

ZECHARIAH

Chapters Five & Six

Introduction

The Jews who had returned to Jerusalem from captivity in Babylon were busy building the Temple. They were eagerly anticipating its completion so that they could properly observe all of its ceremonies.

The Lord told Zechariah to celebrate a special ceremony prior to the completion of the Temple. He told him to make a crown out of the silver and gold certain returning exiles had brought for an offering and to put the crown on the head of Joshua, the high priest.

You must understand how unusual this was. First, it was a ceremony that had not been commanded in the Law of Moses and had not been celebrated before. Second, priests were never crowned as kings, just as kings never served as priests.

It was a symbolic ceremony of coronation. It anticipated the future day when their Messiah would come and accept His coronation as a “priest upon His throne.” In the future He would “sit and rule” the whole earth “upon His throne” in the Temple at Jerusalem.

The anticipation that their Messiah would come and accept His coronation must have been an exciting encouragement to the work of building the Temple. Regardless the seeming insignificance of their work, it was an important link in the chain of events that would usher in the Kingdom of God on the earth.

I want to suggest that you and I *can* and *should* have this same exciting encouragement in our work:

1. According to First Corinthians 3:10-15, every Christian is a builder.
2. According to First Corinthians 3:16, we are building in the Temple of God. It is not a physical temple; it is a spiritual temple – the Church.

3. We, too, anticipate the future day when Jesus Christ will come and accept His coronation.

With these things in mind, we'll organize our thoughts around these two points: #1 You Are Building A Temple In Anticipation Of The Coronation Of Your King, and #2 Jesus Will Be Building A Temple In Acceptance Of His Coronation As Your King.

#1 You Are Building A Temple In Anticipation Of The Coronation Of Your King (5:1-6:8)

The Jews had already been greatly encouraged in their work of building the Temple by Zechariah's series of seven visions. These last three visions are the preface to the unusual coronation of Joshua.

The coronation of Joshua is symbolic of the future coronation of the Messiah. These three visions are a summary of the events on earth that lead-up to the crowning of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

The three visions describe future events and activities in three spheres: In the land of Israel, among the nations of the Gentiles, and in Heaven.

The future of the land of Israel is summarized by the flying scroll:

Zechariah 5:1 Then I turned and raised my eyes, and saw there a flying scroll.

Zechariah 5:2 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."

Zechariah 5:3 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."

Zechariah 5:4 "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."

There are two important details you need in order to properly interpret this vision:

1. The phrase "the whole earth" is better translated "the whole **land**." It is referring to the land God gave to the Jews; it is a geographical reference to Israel.

2. The measurement of the scroll at twenty cubits by ten cubits is the exact measure of the holy place in the Temple.

With these two details in mind we would say that this vision presents a future time when the Jews are in their land and with their Temple.

The flying scroll has one commandment from each of the two-tablets of the Ten Commandments. There is a lot of discussion among commentators as to why these two particular commandments. We just don't know. What everyone agrees upon is that the scroll represents the whole law of God.

Israel in the future will be dwelling in their land, with their Temple, according to God's law. God will be disciplining them and many of the Jews will be "expelled" from their land. This word translated "expelled" is interesting; it can mean either "cut-off" or "cleansed."

This, then, is what the vision of the flying scroll reveals: In the future the Jews will be living in their land, with their Temple, observing their law. It will be a time of God's discipline and individual Jews will either be cut-off or cleansed.

We know this future time as the seven-year Great Tribulation. Israel will indeed dwell in their promised land; they will indeed build a Temple according to God's law. But it will be a time of discipline when individual Jews will be either cut-off or cleansed prior to the return of their Messiah.

The vision of the flying scroll summarizes the future of the land of Israel. The vision of the woman in the ephah summarizes the future of the Gentile nations of the earth:

Zechariah 5:5 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."

Zechariah 5:6 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:

Zechariah 5:7 Here *is* a lead disc lifted up, and this *is* a woman sitting inside the basket";

Zechariah 5:8 then he said, "This *is* Wickedness!" And he thrust her down into the basket, and threw the lead cover over its mouth.

Zechariah 5:9 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.

Zechariah 5:10 So I said to the angel who talked with me, "Where are they carrying the basket?"

