

Haggai and Zechariah — Return From 70 Year Captivity

Introduction:

Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther are the historical books recording the final years of Israel's history. The end of the captivity is generally set at about 536, but after that, the dating becomes very controversial and there is very little to go on. For our purpose, there is no great need to place exact dates. It is clear from the writings that Ezra's writings start right at the captivity, but Ezra comes anywhere from 50 to 100 years later. With the characters listed in the early part of the book, we can easily place the minor prophets who worked during this time as Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

Review:

It was **Jeremiah** who first spoke of the seventy year captivity, **Isaiah** who gave the name of the king who would allow them to return to the land, and **Daniel** who identified the time when it would occur.

*"Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Because you have not heard My words, 9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' says the Lord, 'and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations. 10 Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. 11 **And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 'Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,' says the Lord; 'and I will make it a perpetual desolation. Jer 25:8-13***

*Who frustrates the signs of the babblers, And drives diviners mad; Who turns wise men backward, And makes their knowledge foolishness; 26 Who confirms the word of His servant, And performs the counsel of His messengers; **Who says to Jerusalem, 'You shall be inhabited, To the cities of Judah, 'You shall be built, 'And I will raise up her waste places;** 27 Who says to the deep, 'Be dry! And I will dry up your rivers'; 28 **Who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Sa ying to Jerusalem, "You shall be built, "And to the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid." 45 "Thus says the Lord to His anointed, To Cyrus, whose right hand I have held — To subdue nations before him And loose the armor of kings, To open before him the double doors, So that the gates will not be shut: 2 'I will go before you And make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of bronze And cut the bars of iron. 3 I will give you the treasures of darkness And hidden riches of secret places, That you may know that I, the Lord, Who call you by your name, Am the God of Israel. 4 For Jacob My servant's sake, And Israel My elect, I have even called you by your name; I have named you, though you have not known Me. 5 I am the Lord, and there is no other; There is no God besides Me. I will gird you, though you have not known Me, 6 That they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting That there is none besides Me. I am the Lord, and there is no other; 7 I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the Lord, do all these things.' Isa 44:25-45:7***

In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans — 2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. 3 Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. 4 And I prayed to the Lord my God, and made confession, and said, "O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments, 5 we have sinned and committed iniquity, we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. Dan 9:1-6

Ezra's Historical Account Begins

Ezra's account begins shortly after Daniel began his prayers and supplications. It is evident from later in the book that Ezra was not a part of this initial return, but was inspired by the Spirit to reveal it. Much like Moses wrote Genesis, though not present, so also Ezra writes this account of things

as they occurred 50 to 100 years before he began his work. He makes it clear that everything recorded by Isaiah and Jeremiah was now being fulfilled. It is clear that it was a direct command of Jehovah that led Cyrus to send the children of Israel back to their land to rebuild the temple.

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying, 2 Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah. 3 Who is among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem. 4 And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem. Ezra 1:1-4

He gives every aid including a request for freewill offerings. He also returns the articles of the temple that Nebuchadnezzar had removed.

King Cyrus also brought out the articles of the house of the Lord, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem and put in the temple of his gods; 8 and Cyrus king of Persia brought them out by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and counted them out to Sheshbazzar the prince of Judah. 9 This is the number of them: thirty gold platters, one thousand silver platters, twenty-nine knives, 10 thirty gold basins, four hundred and ten silver basins of a similar kind, and one thousand other articles. 11 All the articles of gold and silver were five thousand four hundred. All these Sheshbazzar took with the captives who were brought from Babylon to Jerusalem. Ezra 1:7-11

many from Judah, Benjamin and the Levites took advantage of this opportunity. and others are so moved by the command and the response that they offer generous offerings.

Then the heads of the fathers' houses of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites, with all whose spirits God had moved, arose to go up and build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem. 6 And all those who were around them encouraged them with articles of silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with precious things, besides all that was willingly offered. Ezra 1:5-6

Soon they are on the journey from Babylon to the land of Israel, retracing the steps of their father Abraham who had made this same journey after his call from Ur of the Chaldees. After they arrive they took a census of the number who had returned. They find there are 42,360 people, 7,337 servants, and 200 singing men and women, which brings the total number to a little less than fifty thousand. (49,897). It appears at this time that some chose to dwell in Jerusalem, while others went back to the land given to their family by lot at the time of Joshua.

The whole assembly together was forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty, 65 besides their male and female servants, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven; and they had two hundred men and women singers. 66 Their horses were seven hundred and thirty-six, their mules two hundred and forty-five, 67 their camels four hundred and thirty-five, and their donkeys six thousand seven hundred and twenty. ... 70 So the priests and the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers, and the Nethinim, dwelt in their cities, and all Israel in their cities. Ezra 2:64-67, 70

noun masculine plural **Nethinim** (properly **those given to the service of the sanctuary**, as Levites are called (Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon OT:5411))

Main Characters of Zechariah and Haggai, Introduced in Ezra,

Not long after their return they begin the necessary steps to renew their worship to Jehovah. Two key figures are Zerubbabel the governor (of the tribe of Judah) and Jeshua (also called Joshua – the high priest) from Aaron. They built the altar for Jehovah and began to offer the burnt offerings. After their arrival the first festival they have the opportunity to observe is the feast of Tabernacles which began on the 7th Month and the 15th day, lasting 7 days and a holy convocation on the 8th day (Lev 23:33-38). No mention is made of the day of atonement which was to be held on the 10th day

of the 7th month. With no tabernacle or temple, perhaps it was not possible for them to observe it. We will also find out in Zechariah that Joshua is still defiled in sin, and thus truly unprepared to offer the atonement (Zech 3:1-3).

