

Zechariah 6:1-15

The Crowning of Joshua

The chapter begins when Zechariah sees four chariots.

Zechariah 6:1 - "And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass."

"THE two mountains" in the Hebrew - referring to Mount Zion and the Mount of Olives.

This indicated that the angelic chariots were coming from God's presence, which was right where the Jews were trying to rebuild the Temple. This would assure the people that God was dwelling with them even in the Temple's unfinished state.

"mountains of brass" - representing judgment and strength

Zechariah 2-3 - "In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; And in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses."

The colors are basically the same as the four horsemen in Revelation 6, the emissaries of God's judgment. Red indicates war, black is famine and death, white means victory, and grizzled points to pestilence (see **Ezekiel 14:21, Revelation 6:1-8**)

Zechariah 6:5 - "And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth."

Zechariah 6:6-7 - "The black horses which are therein go forth into the north country; and the white go forth after them; and the grisled go forth toward the south country. And the bay went forth, and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth: and he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth."

These are angelic beings charged with carrying out God's commands. The seven eyes we saw before that roamed the earth represented God's omniscience; these chariots represent His omnipotence. His purposes WILL be accomplished.

Zechariah 6:8 - "Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country."

God's Spirit is quieted when His enemies have been defeated.

One horse went to the south - indicating God's judgment on Israel's old enemy Egypt.

Attacks on Judah and Israel from the Mesopotamian kingdoms always arrived in Israel

from the north.

This vision was to assure the Jews that God's justice will win out. Babylon in the "north" was defeated by the Medes and Persians. They in turn would also be humbled and defeated in the future. The enemies close by - the Samaritans trying to hinder the rebuilding of the Temple - would receive their own punishment.

As a small remnant struggling to build, at the mercy of powerful world empires and harassed by local opposition, the Jews desperately needed this prophecy of comfort and assurance.

An Elaborate Crown

Then Zechariah records a new, separate vision.

While the vision in Zechariah 4 focused on both Zerubbabel and Joshua, the vision in Zechariah 6 centers mostly on Joshua the High Priest.

A Symbolic Crown for King/Priest Messiah

Zechariah 6:9-10 - "And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, take of them of the captivity, 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;"

The prophet is told to receive gold and silver from some wealthy exiles recently arrived from Babylon.

Their names: Heldai is the same name as one of David's "mighty men" and means "robust, vitality"

Tobijah = "Yahweh is good";

Jedaiah = "Yahweh knows"

Josiah = "whom Yahweh heals," but later he is also called

Hen = "gracious"

Some scholars think their names point to the character of God's action - God knew that because of His goodness and grace He would put the king on his throne with robust vitality.

Zechariah 6:11 - "Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest;"

Remember that "Joshua" or "Yeshua" is the Hebrew name for Jesus. "Jesus" is how it is written in Greek.

The word "crowns" is plural, but it can also mean an "elaborate crown" - to distinguish it from the usual "crown" or holy diadem of the High Priest., described in Exodus 28:

- **Exodus 28:35-37** - "Aaron must wear the robe whenever he ministers, and its sound will be heard when he enters or exits the sanctuary before the LORD, so that he will not die. You are to make a plate of pure gold and engrave on it as on a seal: HOLY TO THE LORD. Fasten to it a blue cord to mount it on the turban; it shall be on the front of the turban."

But this "elaborate crown" would signify the joining of the kingly royal authority with the priestly spiritual authority.

Crowning the High Priest as king was unheard of.

Throughout Israel's history the distinction between the priesthood's spiritual authority and the king's royal authority was never blurred.

An illustration of this: When King Uzziah tried to function as a priest he was stricken with leprosy by God.

- **2 Chronicles 26:16** - "But when Uzziah grew powerful, his arrogance led to his own destruction. He was unfaithful to the LORD his God, for he entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense."

But the Messiah would combine those roles in Himself. Not only is He king of kings but also our High Priest - after the order of Melchizedek rather than Aaron (**Hebrews 7:17**)

- **Hebrews 10:12-14** - "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

Zechariah 6:12 - "And speak unto him, saying, 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:"

The prophet had spoken before of the Branch:

- **Zechariah 3:8** - "Hear now, O high priest Joshua, you and your companions seated before you, who are indeed a sign. For behold, I am going to bring My servant, the Branch."

