

1. The year is 520 BC when we begin our study of the book of Zechariah.

(Please note the change in dates from the Lesson Two material. There is a two-year difference).

- Eighteen years have passed since 538 BC when Cyrus king of Persia issued his decree which allowed the Jewish exiles to return to their home in Jerusalem.
- In 538 BC Zerubbabel led the first group of nearly 50,000 exiles from Babylon back to Jerusalem. The work on the Temple began and continued for two years.
- Shortly after the exiles arrived in Jerusalem in 538 BC they built the Altar.
- The work of clearing debris and rubble began, and the foundation of the Temple was complete in 536 BC. Afterwards, the work stopped due to the opposition of the surrounding peoples.
- Now eighteen years later (520 BC) the prophets Zechariah and Haggai prophesize to the Jews and the work on the Temple resumed.

This is where we are as we begin Lesson Two. The first six chapters of Zechariah provide encouragement to the Jews and Jerusalem's two main leaders: *Zerubbabel* who governed the civil affairs, and Jeshua (Joshua) the high priest who governed the religious affairs.

A. The prophecies found in the first six chapters will remind these leaders, and all the exiles, of God's faithfulness and Israel's future. However, these prophecies began with a warning to the exiles from the **LORD of hosts**...

- Do not be like your fathers and those who lived before you; who paid no attention to the warnings from the former prophets such as Hosea, Joel, Amos, and others. Listen to my word now and turn away from your evil ways: obey my warning now! Turn to me!
- Your fathers and those who lived before you are dead and their voices are no longer heard. They will be judged for their sin of ignoring God's warnings through his prophets. The LORD judged them just as he had warned them. (Zechariah 1: 2-6)

B. Let's pause for a closer look at the title of God: "**the LORD of hosts**"

1. According to J Vernon McGee, who gave Dr. Fausset's definition, the word "hosts" is derived from the Hebrew word meaning "service, strength, or military". The way it is used in Zechariah 1:3 "implies the boundless resources at His command for the people's good".

"Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the LORD of hosts: Turn ye unto me, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zechariah 1:3).

2. The title "LORD of hosts" occurs fifty-two times in Zechariah and a total of 235 times in the King James Bible.
3. A closer look at this title takes the definition further into the direction of **military**. The KJV dictionary defines "host" as an army; a number of men embodied for war, or any great number or multitude. With that in mind, consider the Israelites as they were approaching the Red Sea with the Egyptian army pursuing them:

"And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace" (Ex 14:13-14).

Our God fights on the behalf of those who are his own. God is our defender!

God also fights for us in the spiritual realm:

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6: 10-11).

If the LORD of hosts...the LORD of armies...is for us who can be against us?

2. There are three visions of Zechariah in Chapters One and Two: the vision of the red horse and the man among the myrtle trees; the vision of the four horns and the four carpenters; and the man with a measuring line in his hand. I have used the commentary of pastors H.A. Ironside and J Vernon McGee as my primary commentaries for Zechariah's ten visions. There are also common threads to the symbolism used in Revelation and Daniel.

3. Interpretation of Vision #1: (Zechariah 1:8-17)

Zechariah's first Vision of the red horses and the man among the myrtle trees



In his first vision Zechariah saw a man riding upon a red horse who stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were red horses, speckled and white.

- A. **The man riding on a red horse who stood among the myrtle trees is the Lord Jesus Christ before his incarnation, or the "preincarnate Christ".** Jesus Christ is also called "the angel of the LORD" in the Old Testament. (Notice Zechariah 1:11-12)
- B. Zechariah sees the angel of the LORD watching over this world. In this vision it is Israel that he has focused his attention upon. Hearing this news was a comforting message for the exiles.
- C. The color of his horse is red which speaks of bloodshed. In Revelation it is the bloodshed of war, but *the blood shown by the red horse in this vision speaks of his own blood that he shed on the cross for the sin of the world.* Just think...he is looking over the world, the world for which he will shed his blood for one day on the Cross.
- D. Behind the angel of the LORD were red horses speckled and white that likely had angelic riders under the command of Christ. *These riders and horses watched over the earth and reported what they saw to Christ.* We have seen these angels before, who watched over the affairs of men In Daniel chapter 4. Nebuchadnezzar had a dream about a great tree that prophesized that he would

become like a beast for a period of time. It was decreed by the watchers, angelic beings who observed men and reported back to God:

"I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and behold, a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven;...This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the baseth of men" (Daniel 4:13, 17).