And when the seventh month had come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered together as one man to Jerusalem. 2 Then Jeshua the son of Jozadak and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brethren, arose and built the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings on it, as it is written in the Law of Moses the man of God. 3 Though fear had come upon them because of the people of those countries, they set the altar on its bases; and they offered burnt offerings on it to the Lord, both the morning and evening burnt offerings. 4 They also kept the Feast of Tabernacles, as it is written, and offered the daily burnt offerings in the number required by ordinance for each day. 5 Afterwards they offered the regular burnt offering, and those for New Moons and for all the appointed feasts of the Lord that were consecrated, and those of everyone who willingly offered a freewill offering to the Lord. 6 From the first day of the seventh month they began to offer burnt offerings to the Lord, although the foundation of the temple of the Lord had not been laid. 7 They also gave money to the masons and the carpenters, and food, drink, and oil to the people of Sidon and Tyre to bring cedar logs from Lebanon to the sea, to Joppa, according to the permission which they had from Cyrus king of Persia. Ezra 3:1-7

Soon after they lay out the foundation of the temple which leads to a mixed reaction from the people. The young (under 75-80) shouted with joy while the old who had seen the first house some 70 years earlier wept because it was so much smaller than the one Solomon had built.

When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests stood in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the Lord, according to the ordinance of David king of Israel. 11 And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord: "For He is good, For His mercy endures forever toward Israel." Then all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. 12 But many of the priests and Levites and heads of the fathers' houses, old men who had seen the first temple, wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this temple was laid before their eyes. Yet many shouted aloud for joy, 13 so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the sound was heard afar off. Ezra 3:10-13

The Adversaries Rise Up

At this point those who were living in the land (Samaritans and others) acted the part of a hypocrite. Although they were actually adversaries, they acted as though they wanted to help build. They wanted to have fellowship with Israel in the building of the temple, but they cannot have such fellowship with Gentiles so they refuse.

Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the descendants of the captivity were building the temple of the Lord God of Israel, 2 they came to Zerubbabel and the heads of the fathers' houses, and said to them, "Let us build with you, for we seek your God as you do; and we have sacrificed to Him since the days of Esarhaddon king of Assyria, who brought us here." 3 But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the heads of the fathers' houses of Israel said to them, "You may do nothing with us to build a house for our God; but we alone will build to the Lord God of Israel, as King Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us." Ezra 4:1-3

The Samaritans

These adversaries referred back to the time when the king of Assyria brought them to the land of Israel. We learn here the type of people they were and the manner in which they "seek your God as you do" and "we have sacrificed to Him."

Then the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel; and they took possession of Samaria and dwelt in its cities. 25 And it was so, at the beginning of their

dwelling there, that they did not fear the Lord; therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which killed some of them. 26 So they **spoke to the king of Assyria**, saying, "The nations whom you have removed and placed in the cities of Samaria **do not know the rituals of the God of the land; therefore He has sent lions among them, and indeed, they are killing them because they do not know the rituals of the God of the land.**" 27 Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, "Send there one of the priests whom you brought from there; let him go and dwell there, and let him teach them the rituals of the God of the land." 28 **Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Bethel, and taught them how they should fear the Lord.** 29 **However every nation continued to make gods of its own, and put them in the shrines on the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in the cities where they dwelt.** 2 Kings 17:24-29

The Adversaries discourage then Stop the Temple being built

Because they were not allowed to build with them, their true intentions come out as they do everything they can to discourage the people. Finally they begin the process of getting the king to stop the building. Keil and Delitzsch estimate that it was 14 years before they began to build again.

Then the people of the land tried to discourage the people of Judah. They troubled them in building, 5 and hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia. Ezra 4:4-5

After the death of Cyrus, they see the opportunity to get the building stopped completely.

In the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. 7 **In the days of Artaxerxes also, Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabel, and the rest of their companions wrote to Artaxerxes king of Persia** Ezra 4:6-7

A full copy of the letter revealed the *devious methods they used.*

To King Artaxerxes from your servants, the men of the region beyond the River, and so forth: 12 **Let it be known to the king that the Jews who came up from you have come to us at Jerusalem, and are building the rebellious and evil city, and are finishing its walls and repairing the foundations.** 13 **Let it now be known to the king that, if this city is built and the walls completed, they will not pay tax, tribute, or custom, and the king's treasury will be diminished.** 14 **Now because we receive support from the palace, it was not proper for us to see the king's dishonor; therefore we have sent and informed the king,** 15 **that search may be made in the book of the records of your fathers. And you will find in the book of the records and know that this city is a rebellious city, harmful to kings and provinces, and that they have incited sedition within the city in former times, for which cause this city was destroyed.** 16 **We inform the king that if this city is rebuilt and its walls are completed, the result will be that you will have no dominion beyond the River.** Ezra 4:11-16

The answer to this letter stopped the building completely, though Haggai will later condemn them for delaying and submitting to this edict.

The king sent an answer: *To Rehum the commander, to Shimshai the scribe, to the rest of their companions who dwell in Samaria, and to the remainder beyond the River:* **Peace, and so forth.** 18 **The letter which you sent to us has been clearly read before me.** 19 **And I gave the command, and a search has been made, and it was found that this city in former times has revolted against kings, and rebellion and sedition have been fostered in it.** 20 **There have also been mighty kings over Jerusalem, who have ruled over all the region beyond the River; and tax, tribute, and custom were paid to them.** 21 **Now give the command to make these men cease, that this city may not be built until the command is given by me.** 22 **Take heed now that you do not fail to do this. Why should damage increase to the hurt of the kings?** Ezra 4:17-22

Only after God sent Haggai and Zechariah to prophesy against the people did the building of the temple begin again.

Haggai and Zechariah

Introduction:

We noted in our last class that the first few chapters of Ezra continue the Chronicles after the captivity and also describe the exodus from Babylon and the return to Judah and Jerusalem. Zechariah and Haggai were also preaching at this time.

536	49,897 return from Babylon
536	7 th Month built altar— offered sacrifice
535	Work on Temple begun
520	Work renewed by Haggai, Zechariah
516	Temple Completed
478	Esther Becomes Queen
457	Ezra goes to Jerusalem
444	Nehemiah rebuilds the Wall
432	Nehemiah returns a second time (Halley's Bible Handbook 229-230)

Cyrus II "the Great"	550-529 BC
Cambyses II	529-522 BC
Darius I	522-486 BC
Xerxes I	486-465 BC
Artaxerxes I	465-425 BC
Xerxes II	425-424 BC
Darius II	423-404 BC
Artaxerxes II	404-359 BC
Artaxerxes III	359-338 BC
Arses	338-336 BC
Darius III	336-330 BC

Remember that Cyrus was already king in Persia before the fall of Babylon. So the dates are easy to match up once we realize that it is from the time of the fall of Babylon that these dates apply. It is the the kings Cyrus and Darius that our books cite as important historical dates. are

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying, Ezra 1:1

Now in the second month of the second year of their coming to the house of God at Jerusalem, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the rest of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all those who had come out of the captivity to Jerusalem, began work and appointed the Levites from twenty years old and above to oversee the work of the house of the Ezra 3:8-9

Then the people of the land tried to discourage the people of Judah. They troubled them in building, 5 and hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia. Ezra 4:4-5

There is some difference of opinion about how long this gap took. It depends on when in Cyrus reign this new king began to reign. Some believe that while Cyrus reign continued, a new king (Ahasuerus / Artaxerxes) arose. We have no means to verify these things in secular history, but somehow, Cyrus was reigning, but so also was this king.

