation. He will, indeed, be a wicked and evil person, representing an evil and wicked system (compare Revelation 18:23–24).

### **Meaning of the Basket**

With this understanding, let us explore the additional meaning of the prophecy in Zechariah 5. We read that the woman, personifying worldwide wickedness or iniquity, is confined to a basket or container, but she is trying, unsuccessfully, to escape from her prison (verses 7–8). This gives us the time setting of Zechariah's vision—it describes the woman's future judgment—which will occur when Jesus Christ returns. The modern CITY of Babylon the great—as well as the SYSTEM which it represents—will be destroyed with fire (Revelation 18:8, 21; 19:3). Depending on the translation, it will become a "dwelling place" or a "habitation" or a "house" (*Elberfelder Bibel*, *Menge Bibel* and *Luther Bibel* all say: "Behausung") or a "home" (*New International Version*) of "demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird" (Revelation 18:2).

This fact explains why two women with wings of a stork (Zechariah 5:9)—perhaps angels—carry the imprisoned woman to the land of Babylon, to build a house or dwelling place for her (verse 11). (For a further discussion about the appearance and functions of angels, please read our free booklet, "*Angels, Demons and the Spirit World*.") The two women will assist in removing "wickedness"—the wicked system—from this earth. Please note that true Christians are already

great, in the book of Revelation, signifies a false religious, political, military and economic system.

In this regard, notice the explanation of the *Scofield Reference Notes*:

“The Babylon phase of the apostate church is symbolized by an unchaste woman, sodden with the greed and luxury of commercialism... Prophetically, the application to the Babylon of the Revelation is obvious.”

*Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible* agrees:

“The land of Shinar means Babylon; and Babylon means Rome, in the Apocalypse...”

*John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible* concurs as well:

“This woman is a very lively emblem of the whore of Rome, sitting as a queen upon many waters; ruling over kings and princes; living deliciously, and in great ease and pleasure filling up the measure of her sins...”

### **Land of Shinar**

Regarding the reference to the land of Shinar, virtually all commentaries agree that this is a reference to Babylon, whether ancient or modern. The commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* states that “Shinar” is “Babylonia..., the capital of the God-opposed world kingdoms, and so representing in general the seat of irreligion...”

### **Origin of Ancient Babylon**

In evaluating the ORIGIN of ancient Babylon, *Albert Barnes’ Notes on the Bible* points out:

“The name of Shinar, though strictly Babylonia, carries back to an older power than the world-empire of Babylon; which now too was destroyed. ‘In the land of Shinar’... was that first attempt [by Nimrod and the attempt to build the Tower of Babel] to array a world-empire against God... And so it is the... [appropriate] symbol of the antitheist or anti-Christian world, which by violence, art, falsehood, sophistry, wars against the truth...”

The *Broadman Bible Commentary* adds the following observation:

“Verse 8 [of Zechariah, chapter 5] identifies the figure as the wicked one or wickedness. In the Old Testament this may be understood in many ways. One is the worship of idols [such as]... the figure of the

### **The Seven Eyes of God and the Lampstand**

The seven eyes of God (Zechariah 4:10) are seven angelic beings who are also mentioned in Revelation 5:6. Please note that Zechariah 1:8 describes four of these seven angels. They are also referred to as seven lamps on the lampstand (Zechariah 4:2). The tabernacle had a seven-branched lampstand, a lampstand with seven lamps (Exodus 25:31–37). Solomon’s Temple had several lampstands (1 Kings 7:49). A similar description is found in Revelation 1:20, where seven angels are described as seven stars in Christ’s hands, functioning as ministering spirits for seven churches. These seven churches are described as seven lampstands.

As we explain in our free booklet, “*The Sacrificial System and the Tabernacle in the Wilderness*,” on pages 35 and 36, the lampstand typifies Christ, the Light of the world. It also symbolizes the Church of God and every single converted Church member. The oil for the lampstand symbolizes God’s Holy Spirit. Christians must continuously make use of its power (2 Timothy 1:6).

