

Building The Temple of the Lord

This 6th chapter of Zechariah consists of two sections.

- 1) The 8th Vision: verses 1-8
- 2) The practical parable of the crowning of Joshua, 9-14.

Vision 8 the two mountains of Brass



The previous vision we recall was a depiction using symbols, of the way in which false religion would become established. It was a prediction of how the corruption of the Word of God in Israel, amongst the natural seed of Abraham, evolved, and developed into a complete system of a counterfeit christianity, based in Rome. It would have been a depressing vision, to faithful men like Zechariah. Nevertheless, it was important for him to see that mankind would be given the ability to make their own choices, and allowed to continue in their corruption until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. However, it was not then end of things, far from it. It depicts the victory – for a while of falsehood and lies. But the last and eighth vision showed the victory of truth and righteousness, it would have

been of good cheer for prophets like Zechariah and Haggai to see far in the future the triumph over the false prophets

Here Zechariah saw in this vision two mountains of brass, and out from between them came four chariots, pulled variously by red, black, white and dappled horses, as depicted here in the above picture.

Zechariah asks what are these chariots all about? The answer was given in verse 5: *These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth.*

Chariots are frequently mentioned in scripture. They were a potent military vehicle. Israel were instructed not to trust in horses and chariots, and the arm of the flesh, not to collect horses, and chariots, but instead to rely on God. This was dramatically taught to the kings of Israel, at the time of Elisha, when Elijah was taken by a great whirlwind, and a chariot and horses appeared in the whirlwind 2 Kings 2:12: *And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.* Again later, the power and spirit of God and His protection was shown in this form in 2 Kings 6:17 *And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.* Taking this forward, the Psalmist wrote Psalm 68:17 *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of changed ones: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.* And again Isaiah 66:15 *For, behold, the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.* From this we can easily see how horses and chariots are also used to show the power, protection, and might of God. In this vision only four chariots were seen. Bearing in mind they are described as the four spirits of the heavens, it is describing the Israel after the Spirit – Israel as a nation had four camps, four standards which could correspond to the four faces of the cherubim. Israel after the flesh which trusted in literal horses and chariots, became the inventor of lies and corruption of truth. How fitting that

Israel after the Spirit would be power to bring about the victory of Truth. The colours of the horses signify different stages of conquest to bring about that victory. In Eureka, and Volume 1, Bro Thomas as he goes through the gospel preached in the prophets provides a good exposition on this part of Zechariah's vision. For example he writes about the two brass mountains. Brass is used by the prophet to describe the Greek element of Nebuchadnezzar's image. The belly and thighs of brass. So why the focus on this stage of Gentile dominion? Because as Daniel revealed in his eighth chapter it was the Greek aspect which developed into the careers of the king of the north and the kings of the south. The last great confrontation of these powers is described in Ezekiel 38, to great alliances facing off, over the future of the city of Jerusalem. Even now, today we can see this polarisation of the world into two camps, two great mountains.

The power of God will be invested in those Daniel describes in chapter 12: 2-3: *And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.* Those who have striven for truth, against lies and corruption, and have been judged worthy, will be given eternal life, and will stand before the God of all the earth. It is these who God will use against the great military powers of the world to bring about their downfall. Dr Thomas says: *But it would seem that there is an established order after which the conquest of the nations is to be effected; Zechariah seems to intimate that the 'north country' (Zechariah 6:6) will be first invaded, and then the 'south country' (ie the confederacies of the North and South of the latter days)... The north and south being subdued, the time comes to 'fly upon the shoulders of the peoples toward the West, and to spoil the children of the east together (Isaiah 11:14)*

The Crowning of Joshua

From verse 9 to the end of the chapter, Zechariah describes a real incident which took place, and the long night of visions has finished. Now he is told to record various incidents which will teach just as the visions he had been given were designed to do. Just as the last vision left Zechariahs and those who he relayed the vision to, in a happy state of encouragement, a vision of the future, and the establishment of the Kingdom of God, so this next activity described in these verses also relate to the same setting up of the Kingdom.

Only instead of being a vision, Zechariah is instructed to act out the development there and then.

He was commanded to gather together some faithful Jews who had travelled from Babylon from the captivity, and arrived in Israel with a gift for the temple... *even of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah, which are come from Babylon, and come thou the same day, and go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah; Zechariah was to take their gifts of silver and gold, and to make crown(s). He was then to set them on the head of the high priest, Joshua the son of Josedech.*

When doing so he was commanded by the Holy Spirit to say: *Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord:...*

Clearly, these words were prophetic, since when were high priests crowned under the law of Moses, or in the history of Israel?

“Behold the man whose name is the Branch...” Zechariah, and these fellow Jews from The East, Josedech the high priest would all have been aware of the significance of these words. Jeremiah the prophet described the Promised Coming One as being the Branch of David in Jeremiah 23:5, *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and*

shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. and 33:15 In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: Zechariah also was introduced to the Branch in chapter 3 in the night visions: 3:8 *Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch.* This context was in relation to the servant the Branch laying the foundation of the temple. But here in chapter 6, the Branch is crowned king and priest, in the presence of his fellows. Chapter 3 is referring to the work of Jesus at his first appearing, and chapter 6 his second. First a servant, then a king. The Hebrew for Branch here, is a sprout, something which buds and shoots forth in growth. From humility to glory. His work upon returning is to construct the temple made without hands – as well as a literal house of prayer for all nations.

The temple made without hands, will be using the vessels of honour brought by those who were strangers and exiles, but brought nigh by the Holy Covenant, it will be with those like Heldai, whose name means Durable, Tobijah – the Lord is good, Jedaiah – the Lord knows. Those whose lives manifest these principles, their offering will be accepted. In fact, believers themselves are described as a crown - 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 *For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy.* Philippians 4:1 *Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.* Jesus only will be crowned with such glory and honour, as King and priest – after the order of Melchizedek, Priest of the Most High God, and King of Righteousness, as we are reminded in the book of Hebrews. See also Revelation 1:5,6 *And from Jesus Christ,...the prince of the kings of the earth.* As Priest he is the Mediator, *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

The King Priest, the Branch, will invite those faithful men and women to join him for ever.... 14 *And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the Lord.* Noting the subtle changes in the names from the earlier list, the meanings of the names have significance, and this is brought out in the Septuagint version – highlighting the essential characteristics which have been displayed by those who have brought their gifts to the Altar. Septuagint version, replacing the names with meanings..V14: *the crown shall be to them that wait patiently, and to the useful men of the captivity, and to them that have known it – for a memorial in the temple of the Lord.*

In verse 15, we read *And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord,...* Them that are afar off, could be referring to those far off in the future, but no doubt refers to those far off from the Holy Covenant, Gentiles. It may well be referring also the building of the literal temple, the house of prayer for all nations. Just as Zechariah and Haggai were encouraging the work under Ezra in the building of the house, so the prophet was caused to proclaim the glory of the future house. The prophet Isaiah describes other strangers bringing gifts to the temple just as these were doing in this sixth chapter. Isaiah 60: 9 -10 *Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee.* These are those that are afar off, and will be included in the building of the magnificent habitation, where all nations will be gathered as one. What of our own involvement? ..

V15: *And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God.*

Brother Terry