*5 and hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia. 6 In the reign of Ahasuerus, in the beginning of his reign, they wrote an accusation against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem. ... 11 ... (This is a copy of the letter that they sent him) **To King Artaxerxes from your servants, the men of the region beyond the River, and so forth: ... 24 Thus the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem ceased, and it was discontinued until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia. Ezra 4:5-6, 11, 24***

Some reckon that the building of the temple was suspended for only nine years; I am willing to believe that fifteen years were the utmost. During this time they had an altar and a tabernacle, which no doubt they made use of (Matthew Henry's Commentary)

Somewhere between 2 (Barnes) and 15 years the temple lay waste. Then God sent Haggai, to

Zerubbabel (governor) and Joshua (High Priest) to rebuke them.

In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, Hag. 1:1-2

Zechariah also began his work at this time.

Then the prophet Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophets, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them. 2 So Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak rose up and began to build the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them, helping them. Ezra 5:1-2

Why they did not do that at the same time the other letter of accusation was written to the new king probably reflects a lack of interest or concern since they are rebuked for it. God did not consider the persecutions of the people as a just reason for this delay. God complained that though the people affirmed it was not time to build his house (since they had been forcibly stopped), they had no difficulty in building their own homes.

In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, 2 "Thus speaks the Lord of hosts, saying: 'This people says, "The time has not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.'" 3 ***Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, 4 "Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?" 5 Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: "Consider your ways! 6 "You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; And he who earns wages, Earns wages to put into a bag with holes." Hag. 1:1-6***

God bid them consider the fruitless nature of the efforts they had been putting forth to prosper as long as his house and their need to worship and honor him was placed second to their own desires.

Thus says the Lord of hosts: "Consider your ways! 8 Go up to the mountains and bring wood and build the temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified," says the Lord. 9 "You looked for much, but indeed it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why?" says the Lord of hosts. "Because of My house that is in ruins, while every one of you runs to his own house. 10 Therefore the heavens above you withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its fruit. 11 For I called for a drought on the land and the mountains, on the grain and the new wine and the oil, on whatever the ground brings forth, on men and livestock, and on all the labor of your hands." Hag. 1:7-11

After this stirring call for repentance, both Zerubbabel, Joshua and all the remnant of the people began to build. It would be wonderful to believe it was as a result of their faith in God, but it appears from latter words, that it was only a desire for the blessings God was then withholding.

Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him; and the people feared the presence of the Lord. 13 Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, spoke the Lord's message to the people, saying, "I am with you, says the Lord." 14 So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God, 15 on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of King Darius. Hag. 1:12-15

As they began to build more adversity comes upon them, but this time they do not stop building.

At the same time Tattenai the governor of the region beyond the River and Shethar-Boznai and their companions came to them and spoke thus to them: "Who has commanded you to build this temple and finish this wall?" 4 Then, accordingly, we told them the names of the men who were constructing this building. 5 But the eye of their God was upon the elders of the Jews, so that they could not make them cease till a report could go to Darius. Then a written answer was returned concerning this matter. 6 This is a copy of the letter that Tattenai sent:

Ezra 5:3-6

Tattenai then sends a letter to Darius to see if the Jewish claims would be acceptable to him or not. Evidently those who had written the first letter have either died, or they were no longer interested. But when word reached the governor, he was concerned. He asked about the authority they had to begin this work and they cited the letter to Cyrus.

(They sent a letter to him, in which was written thus) To Darius the king: All peace. 8 Let it be known to the king that we went into the province of Judea, to the temple of the great God, which is being built with heavy stones, and timber is being laid in the walls; and this work goes on diligently and prospers in their hands. 9 Then we asked those elders, and spoke thus to them: "Who commanded you to build this temple and to finish these walls?" 10 We also asked them their names to inform you, that we might write the names of the men who were chief among them. Ezra 5:7-10

He also included the claims the Jewish leaders were making at this time which he could not verify.

And thus they returned us an answer, saying: "We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the temple that was built many years ago, which a great king of Israel built and completed. 12 But because our fathers provoked the God of heaven to wrath, He gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this temple and carried the people away to Babylon. 13 However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to build this house of God. 14 Also, the gold and silver articles of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple that was in Jerusalem and carried into the temple of Babylon — those King Cyrus took from the temple of Babylon, and they were given to one named Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. 15 And he said to him, 'Take these articles; go, carry them to the temple site that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its former site.' 16 Then the same Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundation of the house of God which is in Jerusalem; but from that time even until now it has been under construction, and it is not finished." 17 Now therefore, if it seems good to the king, let a search be made in the king's treasure house, which is there in Babylon, whether it is so that a decree was issued by King Cyrus to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send us his pleasure concerning this matter. Ezra 5:11-17

Evidently this new king knew nothing of the previous letter and decree of the previous king. So he sent to verify the claims the Jews were making. The letter he found here is different from the things said in the first chapter of Ezra. He gave the details of the new Temple.

Then King Darius issued a decree, and a search was made in the archives, where the treasures were stored in Babylon. 2 And at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of Media, a scroll was found, and in it a record was written thus: 3 In the first year of King Cyrus, King Cyrus issued a decree concerning the house of God at Jerusalem: "Let the house be rebuilt, the place where they offered sacrifices; and let the foundations of it be firmly laid, its height sixty cubits and its width sixty cubits, 4 with three rows of heavy stones and one row of new timber. Let the expenses be paid from the king's treasury. 5 Also let the gold and silver articles of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple which is in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, be restored and taken back to the temple which is in Jerusalem, each to its place; and deposit them in the house of God" — Ezra 6:1-5

With this letter to verify the claims, not only does Darius allow the building, but commands that the money to build it be provided from the Persian treasury. Thus when men determine to do God's will, God providentially helps with it.

