

ZECHARIAH

(“The Lord Remembers”)

Christian Formation
The Post-Exilic Period
15 October 2017

Zechariah Ministers along Side of Haggai

(~ 520 – 516 B.C.)



How Zechariah Presents His Message

Prologue: 1. 1 – 6

Prophetic Visions: 7 – 6.15

Historical Interlude: 7 – 8

Prophetic Burdens: 9.1 – 14.15

Epilogue: 14.16 – 21

Start with the Prologue: What's the Point?

1 In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo saying, 2 “The Lord was very angry with your fathers. 3 Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, “Return to Me,” declares the Lord of hosts, “that I may return to you,” says the Lord of hosts. 4 “Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, “Return now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds.”’ But they did not listen or give heed to Me,” declares the Lord. 5 “Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? 6 But did not My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets, overtake your fathers? Then they repented and said, ‘As the Lord of hosts purposed to do to us in accordance with our ways and our deeds, so He has dealt with us.’”” [NASB]

The Point of the Prologue

Your fathers broke the covenant, and that is why they were in exile. But part of the covenant stipulates that I will bring you back to your homeland, and that is what I have done now that requisite time is over.

OK, We're Back in the Land: Now What?

BUILD THE TEMPLE!!

And Zechariah sees eight visions to allay the people's fears and to encourage them to continue with the work.

The Form of Zechariah's Visions

1. Introductory words
2. Depiction of what the prophet sees
3. Zechariah's request for the meaning of the vision
4. The messenger's (angel's) explanation

Zechariah's Visions Are Apocalyptic

- What are the characteristics of apocalyptic visions?
 - A pictorial, or graphic, form of God's revelation
 - Not limited to normal experiences (i.e., weird beings, flying)
 - Symbolism (color of horses, lampstand connected to olive trees)
 - Looks forward to a time when good will triumph
 - Divisions of time and symbolic use of numbers
 - Often pseudonymous (non-canonical literature)

Vision 1a: Zech 1.7 – 11 [NASB]

- 7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, as follows: 8 I saw **at night**, and behold, **a man was riding on a red horse**, and he was **standing among the myrtle trees** which were in the **ravine**, with **red, sorrel and white horses behind him**. 9 **Then I said, “My lord, what are these?”** And the angel who was speaking with me said to me, “I will show you what these are.” 10 **And the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered and said,** “These are those whom the Lord has sent to patrol the earth.” 11 So they answered the angel of the Lord who was standing among the myrtle trees and said, “We have patrolled the earth, and behold, all the earth is peaceful and quiet.”

Vision 1b: Zech 1.12 – 17

- 12 Then the angel of the Lord said, “O Lord of hosts, how long will You have no compassion for Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which You have been indignant these seventy years?” 13 The Lord answered the angel who was speaking with me with gracious words, comforting words. 14 So the angel who was speaking with me said to me, “Proclaim, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, “I am exceedingly jealous for Jerusalem and Zion. 15 But I am very angry with the nations who are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they furthered the disaster.” 16 Therefore thus says the Lord, “I will return to Jerusalem with compassion; My house will be built in it,” declares the Lord of hosts, “and a measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem.”’” 17 Again, proclaim, saying, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, “My cities will again overflow with prosperity, and the Lord will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.’”’”

VISION 1: 1.7 – 17

The Man in the Valley among the Myrtle Trees

- The Symbols:
 - The red horse (vs. 8)
 - The other horses (vs. 8)
 - The myrtle trees (vss. 8, 10, 11) [Cf. Neh 8.15; Is 41.19, 55.13]
 - The ravine (vs. 8)
 - “70 years” (vs. 12)
- The Message: God is jealous for his people who are in turmoil, and he is not pleased w/ the surrounding nations that are at ease
- The Lesson: : God has made everything ready for the doing of his will. There is no point in delaying. He has indicated a great future (v. 17). The people should get on with the job.
- **But, but ...we still have enemies. How can we proceed?**

Vision 2: 1.18 – 21

- 18 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, there were four horns. 19 So I said to the angel who was speaking with me, “What are these?” And he answered me, “These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem.” 20 Then the Lord showed me four craftsmen. 21 I said, “What are these coming to do?” And he said, “These are the horns which have scattered Judah so that no man lifts up his head; but these craftsmen have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations who have lifted up their horns against the land of Judah in order to scatter it.”

