

“ZECHARIAH AND ANGELS”

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. 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?" Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel. (Zechariah 3:1-3 NKJV)

Zechariah began his ministry of prophesying and encouraging God's people in Jerusalem twenty years after Darius began allowing the Jews to return from Babylon. The Jews had expected that after the exile there would be a glorious restoration. For the exiles who returned to Jerusalem in Zechariah's day, the reality fell far short of their hope. There were financial hardships, opposition from outside enemies, and low morale. Among the Jews there were disputes between those who returned from Babylon and those who had remained in the land.

The people of Israel were allowed to return because the Babylonians were conquered by the Medes (modern day Kurds) and the Persians (Iranians). The kingdom of the Medes and Persians was an enormous and powerful empire. It was one of the largest empires in history.

Zechariah, along with Haggai encouraged God's people to complete rebuilding the Temple in anticipation of God coming to establish His kingdom. He prophesied of the vast future kingdom of God and His King.

Like the encounter Abraham had with the three men, one of whom was the LORD and two were angels, the speakers to Zechariah keep changing from the LORD, to the Angel of the LORD, to an angel.

God uses dreams, visions, and sign-symbols in communicating His revelation through Zechariah. After the sixth chapter there are no more appearances of angels. God speaks directly to Zechariah. There are eight visions; angels explain these visions to Zechariah.

1.) 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. 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." 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."

(Zechariah 1:8-10 NKJV)

The angel's explanation ends with a message for the people of Jerusalem:

So the angel who spoke with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "I am zealous for Jerusalem And for Zion with great zeal. I am exceedingly angry with the nations at ease; For I was a little angry, And they helped-but with evil intent." 'Therefore thus says the LORD: "I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy; My house shall be built in it," says the LORD of hosts, "And a surveyor's line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem."'"

"Again proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "My cities shall again spread out through prosperity; The LORD will again comfort Zion, And will again choose Jerusalem."'"

(Zechariah 1:14-17 NKJV)

This was Zechariah's second vision: Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were four horns. 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." Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen. 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." (Zechariah 1:18-21 NKJV)

"Horn" is used in the Bible and ancient literature to signify military power. This vision was God's promise to punish the nations He had used to punish Israel and Judah when they had turned away from Him.

This was Zechariah's third vision: Then I raised my eyes and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. So I said, "Where are you going?" And he said to me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length." And there was the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, 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. (Zechariah 2:1-4)

"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," says the LORD. "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. "And the LORD will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem. "Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!" (Zechariah 2:10-13 NKJV)

In this prophecy God speaks of the expansion of Jerusalem, its future prosperity, and the inclusion of many nations in His Kingdom.

2. 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. 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?" Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel. 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." And I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put the clothes on him. And the Angel of the LORD stood by. Then the Angel of the LORD admonished Joshua, saying, "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 these who stand here. '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. 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. In that day,' says the LORD of hosts, 'Everyone will invite his neighbor Under his vine and under his fig tree.'" (Zechariah 3:1-10 NKJV)

For the Jews in Zechariah's day this was a prophecy of the promised Messiah Priest and King. For the Christian it is a picture of a sinner snatched from a life bound for hell, clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

Now the angel who talked with me came back and wakened me, as a man who is wakened out of his sleep. 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. Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left." ... 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. '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!"' ... "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. For who has despised the day of small things? 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." Then I answered and said to him, "What are these two olive trees-at the right of the lampstand and at its left?" 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?" Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." So he said, "These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth." (Zechariah 4:1-3,6-7,9-14)

Zerrubabel will build the Temple, not in his own strength, but in the power of God's Spirit. Zechariah and Haggai, the Spirit's human vessels.

3.) Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying scroll. And he 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." 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." "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 its timber and stones." (Zechariah 5:1-4 NKJV)

The last three visions are God's judgment on sinners, preparing the earth for His righteous kingdom. The first judgment or curse is on His covenant people, who know and have promised to live holy lives following the precepts of His Law (the Scroll) and have turned away from it.

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." So I asked, "What is it?" And he said, "It is a basket that is going forth." He also said, "This is their resemblance throughout the earth: Here is a lead disc lifted up, and this is a woman sitting inside the basket"; then he said, "This is Wickedness!" And he thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead cover over its mouth. 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. So I said to the angel who talked with me, "Where are they carrying the basket?" And he said to me, "To build a house for it in the land of Shinar; when it is ready, the basket will be set there on its base." (Zechariah 5:5-11 NKJV)

The woman named Wickedness in a basket with a lead cover carried by two women with wings is a parody of the Ark of the Covenant. She is carried to Shinar (Babylon) to be worshiped by enemies of God, lovers of evil. She is the woman who is called the Whore of Babylon in Revelation.

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. With the first chariot were red horses, with the second chariot black horses, with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot dappled horses-strong steeds. Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" 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." (Zechariah 6:1-5 NKJV)

The final vision is of the LORD's army leaving heaven and coming to earth to conquer the armies of God's enemies on earth. This is the prelude to Christ establishing His kingdom and sitting upon David's throne