Zechariah 5:11 And he said to me, "To build a house for it in the land of Shinar; when it is ready, *the basket* will be set there on its base."

The "basket" was an *ephah*. The ephah was a large measure of volume. The "lead disc" was a *talent*. The talent was a large measure of weight. They are both symbols of commerce and commercialism – of doing business in the world.

The "woman sitting inside the basket" is identified as "Wickedness." So far it is a picture of wicked commercialism. The word for "earth" here does mean *the whole earth*.

The "land of Shinar" is Babylon. The "house" in the land of Shinar is a religious temple since the basket with the lead disc will be set there "on its base" or *pedestal* in the fashion of an idol.

This vision is telling you that in the future the city of Babylon will be rebuilt as a center of wicked world commerce mixed with idolatrous religion. **This is exactly what you read in the Revelation of Jesus Christ, especially chapters seventeen and eighteen!** Babylon will indeed be rebuilt as the world's center of commerce and religion. The commerce will be wicked, having as commodities things like "slaves and the souls of men" (Revelation 18:13). The religion will be a monstrous false system of idolatry described as a spiritual harlot (Revelation 17).

Thus far the future looks like this: the Jews will be in their land, with their Temple according to God's law. The Gentile nations will be united in a system of world religion and commerce. What happens next is described in Zechariah's tenth and final vision.

The vision of the four horsemen and chariots summarizes Heaven's future activities upon the earth:

Zechariah 6:1 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.

Zechariah 6:2 With the first chariot *were* red horses, with the second chariot black horses, Zechariah 6:3 with the third chariot white horses, and with the fourth chariot dappled horses—strong *steeds*.

Zechariah 6:4 Then I answered and said to the angel who talked with me, "What *are* these, my lord?"

Zechariah 6:5 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.

Zechariah 6:6 The one with the black horses is going to the north country, the white are going after them, and the dappled are going toward the south country.”

Zechariah 6:7 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.

Zechariah 6:8 And He called to me, and spoke to me, saying, “See, those who go toward the north country have given rest to My Spirit in the north country.”

When Israel is in their land and with their Temple according to God’s law; and when the Gentile nations are united in a system of false religion and wicked commerce; then God will release His angelic horsemen and chariots. Whether these are the same as the four horsemen of the Apocalypse described in Revelation Six is a matter for further discussion and study. They are certainly God’s agents who carry out His will upon the future earth during the seven-year Great Tribulation.

Their ministry is one of judgment, symbolized by the fact that the “mountains” they emerge from are “bronze.” It has been suggested that the valley between these two mountains is representative of the Valley of Jehoshaphat – also called “the valley of decision” by Joel. It is the valley that will be formed when Jesus Christ returns and sets foot on the earth. Zechariah will later describe the formation of this valley (14:4).

The Jews were building the Temple. It would be a small, seemingly insignificant Temple. But in God’s scheme of prophetic history, it was an integral part. The Jews were being encouraged to build with a sense of anticipation of the future coronation of their King.

You and I are God’s builders; we are building in His current Temple, the Church. We ought to have an even greater anticipation than the Jews. As you look forward to the coming of Jesus to be crowned as King of kings and Lord of lords, **you realize He is first coming for you in the Rapture of the Church!**

The anticipation of Christ’s coronation is even more intensified by our understanding He is coming to Rapture us because it means we will actually be in heaven to see the Lord Jesus make His final preparations to come as King. In Revelation chapters four and five you and I and all the believers of the Church age surround the throne in heaven when Jesus steps forward to reclaim the earth.

If you've lost the edge to your Christian walk, I suggest it is because you are not reminding yourself that you could be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

#2 Jesus Will Be Building A Temple In Acceptance Of His Coronation As Your King (6:9-15)

Zechariah's visions were ended. Now he was given an unusual ceremony to officiate:

Zechariah 6:9 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying:

Zechariah 6:10 "Receive *the gift* from the captives - from Heldai, Tobijah [To-be-yahoo], and Jedaiah [Yed-I-ah], who have come from Babylon - and go the same day and enter the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah.

Zechariah 6:11 Take the silver and gold, make an elaborate crown, and set *it* on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest."