Now therefore, Tattenai, governor of the region beyond the River, and Shethar-Boznai, and your companions the Persians who are beyond the River, keep yourselves far from there. 7 Let the work of this house of God alone; let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God on its site. 8 Moreover I issue a decree as to what you shall do for the elders of these Jews, for the building of this house of God: Let the cost be paid at the king's expense from taxes on the region beyond the River; this is to be given immediately to these men, so that they are not hindered. 9 And whatever they need — young bulls, rams, and lambs for the burnt offerings of the God of heaven, wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the request of the priests who are in Jerusalem — let it be given them day by day without fail, 10 that they may offer sacrifices of sweet aroma to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his sons. 11 Also I issue a decree that whoever alters this edict, let a timber be pulled from his house and erected, and let him be hanged on it; and let his house be made a refuse heap because of this. 12 And may the God who causes His name to dwell there destroy

any king or people who put their hand to alter it, or to destroy this house of God which is in Jerusalem. I Darius issue a decree; let it be done diligently. Ezra 6:6-12

Tattenai, fully submits to these commands and the Jews continue the work, which still takes another four years to complete.

Then Tattenai, governor of the region beyond the River, Shethar-Boznai, and their companions diligently did according to what King Darius had sent. 14 So the elders of the Jews built, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they built and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the command of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. 15 Now the temple was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius. Ezra 6:13-15

After the temple is finished, they dedicated it and assigned the priests who would do the work.

Then the children of Israel, the priests and the Levites and the rest of the descendants of the captivity, celebrated the dedication of this house of God with joy. 17 And they offered sacrifices at the dedication of this house of God, one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs, and as a sin offering for all Israel twelve male goats, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. 18 They assigned the priests to their divisions and the Levites to their divisions, over the service of God in Jerusalem, as it is written in the Book of Moses. Ezra 6:16-18

God then comforts those men who have been influenced by the smaller size of the temple. It appears there were two forms of weeping. Those weeping here were those who felt it was not enough honor to God to build such a small structure.

In the seventh month, on the twenty-first of the month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying: 2 "Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying: 3 'Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, is this not in your eyes as nothing? 4 Yet now be strong, Zerubbabel,' says the Lord; 'and be strong, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all you people of the land,' says the Lord, 'and work; for I am with you,' says the Lord of hosts. 5 'According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so My Spirit remains among you; do not fear!' Hag. 2:1-5

While God commended those above who felt it was not glorifying Him, there were others whom He rebuked

Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying: 9 "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. 10 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." Zech 4:8-10

God then promised that He would build a new temple (the church).

"For thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; 7 and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the Lord of hosts. 8 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the Lord of hosts. 9 'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the Lord of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the Lord of hosts." Hag. 2:6-9

The Hebrew writer builds on this as it also ushered in the eternal home.

but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I shake not only the earth, but also heaven." 27 Now this, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of those things that are being shaken, as of things that are made, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. 29 For our God is a consuming fire. Heb 12:26-29

Although the temple will take four years to build, God does not wait for the completion.

In the four and twentieth (day) of the ninth (month), in the second year of Darius, came the word of Jehovah by Haggai the prophet, saying, ... 15 And now, I pray you, consider from this day and backward, before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple of Jehovah. 16 Through all that time,

when one came to a heap of twenty (measures), there were but ten; when one came to the winevat to draw out fifty (vessels), there were but twenty. 17 I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail in all the work of your hands; yet ye (turned) not to me, saith Jehovah. 18 Consider, I pray you, from this day and backward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth (month), since the day that the foundation of Jehovah's temple was laid, consider it. 19 Is the seed yet in the barn? yea, the vine, and the fig-tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive-tree have not brought forth; from this day will I bless (you). Hag. 2:15-19

Zechariah

Introduction:

The prophets Haggai and Zechariah and the beginning of the book of Ezra cover the same period when the temple was being rebuilt in Jerusalem. Ezra begins with their leaving Babylon and describes the first attempts to rebuild and the interference of the Gentiles (Samaritans) that stopped their work for many years.

Cyrus: (Year and Month)

- 1 Now ***in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia***, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, Ezra 1:1
- 2 2 Now ***in the second month of the second year of their coming*** to the house of God at Jerusalem, Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the rest of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all those who had come out of the captivity to Jerusalem, began work Ezra 3:8
- ? Thus the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem ceased, and it was ***discontinued until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia***. Ezra 4:24

God sent Zechariah and Haggai to rebuke Israel for not completing the work of the temple and exhort them to begin the work. This began in the second year of Darius and continued until the temple was rebuilt in the sixth year of Darius. Haggai's book closes with two promises, one of which is a messianic prophecy. First, God promised to bless them, since they were now working to complete the temple. Second, God promised that Zerubbabel would have a son who would be made like a signet ring (Jesus the Messiah and Christ).

Then the prophet Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophets, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them. 2 So Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak rose up and began to build the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them, helping them. Ezra 5:1-2

Darius: (Year, Month, Day and Prophet)

Y M D (Year, Month, Day)

- 2 6 1 Z In the ***second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month***, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, ... 2 'This people says, "The time has not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.'" Hag. 1:1-2
- 2 6 24 H So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God, 15 on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of King Darius. Hag 1:14-15
- 2 7 24 H In the ***seventh month, on the twenty-first of the month***, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying: ...
- 2 7 24 H In the ***seventh month, on the twenty-first of the month***, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying: Hag 2:1
- 2 8 Z In the ***eighth month of the second year of Darius***, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, Zech 1:1
- 2 9 24 H On the ***twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius***, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, Hag 2:10
- 2 11 24 Z 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: Zech 1:7

4 4 9 Z Now in the **fourth year of King Darius** it came to pass that the word of the Lord came to Zechariah, on the **fourth day of the ninth month**, Chislev, Zech 7:1

6 12 3 E Now the temple was finished on the **third day of the month of Adar**, which was in the **sixth year of the reign of King Darius**. Ezra 6:15-16

Zechariah

While Ezra introduces Zechariah along with Haggai as the prophets who rebuked and exhorted the people to begin rebuilding the temple, there are only a few places where it is mentioned of it in the book that bears his name. While Haggai is focused exclusively on the rebuilding of temple, Zechariah only touches on it briefly, never with rebukes or commands to build it, but only God promising it would be built.