- E. The colors of the horses behind the angel of the LORD may represent: Red/warfare; white/victory, speckled/a combination of colors.
- F. The myrtle trees and "in the bottom": The red horse stood amongst the myrtle trees in "the bottom" means the red horse and the angel of the LORD were *in a valley*. *The myrtle tree is a sign of God's blessings* in Jewish culture.
- G. The horses and their angelic riders patrolled the earth "We have walked to and fro...". They reported to the angel of the LORD that *the world was at peace*. Notice, the angel used the word "behold" which means to pay careful attention and listen with care. We can assume that the world being at rest or at peace was a most unusual thing to observe!

"And they answered the angel of the LORD that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and, behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest" (Zechariah 1:11).

- H. There are questions from the angelic riders about how long it will be before Jerusalem and Judah will experience mercy. They have just been through seventy years of indignation – the Seventy Years Prophecy/Captivity – and they are anxious for the LORD's mercy. The Jewish exiles are crying out for the LORD to give them a real blessing! The LORD answers this question:

"And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me with good and comfortable words" (Zechariah 1:13).

- a. The LORD's answer was soothing and comforting and would encourage and strengthen the exiles. In His answer the LORD tells them he is jealous for Jerusalem. His people would know that the LORD's jealousy comes out of his holy love which desires only what is best for them. The LORD told his people that he is not pleased with the heathen (Gentile nations) that oppress Israel. As the oppression from the heathen increases so does his displeasure also greatly increase! The LORD tells them that one day he will stop all oppression against Israel. The LORD will show mercy upon Jerusalem so they will now build the temple. The future fulfillment of the LORD's mercy will be when the LORD dwells in Jerusalem (Kingdom of heaven on earth). In Zechariah 1:16 we read "...and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem" which tells us the LORD is getting ready to move forward, to do a thing that relates to building or growing something. *The LORD has chosen Jerusalem.*

Now we will examine Zechariah's second vision. Remember, these visions are not dreams and he had all ten visions in one night. He was wide awake when the LORD gave him these visions.

4. Interpretation of Vision #2: (Zechariah 1: 18-21)***Zechariah's second vision of the four horns and the four carpenters***

Remember, horns often symbolize Gentile Rulers, Kingdoms or Nations, or powers/strength, in the Bible. First, the horns...

- A.** The angel told Zechariah that these four horns are the horns that scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. **These horns are the Kingdoms or Nations that have oppressed Israel and scattered her people throughout the years.**
- B.** To understand the identity of these kingdoms we will look into Daniel's prophecies. He was a young Jewish exile taken captive from Jerusalem to Babylon at the beginning of the Seventy Year Prophecy in 605 BC. Let's briefly meet Daniel...
 - a. Daniel was educated in king Nebuchadnezzar's palace and grew in stature so that he was trusted by the king. Daniel never compromised his faith in the God of Israel all of his life as he lived in pagan Babylon. On his journey from Jerusalem to captivity in Babylon Daniel "...purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat..." (Daniel 1:8). God honored Daniel with the ability to interpret the dreams that God gave the Gentile king Nebuchadnezzar. To understand what Kingdoms/Nations these horns represent will look into a dream given to Nebuchadnezzar from God that Daniel interpreted for him.
- C. Explanation of the four horns:** These four Gentile Kingdoms are the four horns that scatter Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth" (Daniel 2:31-35).

REVIEW: "A Warning and Three Visions" Lesson Two

The **first kingdom is Babylon**. Nebuchadnezzar is the head of gold. The future of the Babylonian kingdom is found in Daniel 5:28: "Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians".

The **second kingdom is the Medes and the Persians** (Daniel 8:20). It is silver and is the breast and arms and it is inferior to the first kingdom of gold.

The **third kingdom Greece** (Daniel 8:21) and the first king was Alexander the Great. It is brass and is the belly and thighs. It is inferior to the second kingdom of silver. Greece was defeated by Rome.

The **fourth kingdom and last Gentile kingdom is Rome**. It is iron and is the legs. The fourth kingdom will have great influence and will be as strong as iron; however it will break into pieces and bruise. Rome conquered the world by military might, bruised, and subdued its enemies. Rome's influence continues as we see in the structure of governments and cultures today.

The **last phase of the fourth and final Gentile kingdom**. This phase adds clay to the iron and is the feet and toes. It is simply going to be a continuation of the kind of government that existed under Rome **transforming into a "dreadful and terrible" beast** (Daniel 7:7). The ten toes correspond to the ten horns of the same kingdom described later in Daniel. Some believe this will find fulfillment in some kind of political alliance. A little horn will spring up amongst the ten toes and will be the kingdom of the Anti Christ – the beast system of the "dreadful and terrible" beast.