### **“The LORD Sent Me”**

We read in Zechariah 4:9 that the LORD says that the LORD sent Him to the people. As pointed out before, this shows that the designation, the “LORD,” can refer to either one of the two God beings—also known as the Father and the Son. Here, the Son, Jesus Christ, is saying that the FATHER sent Him (that is, Christ) to the people.

### **The Capstone**

Zechariah 4:7 speaks of a capstone (or “headstone” in the *Authorized Version*). This is the last stone to be placed in the building. It is remarkable that the pyramid is the only building where the cornerstone is identical with the capstone. Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20; 1 Peter 2:6)—and He is also referred to here as the capstone, showing that the temple is built through Him. He is the beginning and the end (Revelation 1:8), the very foundation on which the temple—physical and spiritual—must be built. Zechariah 4:9 says that Zerubbabel laid the foundation, but “no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:11).

The pyramid also describes the governmental hierarchical structure within the God Family. God the Father is over all. Under Him is Jesus Christ. Converted Christians will be changed into Spirit beings at the time of Christ's return, and they will rule with, and UNDER Christ for a thousand years. And so, God's Church today is also hierarchically structured. Jesus Christ—the HEAD of the Church—ordains and GIVES ministers to the Church to guide and lead the membership (Ephesians 4:11–16).

### **The Temple**

Even though the vision is talking about the construction of a physical temple at the time of Zerubbabel, it also applies to the end time. As explained above, one application must be seen in the reference to the spiritual temple—the Church. But it is also possible that another physical temple will be built prior to Christ's return—and that a modern "Zerubbabel" will be used in some way for the accomplishment of that task.

### **The Two Olive Trees**

The two olive trees, as mentioned in Zechariah 4:11, 12, have dual or even triple application.

The commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* points out:

"Primarily, the 'two' refer to [the high priest] Joshua and [to the governor] Zerubbabel. God... at each of the transition periods of the world's history has sent great men to guide the Church. So the two witnesses shall appear before the destruction of Antichrist... in [Revelation] 11:3, 4, the 'two witnesses' are identified with the two olive trees and the two candlesticks."

The *Ryrie Study Bible* adds:

"Joshua and Zerubbabel witnessed to [God's] power in seeing to the completion of the Temple [in 516 B.C., Ezra 6:14, 15]; and in the Tribulation days two mighty witnesses will yet arise (Rev. 11:4). All true witness must be done in the power of the Spirit."

The *New Scofield Reference Edition* adds the following:

"The two olive trees represent Joshua and Zerubbabel, whose witness in that day is the prototype of the two witnesses of [Revelation] 11:3–12. Actually no human being can be the real source

## **The Seventh Vision The Woman in a Basket**

(Zechariah 5:5–11)

In Zechariah 5:5–11, we read the following words pertaining to Zechariah's seventh vision: "(5) Then the angel who talked with me came out and said to me, 'Lift your eyes now, and see what this is that goes forth.' (6) So I asked, 'What is it?' And he said, 'It is a basket that is going forth.' He also said, 'This is their resemblance [better: their iniquity] throughout the earth: (7) Here is a lead disc lifted up, and this is a woman sitting inside the basket'; (8) then he said, 'This is Wickedness!' And he thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead cover over its mouth. (9) Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were two women, coming with the wind in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. (10) So I said to the angel who talked to me, 'Where are they carrying the basket?' (11) And he said to me, 'To build a house for it in the land of Shinar [i.e., Babylon, compare Genesis 10:10; Daniel 1:2]; when it is ready, the basket will be set there on its base.'"

Keeping in mind that Zechariah's nine visions are to be viewed primarily as containing prophecies for our time, we can consider the following points to help us understand the meaning of this vision:

### **Identity of the Woman**

Some commentaries identify the woman in the basket as the woman or harlot riding the beast, as described in the book of Revelation. There, she is called "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (Revelation 17:5). She is also described as a religious city built on seven hills (Revelation 17:9, 18, *New International Version, Living Bible*)—in other words, Babylon the

will send (Revelation 9:20–21; 16:9, 11, 21). Mankind will not be left without God’s warning. Before the curse of the flying scroll enters their houses, they will have been sufficiently warned.

