

34. Jesus in Zechariah - Part 1

March 30, 2017

This is the second Book that was written after the Jewish remnants returned to Jerusalem from the exile to Babylon which was the time of postexilic. It is the longest Book for the Minor Prophets. It is only second to Isaiah among the prophets in Messianic passages.

Zechariah means "The Lord remembers." It is the perfect name for this particular prophet who reminded the faithfulness of God to the Jewish remnants in Jerusalem.

A. JESUS IN HORSES AND RIDERS – 1:7-17

Zechariah 1:7-17 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 son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet: 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." 12 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?" 13 And the Lord answered the angel who talked to me, with good and comforting words. 14 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. 15 I am exceedingly angry with the nations at ease; For I was a little angry, And they helped-but with evil intent." 16 '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.'" 17 "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.'"

In this apocalyptic vision, a rider on a red horse, identified as "the Angel of the Lord" in v11-12, explains that He and three other horsemen have conducted a reconnaissance mission throughout the earth and found it to be "resting quietly". I believe that these riders are Jesus Himself and a part of God's angelic army.

God answers that He is angry with the nations, such as Assyria, Babylon, and Moab for going beyond with unnecessarily brutal treatment toward the Jews. As for the Jews, the Lord will once again raise the temple, rebuild Jerusalem, and bless those who belong to Him.

B. JESUS WITH A MEASURING LINE – Chapter 2

The remnant that had returned to Judah was concerned about rebuilding the temple and restoring the city and the nation, but their work was extremely difficult. In this vision, God assured His people that He planned future glory and honor for them and their city when He Himself would come to dwell with them.

The man with the measuring line is evidently the Angel of the Lord, Israel's Messiah. Leaders and diplomats may debate over who shall control Jerusalem, but the Lord Jesus Christ has the final word. By measuring the city, He declares that it is His and He will accomplish His divine purposes for the city no matter what world leaders and international assemblies may decide.

C. JESUS IN JOSHUA'S GARMENTS – 3:1-5

Zechariah 3:1-5 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 the clothes on him. And the Angel of the Lord stood by.

Zechariah's fourth vision, between chapter 1 through chapter 6, takes him from Jerusalem during the time of Millennium back to the courts of the temple. Here he witnesses what may be one of Scripture's clearest portrayals of God's gracious gift of salvation.

The high priest, Joshua, who returned from Babylon with Zechariah, stands in filthy garments before the Angel of the Lord. Satan, who tries to disqualify Joshua for his unworthiness, is rebuked by the Lord.

The Lord Himself removes Joshua's soiled clothes and replaces them with clean garments, symbolizing God's forgiveness of Israel's – and our – sin. This is so rich. You all remember Joshua means "God is salvation" in Hebrew and in Greek "Jesus".

When we put our trust in Christ, God removes the filth of our sin and clothes us in His Son's perfect righteousness. Though we are indeed unworthy to stand before God, as Satan accuses, God's gracious gift allows us not only to stand before Him, but to serve Him.

Forgiveness comes with responsibility. As Joshua is expected to follow the Lord's commands and lead by example, so we are to live out our faith by obeying our heavenly Father.

D. JESUS IN BRANCH

Zechariah 3:8-10 '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, 'Everyone will invite his neighbor Under his vine and under his fig tree.'"

"Branch" is used several times as a title for the Messiah in Isaiah 4:2, 11:1, Jeremiah 23:5, and 33:15. The Branch is associated with fruitfulness and life. Jesus used the same image when He said that He was the vine and we are the branches in John 15:5.

E. JESUS IN GOLDEN LAMPSTAND AND OLIVE TREES – Chapter 4

Just as the previous vision was a message of encouragement to Joshua, the high priest, this vision is intended to encourage Zerubbabel, Judah's governor.

Zechariah 4:6 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.

It is never about our own strength and intelligence. Whenever we do the works of God with our own power, program and human ingenuity, we always fail no matter how the beginning goes. But when we finally realize that it is the power of the Living God and we step aside for Him, we cannot lose.

F. JESUS IN FLYING SCROLL – 5:1-4

Zechariah 5:1-4 Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying scroll. 2 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." 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 its timber and stones."