Vision 2: 1.18 – 21

The Horns and the Craftsmen

- The Symbols:
 - The horns
 - The craftsmen
 - Symbolic action (tearing down and building up. Cf. Jer 1.10: “See, I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant.”)
- The Message: Every foe that has come up against Judah has been dealt with by God. He will continue to do so.
- The Lesson: Don't worry about enemies...God will deal with them. His people should be faithful to him. Wherever foes arise, God will meet their challenge. Get busy and build the Temple.
- OK, you'll take care of our enemies, but we don't have the manpower to build Jerusalem....

Vision 3: Zech 2.1 – 5

- 2 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, there was 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 how wide it is and how long it is.” 3 And behold, the angel who was speaking with me was going out, and another angel was coming out to meet him, 4 and said to him, “Run, speak to that young man, saying, ‘Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls because of the multitude of men and cattle within it. 5 For I,’ declares the Lord, ‘will be a wall of fire around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’”

Vision 3: 2.1 – 5

The Man with the Measuring Line

- The Symbols:
 - The measuring line
 - The symbolic action (measuring)
- The Message: Jerusalem is going to be inhabited beyond anything previously seen. Its future is sure; the Lord himself will protect her and be her glory.
- The Lesson: How about Eph 3.20?
- But, but ... how can God be a glory in our midst? We are so unclean.

Interlude: 2.6 – 13

- “Ho there! Flee from the land of the north,” declares the Lord, “for I have dispersed you as the four winds of the heavens,” declares the Lord. 7 “Ho, Zion! Escape, you who are living with the daughter of Babylon.” 8 For thus says the Lord of hosts, “After [or with] glory [heaviness] He has sent me against the nations which plunder you, for he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye. 9 For behold, I will wave My hand over them so that they will be plunder for their slaves. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me. 10 Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” declares the Lord. 11 “Many nations will join themselves to the Lord in that day and will become My people. Then I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me to you. 12 The Lord will possess Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.”

Vision 4a: 3.1 – 5

- 3 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. 2 The Lord said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, 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 standing before the angel. 4 He spoke and said to those who were standing before him, saying, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” Again he said to him, “See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes.” 5 Then I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments, while the angel of the Lord was standing by.

Vision 4b: 3.6 – 10

- 6 And 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 perform My service, then you will also govern My house and also have charge of My courts, and I will grant you free access among these who are standing here.
- The Branch, vss. 8 - 10 (An eschatological matter we will discuss later)

Vision 4: 3.1 – 10

The Cleansing of Joshua

- The symbols:
 - A brand from the fire
 - Filthy garments (Cf. Is 64.6)
 - Change of raiment (symbolic action: filthy garments to festal robes) [Cf Eph 4.22 – 24]
 - Clean turban (or mitre)
- The Message: : It is true that no person is good enough for God, but God chooses by his grace and outfits that party so they may do his will.
- The Lesson: Pretty much the same as the message. We all need spiritual dry cleaning.
- OK, the priest (Joshua) is taken care of, but what about the governor (Zerubbabel)? Doesn't he need special grace?

Vision 5a: 4.1 – 7

- 4 Then the angel who was speaking with me returned and roused me, as a man who is awakened from his sleep. 2 He said to me, “What do you see?” And I said, “I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold with its bowl on the top of it, and its seven lamps on it with seven spouts belonging to each of the lamps which are on the top of it; 3 also two olive trees by it, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left side.” 4 Then I said to the angel who was speaking with me saying, “What are these, my lord?” 5 So the angel who was speaking with me answered and said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” And I said, “No, my lord.” 6 Then he said to me, “This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying, ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord of hosts. 7 ‘What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of “Grace, grace to it!”””

Vision 5b: 4.8 – 14

- Also the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 9 “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will 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? But these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel—these are the eyes of the Lord which range to and fro throughout the earth. 11 Then I said to him, “What are these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left?” 12 And I answered the second time and said to him, “What are the two olive branches which are beside the two golden pipes, which empty the golden oil from themselves?” 13 So he answered me, saying, “Do you not know what these are?” And I said, “No, my lord.” 14 Then he said, “These are the two anointed ones who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth.”