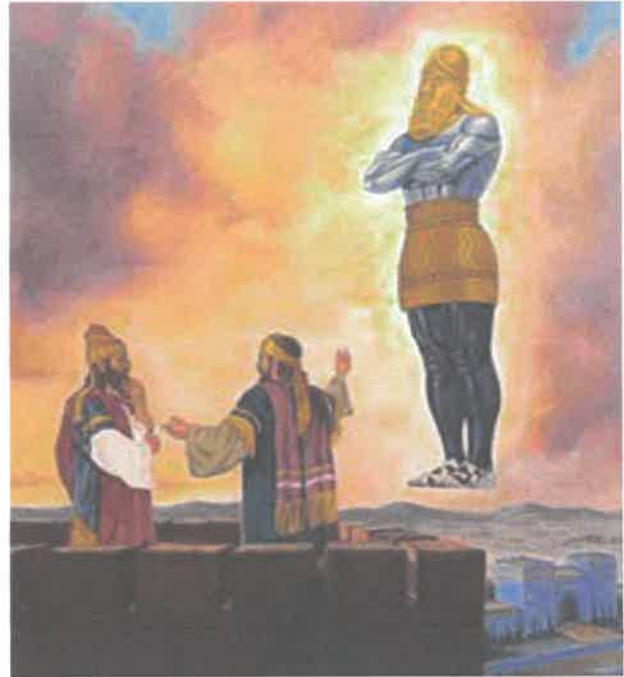
The horns which scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem in Vision Two are: Babylon, Medes/Persians, Greece, and Rome. The fourth and final kingdom Gentile kingdom transforms into the "dreadful and terrible" beast and is destroyed forever by the Lord Jesus Christ and his Kingdom of heaven on earth.

This part of Zechariah's vision provides more information about the four carpenters

D. Horns and carpenters: both are Gentile Kingdoms used by God with different purposes with Israel

- a. The *horns* are Kingdoms whom God allows to oppress Israel; and the *carpenters* are Kingdoms whom God allows to destroy the *horns*. God will allow a Kingdom to oppress Israel/Judah/Jerusalem for only so long; then he will defeat that Kingdom (horn) with another kingdom (carpenter). The horns and carpenters have different purposes to control the oppression against Israel/Judah/Jerusalem. *God is in control: "And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding"* (Daniel 2:21).

- The first Gentile Kingdom (horn) was Babylon
- The second Kingdom (horn) of the Medes/Persians was a carpenter to Babylon in 539 BC



Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

REVIEW: "A Warning and Three Visions" Lesson Two

- The third Kingdom (horn) of Greece was a carpenter to the Persians in 490 BC
- The fourth Kingdom (horn) of Rome was a carpenter to Greece in 146 BC
- Jesus Christ will be the final carpenter to all the Gentile Kingdoms of the world. He will establish his Kingdom of heaven on earth that will last forever.

5. Zechariah's third vision of the man with a measuring line in his hand...(for taking measurements)**Interpretation of Vision #3** (Zechariah 2: 1-13)

This vision prophesizes the rebuilding of the temple and the restoration of Jerusalem at that time of Zechariah (520 BC), and the (future) building of a much larger Jerusalem at the Second Coming of Christ.

- A. The man with the measuring line likely is the preincarnate Christ – prior to his first coming to earth and his death, burial, and resurrection. In Zechariah 6:12 we read: "...Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD."
- B. The term "measuring line" is also found in Jeremiah 31:38-39:

"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath".

This passage in Jeremiah refers to the physical rebuilding of Jerusalem at Christ's Second Coming following the seven year tribulation. T

During the Kingdom of heaven on earth...

1. Jerusalem will be protected by God Himself and no harm will ever again come to Jerusalem. Who could go through fire and live? Judah will sing because God's glory will be present inside of Jerusalem. Salvation will make Jerusalem a strong city because it is a salvation that cannot be taken away. The salvation of the people is protected and secure by God Himself who is their wall of fire. God the Son will dwell within the City and his glory will provide all the light.

"The LORD will be unto her a wall of fire round about and will be the glory in the midst of her" (Zechariah 2:5).

"In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks" (Isaiah 26:1).

"And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Revelation 21:23).

"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD" (Zechariah 2:10).

This Messianic prophecy calls for the daughter of Zion, who has wept for so long, to sing and rejoice because the LORD will dwell in the midst of Her (Jerusalem)! At that time many Gentile nations who were alive at Christ's return and allowed to enter into the Kingdom, will come to believe in the LORD and will know salvation. At that time the LORD will receive his inheritance and will choose *again* to live in Jerusalem. O daughter of Zion be still; that day is coming!