Three Jewish men had recently arrived from exile in Babylon to offer gifts for the work of the building of the Temple. Zechariah was instructed to take their gifts of silver and gold and make a crown, then celebrate the coronation of Joshua, the high priest.

It was to be a symbolic ceremony:

Zechariah 6:12 Then speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, saying: "Behold, the Man whose name *is* the BRANCH! From His place He shall branch out, and He shall build the temple of the LORD;

Zechariah 6:13 Yes, He shall build the temple of the LORD. He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule on His throne; so He shall be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

"The BRANCH" is *not* the name of Joshua. It is a prophetic name which is given to the Lord Jesus Christ. The word of God speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ as "The Branch" in four ways:

1. He is called the Branch of David: 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." The Branch of David means Jesus is a King from David's line.
2. He is spoken of as Jehovah's *Servant*, the Branch, as we have already seen in chapter three verse eight of Zechariah: "Here now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee:

for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH.”

3. Here in chapter six verse twelve He is called “the *man* whose name is The BRANCH.” Branch reminds you of His humanity – His identification with the human race.
4. Finally, in Isaiah 4:2 He is called the Branch of Jehovah in His rule over the whole earth during the Millennial Kingdom: “In that day shall the branch of the LORD [Jehovah] be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.”

It is interesting that the gospel records in the New Testament present the Lord Jesus in the same fourfold way:

1. In the Gospel of Matthew He is the *King*, the Branch of David.
2. In the Gospel of Mark He is Jehovah’s *Servant*, the Branch.
3. In the Gospel of Luke He is presented as the perfect *Man* whose name is the Branch.
4. And in the Gospel of John He is the Branch of Jehovah, *God* the Son.

When Jesus Christ returns to earth He will build a Temple in Jerusalem. He will accept His coronation and unite once-and-for all the two offices of priest and king. He Who **is** our Great High Priest **will** finally **be** crowned as King over the whole earth.

He is poised in heaven, waiting. He will Rapture His Church; then He will step forward in heaven to reclaim the title deed of the earth. As He does, seven seals are opened... seven trumpets are blown... seven bowls are poured-out upon the earth. Then He returns in His Second Coming, creating the Valley of Decision. He destroys the enemies of God gathered against Him at Armageddon. Then He separates believers from unbelievers among both Israel and the nations and He establishes the Kingdom of God on the earth for one thousand years.

All of this was memorialized in the symbolic coronation of Joshua.

Zechariah 6:14 “Now the elaborate crown shall be for a memorial in the temple of the LORD for Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen the son of Zephaniah.

Zechariah 6:15 Even those from afar shall come and build the temple of the LORD. Then you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. And *this* shall come to pass if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.”

The three returning exiles themselves were a symbol. They were a symbol of all those – both Jew and Gentile - who, in the future, will come from all over the earth to worship Jesus as Priest and King. The text literally reads they shall come from afar and “build **in** the Temple.” They will share in the work of the Kingdom on earth – but it will be Jesus Who will Himself build the Temple.

Someone said, “History is flowing in the channel of prophecy.” World events, especially in the Middle East and Israel, are everyday reminders that God has a plan for history that involves restoring Israel to Himself. Jesus will return and they will receive the One they once rejected as their Priest and King.

Conclusion

Four names are memorialized in connection with this symbolic coronation: Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen. “Helem” is another rendering of Heldai (v10). “Hen” is a nickname for Josiah (v10). Three of them are *returning*; one is the gracious host who *received* them.

You are being encouraged to return. You’ll have to ask Jesus exactly what you need to return *from* or *to*! It could be a return from the world or worldliness that has crept into your life... It could be a return from sin that has been dominating you... It could be a return to His Lordship in your life... It could be a return to an attitude of sacrifice and service in the Church... Whatever it is, anytime you return, it is a reminder to yourself and others that Jesus Christ is coming as King. When you return, it is a coronation of Jesus in your life.

Anyone not being encouraged to return **is** being encouraged to receive. Hen, the nickname of Josiah, means *gracious one*. Receive others in the grace of God. Live by the principles of the Kingdom of God as you await its establishment at the coming of Jesus.