*"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." Zech 1:16*

*Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying: 9 **"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. 10 For who has despised the day of small things? Zech 4:8-10***

*9 "Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Let your hands be strong, You who have been hearing in these days These **words by the mouth of the prophets, Who spoke in the day the foundation was laid For the house of the Lord of hosts, That the temple might be built. Zech 8:9***

A casual reading of Zechariah leads to the conclusion that this book is so highly symbolic that it will take great efforts to understand. It follows much the same path as Revelation, moving from one figure to another with little explanation to understand or interpret it. Some things are so highly figurative that it appears nearly impossible to understand and interpret properly. There are a few places where it is to understand, but for the most part the passages move from difficult to so complicated that no one really knows exactly what they mean. Yet the some great prophecies of the coming Messiah make the book of great value to God's people.

God's Providential Care Over all the Earth

In the first vision, God revealed to Zechariah that He is aware of what is occurring in all the earth and has sent forth His angels to oversee them. There are several characters. First, there are the horses red, sorrel (*sorrel, reddish, tawny, bay – BDB OT:8320; speckled*), and white, then the "men" who are part of the vision. An angel who is speaking to Zechariah and the angel of the LORD. Although these appears to be a possibility here that the angel and the angel of the LORD are the same, no one takes that view. The "men" have been sent forth to walk to and fro over the earth.

*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." Zech 1:8-10***

In Daniel we are told that not only do they watch, but they also play an active role in seeing that the will of God is accomplished.

*Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. 13 **But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. ... 20 Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight***

with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come. 21 But I will tell you what is noted in the Scripture of Truth. (No one upholds me against these, except Michael your prince. Dan 10:12-14; 20-21

The phrase “*We have walked to and fro*” throughout the earth, is used twice more in Zechariah and several other times in the Scriptures. Each of them emphasizes a different aspect of God’s knowledge of what occurs over all the earth.

Then the strong steeds went out, eager to go, that they might walk to and fro throughout the earth. And He said, “Go, walk to and fro throughout the earth.” So they walked to and fro throughout the earth. Zech 6:7-8

*They are **the eyes of the Lord**, Which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth.” Zech 4:10*

*For **the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth**, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. 2 Chron 16:9*

God’s Love for Jerusalem

Zechariah is to proclaim that through the intercession of the angel of the LORD, God will care for and protect Jerusalem. He is zealous for Jerusalem, will return with mercy and be sure His house is built there. God promised to comfort and choose Jerusalem.

*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.”’”**” Zech 1:12-17*

God’s Intervention in the World

The angel now discusses the four horns that Zechariah has seen. Since they are the horns that scattered Judah they are most likely the nations. God speaks Although God not identify them the timing of the comments coincide with the letters going back and forth to Persia over the fate of the building of the temple. But it may have to do with the past or the future.

*18 Then I raised my eyes and looked, and **there were four horns**. 19 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.**” Zech 1:18-19*

God promised that he would send “craftsmen” (craftsman, artisan, engraver, smith) *T Complete Word Study Dictionary: OT:2796*) to terrify and cast out these “horns of the nations.”

*Then the Lord showed me **four craftsmen**. 21 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.**” Zech 1:20-21*

Joshua: The Defiled High Priest

This is an amazing vision with a mixture of spiritual truth and symbolism. How much of each is present is difficult to know. Joshua is standing in the presence of the Angel of Lord, and in the presence of Satan. Satan is opposing and the Angel of the Lord to cleanse and restore him. The LORD is also present, but speaking in the third person says “*the LORD rebuke you: Satan.*”

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?” Zech 3:1-2

There is so much we don’t know. Is this a vision or a reality? We know Michael the Archangel did something similar with the body of Moses.

Yet **Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you! Jd 9**

Who is the LORD that said to Satan "the LORD rebuke you?" Some point to the Psalms and to Hebrews, where there is no question that God the Father is calling Jesus Lord and God.

The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." 2 The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! Ps 110:1-2

But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; **Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions." Heb 1:8-9**

John says much the same thing:

*In the beginning was the Word, and the **Word was with God, and the Word was God.** 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ... 14 And **the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.** John 1:1-3, 14*

Though a vision, everything in it is validated by other Scriptures. Satan is the accuser of our brethren. Jesus is Lord and God, Michael also rebuked Satan exactly as here, and Joshua was in dire need of cleansing since both he and his office were defiled.

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. Rev 12:9-11

This is not the only place in the Scriptures where the Angel of Jehovah appears to be deity, so it is entirely possible that the entire vision is literal.

Joshua is standing with filthy garments which indicate the defilement that had occurred both to the office and to him. The office was defiled before they went into Babylon and both the temple and the High Priest were removed. Joshua was defiled when he was not the moving force behind the temple being built. Since Satan is accusing "him" it may be the latter, or it may be both. The office of High Priest was in need of cleansing and this vision revealed that it was done.

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." Zech. 3:3-5

The Angel of the LORD Admonishes Joshua

This is clearly a part of the vision since the angel is showing him this. Whether Joshua got this directly or later through Zechariah is difficult to determine, but it is most likely the latter. He has been cleansed, but that cleansing is contingent on his being faithful and obedient. He does not identify "these who stand here." But when the Angel of the LORD continues in the next verse, it appears that these are other men who are present with him.

Then the Angel of the Lord admonished Joshua, saying, 7 "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. Zech. 3:6-7

What follows is a messianic prophesy about the Branch. There is no doubt from other Scriptures that Jesus is the branch that is being described 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.** 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. Zech 3:8-9*

There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Isa 11:1-2

"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 6 In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Jer 23:5-6

"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." Zech 6:12-13

Although we know the branch is Jesus, we do not know about the stone since it is only mentioned here. But it is probably the stone described in other passages.

"Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; Isa 28:16

The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. 23 This was the Lord's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. Ps 118:22-23

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 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. 6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." 1 Peter 2:4-6

The Self-Filling Lampstand

The majority of those who write about this passage see a greater fulfillment in the New Covenant. Although it is a beautiful example of a type-antitype, there is nothing in the New Testament to validate it. It is obvious from the first reading that this had its fulfillment in the rebuilding of the temple in the days of Joshua and Zerubbabel. This was a promise of strong assurance that God would not need human power as He did with the lampstand in the temple. This lampstand would always have oil provided for it through the power of God.

