

From Temple to Judgment

Zechariah Sermon 7 Zechariah 6:1-8 Vision 8

Nutshell: God plans a work, then works the plan. His angels reconnoitered the earth in chap 1. Now they continue their mission based on God's assessments. God's plan and work continue today. Where are we in it? How can Zechariah help us to tell?

Review: God told the repatriated Jews to turn to Him. They did. God then began giving Zechariah visions, signifying His works of **returning** to dwell with His people and of **judging** the ungodly nations of the earth. God promised the renewal of His people, giving short-term prophecy (Esther) as confirmation. He renewed the priesthood and the Davidic line, chaps 3 & 4. The ultimate fulfillment of them both was Christ.

Vision Outline: A chiasm. Compare Vision 1 with 8, 2 with 7, and 3 with 6. Visions 4 and 5 are the focus.

Vision 1: The Son's HORSEMEN: the pagans **rest** smugly. God: I'll be with Israel and judge/convert the pagans.

Vision 2: God sends 4 builders to **BRING DOWN** the 4 pagan horns that scatter God's people.

Vision 3: The Son **goes out** to measure Jerusalem for her coming expansion. Pagans to be judged.

Vision 4: God justifies His priest, rebuking Satan. God commissions Zechariah, promising Messiah.

Vision 5: God sanctifies (anoints) His king by His Spirit. Worship renewed = pagans' judgment.

Vision 6: A scroll **goes out** to 'measure' the ungodly in Israel.

Vision 7: Harlot church **THROWN DOWN**, to be sent away.

Vision 8: The Son's HORSEMEN go forth to give God's Spirit **rest** (judge or convert (2:11) the pagans).

Kid-speak: How many Visions are in Zechariah? . What's the same between Vision 1 and Vision 8- what's in both of them? (A couple of things, actually)

I. What Zechariah Saw

A. The eighth and final vision, v 1.

1. Numbering the visions

a. We have used *two* factors to number the visions: 1) Zechariah "seeing"; 2) change of subject.

b. We had "I saw" in 5:5 last time, bringing us to Vision 7; however, we counted the "I saw" of 5:9 as a continuation of the same vision.

2. Zechariah turns, as he did at the beginning of the previous vision, 5:1. This seems to indicate a notably different view than in the preceding vision.

a. Each of the last two visions, then, has brought us to a fresh or reset panorama.

b. The Hebrew form of "I turned" in 5:1 is slightly different from 6:1, but they grammatically perform the same function

c. The rest of the phrase is identical between 6:1 and 5:1: "and I lifted my eyes, and I saw, and-look!"¹

B. He sees 4 chariots

1. We've had 4 horns in Vision 2, 1:18, then 4 builders. We had 4 winds as directions, 2:6.

2. Four seems to connote full coverage.

¹ That phrase is also identical in Dan 8:3. There is no "turning" word in the Daniel verse.

II. What the Vision Meant

- A. Zechariah asks the guide angel, v 4
- B. They are called spirits, v 5. Angels, then. They were stationed before God and came from there.
- C. They are different enough from the chap 1 horses to show us their difference in mission, but they are similar enough for us to see their connection.
- D. The horses' (no longer chariots. The horses have been detached?) assignments, v 6:
 1. BLACK- to "the land of the north," Jeremiah's characteristic phrase for Babylon (7x). Zech 2:6.
 - a. Presumably to wreak havoc on their ECONOMY/ agriculture/ etc.
 - b. Reminding us of Rev 18.
 - c. But in Zechariah's time, Persia had overtaken Babylon.
 2. The WHITE- following the black, apparently denoting the CONQUEST accomplished through the economic straits inflicted by the black horses.
 3. The DAPPLED- to "the land of the south." No country is named this way elsewhere.
 - a. This is usually thought to be Egypt, but it could have been Edom. "Teman," in southern Edom, is this same word for "south." Hab 3:3.
 - b. Unless it is somewhere not spoken of in Scriptures.
 4. The VIBRANT (now apparently uncoupled from the dappled)- seeking to traverse the earth, v 7.
 - a. "Vibrant" is from a verb meaning "strengthen." That verb occurs together with "walk/ travel" 5x. Two of them might help us: Josh 1:7; Ruth 1:18.
 - b. Some angels were especially made for action. Some people too.
 5. There is no report on the CHESTNUT horses, which we associated with CONFLICT.
 - a. Outright war was not necessary at the moment...?
 - b. Which fits with Persia's bloodless takeover of Babylon.