In fact, as a confirmation of the warning of God’s Church to rebellious man, God will “open” His third heaven to the eyes of physical man and manifest His spiritual temple and the ark of His covenant (Revelation 11:19). We read in that passage that the temple of God in heaven was opened and the ark of the covenant was seen or “could be seen,” as some translations have it. Since spirit beings could see the temple and the ark of the covenant before that time; and since this passage is not strictly a reference to John, because then he would have referred to himself as the one seeing it (compare Revelation 5:1, 6; 6:1; 7:1, etc.), this passage in Revelation 11:19 refers to the manifestation of the ark of the covenant to the eyes of human beings. The physical ark of the covenant contained the tablets of the law—the Ten Commandments. The manifestation of His spiritual ark of the covenant in heaven will show man that God expects him to keep His law today, as well as in the future, just as He expected man to keep it in the past.

The good news is that some WILL repent and thus be counted worthy to escape God’s punishment (Revelation 7:1–17). Others, however, will reap what they have sown. God’s curse over a disobedient world will be executed. The curse for disobeying God’s law will swiftly, and without partiality, enter the house of every thief and every liar (**representing every unrepentant sinner**).

God is fair and judges rightly. He will give everyone an opportunity to repent—in His due time. But those who refuse willfully to do so, will experience eternal destruction. They will be destroyed, never to live again. Revelation 21:7–8 tells us: “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

For more information on the fate of the unrepentant wicked, as well as those whom God does not call in this day and age for His salvation, please read our free booklets, “*The Gospel of the Kingdom of God*,” and “*Do We Have an Immortal Soul?*”

of the power that actuates God’s witness. It is only as Joshua [after his cleansing, as described in Zechariah 3], Zerubbabel, or any other human being represents Christ, the true Priest-King, that he fulfills this vision. In their fullest significance the two olive trees speak of Christ, the LORD’s Priest-King (cp. Ps. 110:4).”

The *Broadman Bible Commentary* contains the following annotation:

“It is proper to identify these two servants with Zerubbabel... and Joshua... Both are directly involved in serving the Lord’s kingdom. These two are the current representatives of a long line of promise... The ‘sons of oil’ (anointed)... are those who serve the cause of the Lord’s presence among his people. They are the ones who build the house... and who are the servants of holiness which must surround the place where the Lord dwells...”

“The genuine servants stand to the right and to the left of God [the *New King James Bible* says, “beside,” in verse 14], who rules over the whole earth... The vision should be seen in the general messianic frame of Zechariah’s prophecy. The Lord is returning to Zion and will set up his kingdom there. In so doing he is fulfilling all the promises made to Israel and to David. This act is not only a comfort for Israel, but a key factor in... his reign for the whole earth...”

The construction of the temple will be accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6). Please recall that the two olive trees are also called, “anointed ones.” They are anointed or set aside by God to fulfill His task for them, and they have to do it by yielding to the power of the Holy Spirit.

Zechariah’s fifth vision of the lampstand and the olive trees relates not only to the time of Zerubbabel and Joshua, but also points to events at the time of the return of Jesus Christ, the Messiah. Christ, as the Head of the Church, is the Lampstand who gives us light, strength and understanding through the Holy Spirit. At the very end of this age, two remarkable persons will appear on the world scene—called the “two witnesses”—and will perform mighty works in the service of God. Religious, political and military forces, under the influence of Satan, will oppose them and ultimately kill them, but God will resurrect them through the power of His Holy Spirit (Revelation 11:11–14). (For more information on the function and identity of the two witnesses, please read our free booklet, “*Is That in The Bible?—The Mysteries of*

*the Book of Revelation.”)*

The end-time destroying mountain or “great millstone” of the Babylonian system will be defeated by the power of God (compare Jeremiah 51:25–26; Revelation 18:21). At that time, God will set up His Kingdom here on earth, which will never be defeated, and “Of the increase of HIS government and peace There will be no end... The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this” (Isaiah 9:7).

your persecutions and tribulation that you endure, which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer; since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not OBEY THE GOSPEL of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because OUR TESTIMONY AMONG YOU WAS BELIEVED.”