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. 3 Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left." 4 So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, "What are these, my lord?" 5 Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." 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. 7 'Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring fort the capstone With shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"' Zech 4:2-7

But is this all? Zerubbabel is in the lineage of Christ and Christ also built a temple for the Lord. Throughout the book the Messiah is prominent. It clearly was fulfilled in the New Testament. But caution keeps us from directly applying it to the Messiah.

It is obvious when we look at it as a literal fulfillment in that day. The temple foundation had been laid and some had despised the day of small things, weeping at the size of the new temple. But who are the seven who see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel which are the eyes of the Lord? Are these eyes only looking at Zerubbabel, or do they also have in view the coming Messiah who would also have a plumbline in His hand?

"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. 10 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." Zech 4:9-10

Visions of Zechariah

Introduction:

Like Jesus parables, most of the visions of Zechariah are basic and simple stories that are easy to visualize. Making the spiritual applications is sometimes easy and sometimes complex:

- (1) **Horses among Myrtle Trees**; A “man” speaking with the Angel of the LORD (1:7–17)
Walking through the earth – earth is resting quietly — God is aware ...
- (2) **Four horns** (animal or four corners of altar) and **Four Craftsmen** (1:18–21)
the nations that destroyed Judah, Israel and Jerusalem, and the craftsmen to terrify them.
- (3) **Man with a Measuring Line** to Measure Jerusalem (2:1-3)
Jerusalem will be inhabited and prosperous again. God will be a wall of fire.
- (4) **Joshua** (High Priest) **standing before the Angel of the LORD with Satan opposing** (3:1-5)
Defiled clothing removed and clean clothing restored
- (5) **Golden Lampstand with Bowl**, Pipes to each Lamp; 2 Olive Trees dripping oil into Bowl (4:1-3)
this is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel ... not by might or power but by My Spirit.
- (6) **A Flying Scroll with a Curse** going over the Face of the Earth. (5:1–4)
On one side: every thief will be expelled and on the other: Every perjurer will be expelled
- (7) A **Woman Sitting in a Basket with a Lead Disk** (5:5–11)
woman (wickedness) placed in a basket with lead disk cover and carried away by two women with wings
- (8) **Four Chariots pulled by Red, Black, White and Sorrel Horses** (6:1–8),
Four spirits of heaven walking to and fro on the earth

Joshua: The Defiled High Priest

This is an amazing vision with a mixture of spiritual truth and symbolism. How much of each is present is difficult to know. Joshua is standing in the presence of the Angel of Lord, and in the presence of Satan. Satan is opposing and the Angel of the Lord is preparing to cleanse and restore him. The LORD is also present, but speaking in the third person says “*the LORD rebuke you: Satan.*”

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?" Zech 3:1-2

There is so much we don't know. Is this a vision or a reality? We know Michael the Archangel did something similar with the body of Moses.

*Yet **Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"** Jd 9*

Who is the LORD that said to Satan “*the LORD rebuke you?*” Some point to the Psalms and to Hebrews, where there is no question that God the Father is calling Jesus Lord and God.

***The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."** 2 The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! Ps 110:1-2*

***But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions."** Heb 1:8-9*

John says much the same thing:

*In the beginning was the Word, and the **Word was with God, and the Word was God.** 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ... 14 And **the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:1-3, 14*

Though a vision, everything in it is validated by other Scriptures. Satan is the accuser of our brethren. Jesus is Lord and God, Michael also rebuked Satan exactly as here, and Joshua was in dire need of cleansing since both he and his office were defiled.

So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. Rev 12:9-11

This is not the only place in the Scriptures where the Angel of Jehovah appears to be deity, so it is entirely possible that the entire vision is literal. But we must be very careful, because we don't have enough to draw the final conclusion without violating Deut. 29:29.

Joshua is standing with filthy garments which indicate the defilement that had occurred both to the office and to him. The office was defiled before they went into Babylon and both the temple and the High Priest were removed. Joshua was defiled when he was not the moving force behind the temple being built. Since Satan was accusing "him" it may be the latter, or it may be both. The office of High Priest was in need of cleansing and this vision revealed that it was done.

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." Zech. 3:3-5

The Angel of the LORD Admonishes Joshua

This is clearly part of the vision since the angel was still showing Zechariah all these things. Whether Joshua is receiving this directly or told these things later through Zechariah's teaching is difficult to determine with only this much information. He had been cleansed, but that cleansing would be contingent on his being faithful and obedient. He did not identify "these who stand here," But when the Angel of the LORD continues in the next verse, it appears that these are other men who are present with him.

Then the Angel of the Lord admonished Joshua, saying, 7 "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. Zech. 3:6-7

All of this is a "wondrous sign," This is a messianic prophesy about the Branch. There is no doubt from other Scriptures that Jesus is the Branch being described 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.** 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. Zech 3:8-9*

***There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.** 2 The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Isa 11:1-2*

*"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "That **I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper,** And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. 6 In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: **THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.** Jer 23:5-6*

*"**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.**" Zech 6:12-13*

Although we know the branch is Jesus, we do not know about the stone since it is only mentioned here. But it is probably the stone described in other passages.

*"Behold, **I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, A tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation;** Isa 28:16*

***The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.** 23 This was the Lord's*

doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. Ps 118:22-23

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 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. 6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame." 1 Peter 2:4-6

When we return to this subject in chapter six, it appears that both this vision and the next one are both involved.

The Self-Filling Lampstand

The majority of those who write about this passage see a greater fulfillment in the New Covenant. Although it is a beautiful example of a type-antitype, there is nothing in the New Testament to validate it. It is obvious from the first reading that this had its fulfillment in the rebuilding of the temple in the days of Joshua and Zerubbabel. This was a promise of strong assurance that God would not need human power as He did with the lampstand in the temple. This lampstand would always have oil provided for it through the power of God.

*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. 3 Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left." 4 So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, "What are these, my lord?" 5 Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." 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. 7 'Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring fort the capstone With shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"**" Zech 4:2-7*

But is this all? Zerubbabel is in the lineage of Christ and Christ also built a temple for the Lord. Throughout the book the Messiah is prominent. It clearly was fulfilled in the New Testament. But caution keeps us from directly applying it to the Messiah.