Vision 5: 4.1 – 14

- The symbols:
 - The lampstand
 - The olive trees
 - The mountain
 - “Small things”
 - Symbolic actions
- The Message: The holy Spirit will supply the power and energy needed for the job. The people of God do not need to wonder about this. By the power of the Spirit there will be plenty of ability to complete the temple.
- The Lesson: God is really undertaking the work, and if one looks to see how he has blessed and supplied through the history of the world, one will not doubt that he can continue to do so.
- **OK, but there are still a lot of doubters.**

Vision 6: 5.1 – 4

- 5 Then I lifted up my eyes again and looked, and behold, there was a flying scroll. 2 And he said to me, “What do you see?” And I answered, “I see a flying scroll; its length is twenty cubits [30 feet] and its width ten cubits [15 feet].” 3 Then he said to me, “This is the curse that is going forth over the face of the whole land; surely everyone who steals will be purged away according to the writing on one side, and everyone who swears will be purged away according to the writing on the other side. 4 I will make it go forth,” declares the Lord of hosts, “and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by My name; and it will spend the night within that house and consume it with its timber and stones.”

Vision 6: 5.1 – 4

The Flying Scroll

- The Symbols:
 - The scroll
 - Its dimensions
 - Its curses on thieves and those who swear falsely
- The Message: The problem elucidated by Haggai was that the people had the means to build the temple. They swore that they would build it, but built their own houses instead. They swore falsely and stole from the Lord, and he will repay.
- The Lesson: Cheat on God—you suffer!
- But, but ... the people are acting this way because they are still under the influence of Babylonia and of Persia.

Vision 7: 5.5 – 11

- 5 Then the angel who was speaking with me went out and said to me, “Lift up now your eyes and see what this is going forth.” 6 I said, “What is it?” And he said, “This is the ephah going forth.” Again he said, “This is their appearance in all the land 7 (and behold, a lead cover was lifted up); and this is a woman sitting inside the ephah.” 8 Then he said, “This is Wickedness!” And he threw her down into the middle of the ephah and cast the lead weight on its opening. 9 Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and there two women were coming out with the wind in their wings; and they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heavens. 10 I said to the angel who was speaking with me, “Where are they taking the ephah?” 11 Then he said to me, “To build a temple for her in the land of Shinar; and when it is prepared, she will be set there on her own pedestal.”

Vision 7: 5.5 – 11

The Woman in the Basket [Ephah]

- The Symbols:
 - The basket [ephah]
 - The woman
 - The lead cover
 - The flying women
 - Shinar [Babylonia]
 - Symbolic action [shoving down, flying, setting up a temple]
- The Message: Things that are Babylonian, or belong to Babylonia, should be sent back there. Let the Lord's people honor him.
- The Lesson: Leave your cultural baggage behind—or get rid of it—if it interferes with doing the Lord's will.
- **But, but ... I'm still not completely sure this is the right time to build the temple.**

Vision 8: 6.1 - 8

- 6 Now I lifted up my eyes again and looked, and behold, four chariots were coming forth from between the two mountains; and the mountains were bronze mountains. 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 strong dappled horses. 4 Then I spoke and said to the angel who was speaking with me, “What are these, my lord?” 5 The angel replied to me, “These are the four spirits of heaven, going forth after standing before the Lord of all the earth, 6 with one of which the black horses are going forth to the north country; and the white ones go forth after them, while the dappled ones go forth to the south country. 7 When the strong ones went out, they were eager to go to patrol the earth.” And He said, “Go, patrol the earth.” So they patrolled the earth. 8 Then He cried out to me and spoke to me saying, “See, those who are going to the land of the north have appeased My wrath in the land of the north.”

Vision 8: 6.1 – 8

- The Symbols:
 - The horses and their colors
 - The two mountains
 - The countries
 - The symbolic action (going north, south)
- The Message: Judgment is finally done on the nations that oppressed Judah. No more excuse not to continue building.
- The Lesson: God has settled everything for us at the cross. No excuse to stand still.
- **But, but ... there are no more “buts!” Get with it!!**

On the Improbability We Get This Far...

- Any thoughts??