The Branch was a title of Messiah - (See **Isaiah 4:2** and **11:1**, **Jeremiah 23:5** and **33:15**)

- **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. In His days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is His name by which He will be called: The LORD Our Righteousness"

Rabbinical sources agreed: "What is the name of the King Messiah? it is answered,

among others, his name is the "Branch"; as it is said, "behold the man whose name is the Branch; he shall grow up out of his place" - Eikhah Rabbah, fol. 50. 1, a pre-Talmudic midrash on Lamentations.

"Behold the man..." - "*Ecce Homo*" - these are the exact words used by Pilate at Jesus' trial.

"Behold" Him symbolically through Joshua. The Branch was still to come, in the future. Joshua was only acting as a type, a symbol.

The Targum says, "behold the man, Messiah is his name."

"From His place He shall branch out" - This is the building of the spiritual Temple and the "branching out" or spreading of His Kingdom, bringing forth life and fruitfulness where it is not expected, like "a root out of dry ground."

To "grow up out of his place" can also be translated as to grow up "from his inferior place" -

- **Isaiah 53:2** - "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him."

It would be a "day of small things" as we discussed in chapter 4. He grew up from humble circumstances.

But the Branch is destined to rule and triumph, no longer without comeliness, but beautiful and glorious..

- **Isaiah 4:2** - "In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel."

Or as Zechariah explains later:

- **Zechariah 14:9** - "On that day the LORD will become King over all the earth — the LORD alone, and His name alone."

The two leaders - Zerubbabel and Joshua - were going to finish building the physical Temple in Jerusalem, but the Branch would build the spiritual Temple of His body.

Zechariah 6:13 - "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

"He shall build the Temple of the Lord" - While Joshua would help Zerubbabel in reconstructing the physical Temple in Jerusalem, the Branch would build the spiritual Temple.

Let's consider this spiritual Temple one more time:

- **Ephesians 2:19-22** - "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."

- **1 Peter 2:5** - "...you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."

Both roles - priest and king - would be combined seamlessly in the person of the Messiah, and without conflict (That's what it means when it says, "the counsel of peace shall be between them both").

But since this was to come in the future, the crowns or "elaborate crown" was to be symbolically taken off of Joshua and stored in the Temple as a "memorial" and a reminder of God's promise.

The names of the four men are then repeated:

Zechariah 6:14 - "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."

This "elaborate crown" was actually stored in the Temple after it was completed, and could be seen by curious priests, according to Mishnah Middot, which describes the Temple compound.

"There were poles of cedar wood stretching from the wall of the Sanctuary to the wall of the Porch to prevent it from bulging. There were chains of gold fixed in the roof beams of the Porch by which the priestly initiates used to ascend and see the crowns, as it says, 'And the crowns shall be to Helem and to Toviya and to Yedaya and to Hen the son of Zephaniah as a memorial in the Temple of the Lord' (Zechariah 6:14)." - Mishnah Middot 3:8

The rabbis understood the crowns or the "elaborate crown" to be a memorial of something future, even of the Messiah, who was typified by Joshua.

The crowns or crown was probably looted by the Romans. But it appears one more time in scripture:

In fact, Revelation 19 may reference this passage (remember that the word crown in Hebrew is plural and can be translated either as crowns or "elaborate crown.")

- **Revelation 19:11-12** - "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he

that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself."

The "many crowns" would indicate the combining of every type of dominion and power and authority under His singular rule.

In the meantime God would provide workers, and the construction on the present material Temple by Zerubbabel and Joshua would continue with divine blessing.

Zechariah 6:15 - "And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God."

In fact, the decree of Darius in **Ezra 6:8-13** fulfilled this prediction of Zechariah concerning the physical Temple.

But Gentile workers (they that are "far off") would also have a part in Christ's body, His spiritual Temple. We have been engrafted into Israel.

While Christ is building His Temple, we "build in" the Temple, encouraging, exhorting and edifying one another.

Paul even uses the words "far off" and might have been thinking of this passage in Zechariah.

- **Ephesians 2:12** - "But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

We'll look at that chapter of Ezra next time.