It is obvious when we look at it as a literal fulfillment in that day. The temple foundation had been laid and some had despised the day of small things, weeping at the size of the new temple. But who are the seven who see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel which are the eyes of the Lord? Are these eyes only looking at Zerubbabel, or do they also have in view the coming Messiah who would also have a plumbline in His hand?

"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. 10 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." Zech 4:9-10

The completeness of God's ability to see all adversaries and to overcome them is seen in the vision in the seven eyes that scan to and fro through the earth.

The final passage has no real key to understand. Who these holy ones are have been variously interpreted. Some say Joshua and Zerubbabel, but sadly, we don't have enough information to hazard a guess.

Then I answered and said to him, "What are these two olive trees — at the right of the lampstand and at its left?" 12 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?" 13 Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." 14 So he said, "These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth." Zech. 4:11-14

Flying Scroll and Basket

The two visions in chapter Five are set forth in a manner that shows they stand together. In the first we have a curse in the form of a flying scroll going out throughout all the earth. There are so many difficulties in this vision and so many interpretations that it appears that the best we can do is add our guesses to others. Yet we are forbidden to do that so all we have left is to make some general observations.

First, the size of the scroll is 30' by 15' and though many ingenious guesses have been made there is really nothing except size to interpret.

Second, the nature of the sins are stealing and perjury (false swearing). Why were these chosen and others overlooked? What do they represent? They are both questions with no clear answer. God will send this out over the face of the entire earth, yet only Judah is in covenant with God, why everywhere else? One thing is clear, your sins will find you out.

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." Zech 5:1-4

The second part of the vision is a continuation of the first, except now all sin (wickedness) is under consideration. Yet this vision is more obscure than the first. Many are ready to guess, but nowhere else is sin represented as being placed in a basket and carried to the land of Shinar. There is nothing to even base a guess on. All we can say with certainty is that God intends to remove sin to another place. This bears a certain resemblance to the scapegoat that also has the sins of the people placed on it and released into the wilderness. But it is not close enough. This could be the removal of sin in forgiveness, or forgiveness of sin in the removal of sinners.

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." 6 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: 7 Here is a lead disc lifted up, and this is a woman sitting inside the basket"; 8 then he said, "This is Wickedness!" And he thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead cover over its mouth. 9 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. Zech 5:5-9

The Four Chariots

This vision resembles that of the horses and those visions that represent God as being aware of all that is transpiring and having the resources to deal with anything that should occur. How many horses are pulling them and who is sitting in them are not revealed.

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. 2 With the first chariot were red horses, with the second chariot black horses, 3 with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot dappled horses — strong steeds. 4 Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" 5 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. Zech 6:1-6

Prophecies of Zechariah

Although the next events are done in real life, the symbolism is just as strong as it is in the visions.

From Visions to Reality

A gift has come from the captives of Medo-Persia in the form of gold and silver. Zechariah is commanded to take the gift and have an elaborate and ornate crown made from it. That crown is then to be taken, not to Zerubbabel, but to the High Priest Joshua. It is not to the kingly tribe of Judah that Zerubbabel represented as being a part of the lineage of Christ, but the High Priest from the tribe of Aaron.

Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying: 10 "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. Zech. 6:9-11

There is no way to misunderstand the reality that this figure represents. The BRANCH (the Christ) will build the temple and will sit and rule while at the same time be a priest on His throne. There will be no conflict

between these two offices as they will be perfectly blended.

"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." Zech. 6:12-13

The book of Hebrews spends several chapters dealing with this theme, but instead of using this verse, one of the Psalms is used.

The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." 2 The Lord shall send the rod of Your strength out of Zion. Rule in the midst of Your enemies! 3 Your people shall be volunteers In the day of Your power; In the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, You have the dew of Your youth. 4 The Lord has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek." Ps. 110:1-4

For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. 13 For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar. Heb. 7:12-13

For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; 5 who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. Heb. 8:4-5

As Priest and King, Jesus would build the temple (church) of which we would be the living stones become a holy priesthood and offering up spiritual sacrifices.

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 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. 1Peter 2:4-6

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. Eph. 2:19-22

Questions Regarding The Fasts of the Jews

Israel had gained an understanding about fasting, first from Moses 40 day fast on Mt Sinai and then from the day of atonement where the affliction of the soul is directly tied to fasting. The Day of Atonement fell on the tenth day of the seventh month (Tishri = Sept./Oct.), and was observed from evening to evening.

*"This shall be a statute forever for you: **In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict (OT:6031 – `anah) your souls**, and do no work at all, whether a native of your own country or a stranger who dwells among you. 30 For on that day the priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, that you may be clean from all your sins before the Lord. Lev. 16:29-31*

It shall be to you a sabbath of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall celebrate your sabbath." Lev. 23:32

The general understanding of "afflict your souls" is fasting. This is based on two Scriptures that tie them together. The first a general observance of fasting and the second, probably the day of atonement because God said "Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict (OT:6031 – `anah) his soul?"

But as for me, when they were sick, My clothing was sackcloth; I humbled (afflicted – OT:6031 – `anah) myself with fasting; Ps. 35:13

'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and You have not seen? Why have we afflicted our souls, (OT:6031 – `anah) and You take no notice?' "In fact, in the day of your fast you find pleasure, And exploit all your laborers. ... 5 Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict (OT:6031 – `anah) his soul? Is it to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Would you call this a fast, And an acceptable day to the Lord? Isa. 58:3-5

Fasting moved into general use for the first time when the children of Benjamin has first struck down Judah and then Israel and struck down a total of 40,000 men. They recognized God was

using Benjamin to punish them for their sins so they fasted and prayed.

*Then **all the children of Israel, that is, all the people**, went up and came to the house of God and wept. They sat there before the Lord and **fasted that day until evening; and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings** before the Lord. Judg. 20:26-27*

Fasting soon moved from the feast of atonement to any time a powerful need arose that needed to be brought to God's attention.