Kid-speak: God's angels are strong and fast like horses. Are *we* supposed to be like that? Yes: "God, I pray Your commands will be kept here one earth (by me) the way they're kept in Heaven (by the angels)."

- E. God tells the Vibrant horses to do exactly as they sought, traversing the earth, reminding us of 1:10-11. They appear to be in reconnaissance mode. Perhaps their reconnaissance continues until today.
- F. God 'huddles' with Zechariah. He only gives a report on the BLACK and WHITE horses that had gone to the north.
 1. They had appeased His Spirit/ spirit (Jn 11:33) there.
 - a. So God's 'beef' with the nations (1:15, 21; 2:8-9; 4:7) has been partly settled, at least temporarily.
 - b. And that is how the Visions end. Continuity and closure with the reconnaissance horses (angels) of chap 1.
 2. Perhaps the black and white horses had overseen Persia's takeover of Babylon, though that was earlier; therefore, perhaps Darius' conversion, or (earlier) Cyrus'.

III. What Do We Take From This?

- A. We are *encouraged* at God's extensive and particular care for His people.

B. We are *impressed* with God's thoroughness in keeping track of all matters and peoples.

Kid-speak: Isn't it amazing how God keeps track of *everything* and *everybody*, all over the world?

C. We are *reminded* of how bound our fate is to the fate of nations, Matt 13:24-30; 36-43.

1. We recall the nations' natural animosity to God, Ps 2:1-3, and hence to His people, Ps 3:1-2.
2. God directly considers the wicked when assessing *us*, 2 Thess 1:4-10.

D. We are *instructed* by God's magnification of His sacrificial work: Tabernacle > Temple > Ezekiel Temple > Zechariah Temple imagery.

1. Paving the way for Christ's sacrifice.
2. NOW CHRIST'S SACRIFICE PERVADES THE EARTH, 2 Cor 2:14-16.
 - a. His resurrection in token of it.
 - b. All we have to do is TELL it, as far as the nations go. The message carries its own power, Rom 1:16-17.
 - c. That's also why we send messengers *out*, Rom 10:13-15.
 - d. A fixed part of our telling (showing) it is our steadfast, Word-authorized **WORSHIP**, 1 Cor 11:26.
 - e. When the nations challenge our worship, this witness becomes more prominent.

Kid-speak: How important is Jesus' death on the cross? Hey, *everything* God does is based on that now!

E. Are we in a 'complacent nation' (1:15) stage again? At least among western nations?

1. Is God therefore on the move again? 1:16
 - a. We are to pray for national peace, 1 Tim 2:1-2
 - b. But we are praying against man's warlike propensities, Heb 13:3.
2. Ezra and Nehemiah are after Zechariah. Great opposition still to come in Zechariah's time.
 - a. God orchestrates nations' progress so that his people can fulfill 2 Tim 3:12.
 - b. And we rightly desire Jesus' coming, 2 Tim 4:8.

F. Let us be faithful, without fear, Ps 56:11; 118:6. Let us press on and grow, 2 Pet 3:18; Heb 5:12-14.

1. Repenting (1:4, 6)
2. Worshiping rightly (chap 3)
3. By the Spirit (chap 4).
4. But *God* has to remove the 'dead wood' that *church discipline* doesn't catch, chap 5.

Wrap-up: Whether or not the Vibrant horses still patrol the earth, God's eyes do patrol, Zech 4:10; Prov 15:3; 5:21.

2 Chron 16:9 comes with an encouragement and a warning.