If Israel is to become a light to the nations, she must first be purged of sin. A flying scroll, thirty feet long and fifteen feet wide which happens to be the same size of the Holy Place of the tabernacle, symbolizes God's purifying judgment on those who break His written Law.

G. JESUS IN THE CROWNING OF JOSHUA

Zechariah 6:10-14 "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 an elaborate crown, and set it 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.'"

The Lord instructs Zechariah to place a crown upon the head of Joshua, the high priest – an event that looks forward to the Messiah who will come as the Priest-King to sit on David's throne.

The Jews recognize this as a prophecy concerning Messiah. In fact, if you ask many Orthodox Jews when they will know that Messiah has come, they will cite this very verse 13 and say, "Messiah will rebuild our temple." But this will be used by the antichrist in the middle of the Tribulation period, as he will make a treaty with Israel, which will allow them to rebuild their temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. This will allow him to claim to be the Messiah and many will believe him. But the antichrist will end up defiling the temple, according to Revelation 13, and will turn against the Jews.

H. JESUS IN THE COMING KING

Zechariah 9:9-10 "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salva-

tion, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey. 10 I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be 'from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.'

This prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem on what we traditionally call "Palm Sunday," and the event is recorded in all four Gospels. This is the only public demonstration Jesus allowed during His ministry, and He did it to fulfill Scripture.

Note that the King is riding a colt, the foal of a donkey, not a white stallion like a conquering Roman general used to do. Alexander's arrival brought fear to people, but the Jews were commanded to rejoice and shout because their King had come. Jesus was righteous in all that He did, and His purpose in coming was to bring salvation to those who would trust Him. What a stark contrast to Alexander!

Luke 18:14b everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Almost 500 years before Jesus rode His donkey into Jerusalem, prophet Zechariah was prophesying this very event. According to Daniel 9, we can add 173,380 days or 483 Jewish years to the date when Artaxerxes made a decree to rebuild Jerusalem, we come to the exact date, when Jesus entered Jerusalem through the Palm Sunday road from the Mount Olive and was welcomed by the people of Jerusalem.

The entire age of the church fits between Zechariah 9:9 and 10. In v9, Zechariah mentions about the Triumphant Entry of Jesus two thousand years ago. But in v 10, he talks about the Second Coming and the Millennium on the earth.

I. JESUS IN THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE

Zechariah 10:2-5 For the idols speak delusion; The diviners envision lies, And tell false dreams; They comfort in vain. Therefore the people wend their way like sheep; They are in trouble because there is no shepherd. 3 "My anger is kindled against the shepherds, And I will punish the goatherds. For the Lord of hosts will visit His flock, The house of Judah, And will make them as His royal horse in the battle. 4 From him comes the cornerstone, From him the tent peg, From him the battle bow, From him every ruler together. 5 They shall be like mighty men, Who tread down their enemies In the mire of the streets in the battle. They shall fight because the Lord is with them, And the riders on horses shall be put to shame.

The ancient Hebrew word for 'idols' here is 'teraphim', meaning 'common household idols'. Diviners consulted the spirits of idols to predict the future. God warns His people that there is no real help from either idols or their representatives. The people have listened to false and deceptive leaders, and part of the reason is because there is a lack of godly leadership. Sound familiar?

Though God is displeased with Israel's shepherds which meant kings and rulers in the ancient Israel terms, He will raise up the perfect Shepherd from and for Judah.

- Jesus is the Cornerstone: The foundation, measure and standard. – Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22-23, Matthew 21:42, Acts 4:11, 1 Peter 2:4-5
- Jesus is the Tent Peg: Holding all things securely. – Isaiah 22:23-24
- Jesus is the Battle Bow: A strong fighter for good. – Isaiah 63:1-4, Revelation 19:11-16
- Jesus is the Leader over every ruler of His people. – Revelation 19:16

God's people Israel will be regathered, redeemed, reunited as one nation, and rejoicing in the strength of the Lord. This same God can give the same blessings to His church today. We're a scattered people in many ways, but the Lord can unite us in Christ and bring us together. We're fighting battles against the enemy, but the Lord can strengthen us and turn His helpless victims into victorious warriors.