*David therefore pleaded with God for the child, and **David fasted and went in and lay all night on the ground**. 22 And he said, "**While the child was alive, I fasted and wept**; for I said, 'Who can tell whether the **Lord will be gracious to me, that the child may live?**' 23 **But now he is dead; why should I fast?** 2Sam. 12:16, 22-23*

*So it was, when **Ahab heard those words, that he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his body, and fasted and lay in sackcloth, and went about mourning**. 28 And the word of the Lord came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 29 "See how **Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the calamity in his days**. 1Kings 21:27-29*

*Then **I proclaimed a fast there, at the river Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a straight way for us and for our substance**. ... 23 **So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer**. Ezra 8:21, 23*

*So it was, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and **mourned for many days; I was fasting and praying before the God of heaven**. Neh. 1:4*

*Then Esther told them to reply to Mordecai: 16 "Go, **gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day**. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king, which is against the law; and if I perish, I perish!" Est.4:15-16*

Fasting was always associated with mourning, affliction, a dire need that fasting was added to prayer to make it heard on high. When disciples of the Pharisees and Jesus came to ask why his disciples didn't fast, he used this same reasoning.

*Indeed you fast for strife and debate, And to strike with the fist of wickedness. **You will not fast as you do this day, To make your voice heard on high**. Isa. 58:4*

*Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?" 15 And Jesus said to them, "**Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them?** Mt. 9:14-15*

It is the midst of all this that an inquiry comes from the Jews left in Medo Persia regarding the fasts they had been observing. They did not inquire of the prophet, but instead went to the priests, but God wanted this dealt with properly and along the same lines as Isaiah.

to ask the priests who were in the house of the Lord of hosts, and the prophets, saying, "Should I weep in the fifth month and fast as I have done for so many years?" Zech. 7:3-6

They were asking the wrong question and putting their priorities on the wrong things. The real issue was their repentance which they do not address, but God did. What that fast really for Him and not for themselves? It is evident from their eating and drinking that they were only eating for themselves using none of the strength of the food for their service to God. Their problem was that even then after 70 years of captivity they were obeying the voice of the prophets no better than their parents had. So what was the true purpose of the fast?

*Then the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, 5 "**Say to all the people of the land, and to the priests: 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months during those seventy years, did you really fast for Me — for Me? 6 When you eat and when you drink, do you not eat and drink for yourselves? 7 Should you not have obeyed the words which the Lord proclaimed through the former prophets when Jerusalem and the cities around it were inhabited and prosperous, and the South and the Lowland were inhabited?'**" Zech. 7:4-7*

God then gives two answers. The first regarding the moral condition of those who want to fast and the second, the transient nature of all these fasts revealed that they were not that important. It seems individual fasts for needs and not a day of fasting would soon become the way that fasting would be observed.

*Then the word of the Lord came to Zechariah, saying, 9 "Thus says the Lord of hosts: '**Execute true***

justice, Show mercy and compassion Everyone to his brother. 10 Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, The alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart Against his brother.' 11 But they refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stopped their ears so that they could not hear. Zech. 7:8-12

There were actually four days they were now fasting. We have no real reference as to what these days represented. But only the 10th was commanded by the Lord and it too would be removed in days to come.

"Thus says the Lord of hosts: 'The fast of the fourth month, The fast of the fifth, The fast of the seventh, And the fast of the tenth, Shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts For the house of Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.' Zech. 8:19

Did these fasts continue into the New Covenant. There are a few points that appear that Jesus expected His people to fast.

But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. Mt. 9:16

"Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. 17 But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, 18 so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. Mt. 6:16-18

The only example of fasting in the New Testament occurred when the congregation was about to do something important and they wanted God's blessings.

As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." 3 Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. Acts 13:2-3

So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. Acts 14:23-24

A promise of Good in the Future

This is a wonderful promise of life in the church. Instead of God seeking to punish those who are doing evil, it will be God's intent to do them good.

"For thus says the Lord of hosts: 'Just as I determined to punish you When your fathers provoked Me to wrath,' Says the Lord of hosts, 'And I would not relent, 15 So again in these days I am determined to do good To Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear. 16 These are the things you shall do: Speak each man the truth to his neighbor; Give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and peace; 17 Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; And do not love a false oath. For all these are things that I hate,' Says the Lord." Zech. 8:14-17

For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. 11 Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing. 1Th. 5:9-11

Miscellaneous Prophecies

The Coming King and His Dominion

Zechariah gives a prophesy that is quoted in gospels and called the triumphal entry when Jesus entered into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey. This is also further described in the book of Psalms.

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

6 "Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion." 7 "I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. 8 Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron;

You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel." Ps 2:6-9

The Coming Shepherd

The passages recorded in chapter 11 are not easy to understand and have been variously interpreted. Since there are two Messianic prophecies in their midst, it is clear that Jesus is a part of this prophecy, but how much is unclear and it seems futile to speculate. What we know is that Zechariah is commanded to take the role of a shepherd and to dismiss three unreliable and unfaithful shepherds. Again, how much is Zechariah and how much is Christ cannot be easily seen.

Thus says the Lord my God, "Feed the flock for slaughter, 5 whose owners slaughter them and feel no guilt; those who sell them say, 'Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich'; and their shepherds do not pity them. ... 7 So I fed the flock for slaughter, in particular the poor of the flock. I took for myself two staves: the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bonds; and I fed the flock. 8 I dismissed the three shepherds in one month. My soul loathed them, and their soul also abhorred me. 9 Then I said, "I will not feed you. Let what is dying die, and what is perishing perish. ... 12 Then I said to them, "If it is agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain." So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver. 13 And the Lord said to me, "Throw it to the potter" — that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord for the potter. Zech 11:4-6

Him whom they have pierced

Again we are faced with a difficult passage with enough to conclude it is a Messianic prophecy.

"And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn. Zech 12:10-11

And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced." John 19:37

Smite the Shepherd

While the first few passages in the chapter are so obscure that it is very difficult to interpret them as occurring in the first century, but the latter portion is quoted in the New Testament.

"Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, Against the Man who is My Companion," Says the Lord of hosts. "Strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered; Then I will turn My hand against the little ones. Zech 13:7

Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep will be scattered.' 28 "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." Mk. 14:27-28

The final chapter of Zechariah is often used today to validate the Rapture. But there is nothing in the passage that would set the circumstances or the date with any certainty. It is one of those apocalyptic passages best studied and considered without violating Rev 22:18