In the book of Revelation, we are told that Jesus Christ will come to reward His saints and to punish the disobedient. Notice Revelation 11:17–18: “...‘We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned. The nations were angry, and Your wrath has come, And the time of the dead, that they should be judged. And that You should reward Your servants the prophets and the saints, And those who fear Your name, small and great, And should destroy those who destroy the earth.”

Before Christ returns, this world will need to be warned. The Church of God has the duty to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God today in all the world as a witness, before the end comes (Matthew 24:14; Mark 13:10). God will use two witnesses, prior to Christ’s return, to prophesy and to testify for 3-1/2 years (Revelation 11:3, 6–7). In addition, we read that John saw, in a vision, an “angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue and people—saying with a loud voice, ‘Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water” (Revelation 14:6–7).

When God pours out His plagues over this disobedient world, *MANY will refuse to repent of their sins*, including transgressions such as demon worship, sorceries, murders and thefts. Instead, they will actually curse God, who alone has the power over those plagues He

seize them. Oh that we could with an eye of faith see the flying roll of God's curse hanging over the guilty world as a thick cloud... big with thunders, lightnings, and storms, ready to destroy them! ... The world is full of sin in great variety..."

Regarding the worldwide and comprehensive execution of God's judgment, notice the following comments by the commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown*:

"[The curse will] enter ... the house—In vain they guard and shut themselves up who incur the curse; it will inevitably enter even when they think themselves most secure. [It will] consume ... timber [and] stones—not leaving a vestige of it. So the 'stones' and 'timber' of the house of a leper (type of the sinner) were to be utterly removed..."

*Wesley's Notes* agrees with this explanation:

"This curse shall come with commission from [God]... It shall stick close to them and theirs like Gehazi's leprosy... Nothing shall remain, as when both the timber and stones of a house are consumed."

The execution of God's judgment is certain. *Matthew Henry's Whole Bible Commentary* explains:

"He that pronounces the sentence [i.e., the LORD of hosts] will take care to see it executed... It is a righteous curse, for he is a righteous God that warrants it... He brings it forth with power, and orders what execution it shall do; and who can put by or resist the curse which a God of almighty power brings forth?..."

We also need to address the meaning and relevance of Zechariah's vision of the flying scroll for us today.

The Bible warns us not to become indifferent about the certain worldwide judgment of God. His people are commissioned by God to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God and to feed the flock. This includes preaching repentance of breaking the law of GOD and the necessity to obey God and to keep His law (compare Luke 24:46–47; Romans 16:25–26; James 2:8–13).

Notice Paul's encouragement and warning in 2 Thessalonians 1:3–10:

"We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all

## The Sixth Vision The "Flying Scroll"

(Zechariah 5:1–4)

In Zechariah 5:1–4, we read the following: "(1) Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying scroll. (2) And he (the angel talking to Zechariah, compare Zechariah 4:1), said to me, 'What do you see?' So I answered, 'I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits.' (3) Then he said to me, 'This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth: 'Every thief shall be expelled,' according to this side of the scroll; and, 'Every perjurer shall be expelled,' according to that side of it.' (4) 'I will send out the curse,' says the LORD of hosts; 'It shall enter the house of the thief And the house of the one who swears falsely by My name. It shall remain in the midst of his house And consume it, with timber and stones.'"

Many commentaries are in agreement about the general meaning of the "flying scroll."

The commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* explains:

"It was inscribed with the words of the curse [compare Deuteronomy 27:14–26]. Being written implied that its contents were beyond all escape or repeal... Its 'flying' shows that its curses were ready swiftly to visit the transgressors. It was unrolled, or else its dimensions could not have been seen... Being open to all, none could say in excuse he knew not the law and the curses of disobedience... Being written on both sides, 'on this and on that side'... connects it with the two tables [or tablets] of the law [Exodus 32:15] and implies its comprehensiveness. One side denounced 'him that sweareth falsely... by God's name,' according to the third commandment of the first table, duty to God; the other side denounced theft, according to the eighth commandment, which is in the second table, duty to one's neighbor."

The *Scofield Reference Notes* elaborates:

“The two sins mentioned really transgress both tables of the law. To steal is to set aside our neighbor’s right; to swear is to set aside God’s claim to reverence...”

*Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible* gives a similar explanation:

“... stealing and swearing are supposed to be two general heads of crimes; the former, comprising sins against men; the latter, sins against God.”

However, the condemnation of thieves can also be viewed in a broader context.

*Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible* points out:

“... two sorts of sinners are here specified as the objects of this curse: (1.) Thieves; it is for every one that steals, that by fraud or force takes that which is not his own, especially that robs God and converts to his own use what was devoted to God and his honour... Sacrilege is, without doubt, the worst kind of thievery. He also that robs his father or mother, and saith, It is no transgression [Proverbs 28:24], let him know that against him this curse is directed, for it is against every one that steals. The letter of the eighth commandment has no penalty annexed to it; but the curse here is a sanction to that command. (2.) Swearers. Sinners of the former class offend against the second table, these against the first; for the curse meets those that break either table. He that swears rashly and profanely shall not be held guiltless, much less he that swears falsely...”

That the condemnation of the “thief” in Zechariah’s vision can be viewed as relating to both robbery of man AND of God is also expressed in the commentary by *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown*, where we read:

“The ‘theft’ immediately meant is similar sacrilege to that complained of in [Nehemiah 13:10; Malachi 3:8]. They robbed God by neglecting to give Him His due in building His house, while they built their own houses, forswearing their obligations to Him; therefore, the ‘houses’ they build shall be ‘consumed’ with God’s ‘curse.’ Probably literal theft and perjury accompanied their virtual theft and perjury as to the temple of God...”

Regarding the dimensions of the flying scroll (“Its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits”), these are the same dimensions as those of the temple porch or “vestibule” in front of the sanctuary

of Solomon’s temple (1 Kings 6:3). The commentary of *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown* explains that that was the place “where the law was usually read... Its large size implies the great number of the curses contained...”

*John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible* contains the following additional comments regarding the meaning of the dimensions of the flying scroll:

“... it was a very large one, a volume of a very uncommon size... this being the length and breadth of the porch before the temple... it may design either the roll or book in which the sins of men are written; which is very large, and will quickly be brought into judgment, when it will be opened, and men will be judged according to it; which shows the notice God takes of the sins of men; the exact knowledge he has of them; his strict remembrance of them; and the certain account men must give of them another day... or rather the book of the law... which will be a swift witness against the breakers of it, as more fully appears from the explanation of it in the next verse [Zechariah 5:3].”

We should note that the curse of the flying scroll “goes out over the face of the whole earth” (verse 3).

*Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible* explains the all-encompassing nature of God’s judgment, as well as the required preceding worldwide announcement of God’s coming judgment:

“God’s prophets are not only his ambassadors, to treat of peace with the sons of peace, but heralds, to proclaim war against those that delight in war, and persist in their rebellion. In this chapter we have two visions [the sixth vision of the flying scroll, and the seventh vision of the woman in the basket, see below], by which ‘the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.’...”

“This flying roll [The *New King James Bible* says, “scroll”] is a curse; it contains a declaration of the righteous wrath of God against those sinners especially who by swearing affront God’s majesty or by stealing invade their neighbour’s property...”

“It goes forth over the face of the whole earth, not only of the land of Israel, but the whole world... All mankind are liable to the judgment of God; and, wherever sinners are, any where upon the face of the whole earth, the curse of God can and will find them out and