

1878 - Zech 4:1-14 ZECHARIAH'S MESSAGE

PRELIMS. We read *All Scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness* [2Tim3:16] **All Scripture**. That **includes** this book – and this chapter! We must **not despise** the OT for after all it was the OT that was used in the 1st century for the spread of the **gospel!**

BACKGROUND

Zechariah was a **prophet** along with **Haggai** ministering to the exiles who returned to rebuild Jerusalem! The chief **'builder'** was a man called **Zerubbabel**. He began the great work of restoring the temple at Jerusalem under the spiritual guidance of **Joshua the high priest** referred to in chapter 3 **not** the Joshua who succeeded Moses!

There were **three main batches** of **expatriates** and Zerubbabel was in the first batch. The whole return of the exiles took over 90 years!!

ZECHARIAH

Zech's 'small' book has **8 Visions, 4 Messages, 2 Burdens!!** So he was often in touch with God! Right! God spoke to him often! God was wanting to use him! And of course Zech **was used** by God.

At this chapter 4, Zech has already received and given out **4 Visions!** And guess what? He has **fallen asleep! the angel...woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep** [1] **Imagine** God 'speaking' to you and you fall asleep! It happened before – at the **transfiguration!** Again, the **disciples** fell asleep as Jesus was wrestling in prayer in Gethsemane! **Sleep on now!** So it is not surprising if God's people today fall asleep during a sermon! *Of course you do not know you are sleeping and dreaming **until** you have wakened up! It is when you waken up, you come to **reality** and see you have been dreaming!

Now in Scripture God often spoke to His people thru visions – very often - NT as well as the OT - and more than just visions! **Peter** was not aware that he was being led out of prison by an angel [Acts 12:9]

APP I believe these things can still happen, although **not often**. God speaks to us in **various ways**. Particularly in **Providence** - but Like

Zech/disciples we are **'asleep'**! We are so taken up with the trifles of the day that we miss out on the **reality** of what God is saying to us in Providence - in the **events of life!** *For God **speaks** in one way, and in two, **though man does not perceive it.** In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, while they slumber on their beds, then He opens the ears of men and terrifies them with warnings **that He may turn man aside from his deed and conceal pride from a man** = Elihu [Job 33:14-17] Elihu, re Providence in Job's life *O Job; stop and **consider** the wondrous **works** of God* [Job 37:14].*

People today just do not think about a **meaning to life**. With all the forms of **communication**, in music, poetry, blogging, people do not 'see' God behind life! **Isaiah complained** that *They have lyre and harp, tambourine and flute and wine at their feasts **but they do not regard the deeds of the Lord or see the work of His hands*** [Isa 5:12] **Haggai** was a prophet at the **same time as Zech** said = *thus says the LORD of hosts: **Consider** your ways. You have sown **much**, and harvested **little**. You **eat**, but you **never** have enough; you **drink**, but you **never** have your **fill**. You **clothe** yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a **bag with holes**.... Thus says the Lord **Consider your ways*** [Hag 1:5,6]

The MESSAGE

Some Xns today want visions - they think it is a sign of great favour. But it is not so easy to **interpret** visions! Look: Zech could **not understand** the vision! *What are these my lord?... Do you **not know** what these are?* [4,5] By **asking** Zech what does he see, the angel may have been looking for **discussion/dialogue!** God certainly wants fellowship with us. He wants us to **talk** about things in our lives!

We are told in Hebrews that *Long ago, at many times and in many ways, **God spoke to our fathers*** - in dreams, a voice, a vision, prophets, etc. The whole point Hebrews is making is that there is no revelation as good as **God's Prime Revelation** of Himself in **His Son Jesus Christ!** There is no one like Jesus Christ. And God never spoke **so clearly** as He spoke through Jesus Christ. *There is also of course the **Perfect, Infallible Revelation** of God in His **Word**,

which Peter said was a **more sure** word [2Pet 1:19]! The Word of God, the Bible, is **much simpler** than visions, but of course, **still needs interpreting!** We might say that visions are **less clear** than the written Word of God. Thus the **need for Creeds/Confessions!**

Now Zech had to **forward on** the vision to his generation! But he did not know what it meant! So he asked the angel. The answer this: *This is the Word of the Lord to Zerubbabel 'Not by **might**, nor by **power**, but by **My Spirit**, says the Lord of hosts* [6] You see, Zerubbabel was having great **problems** and **difficulties** in rebuilding the temple! There was much opposition and much **discouragement!**

There were **certain individuals** who were deliberately trying to stop the rebuilding of the temple. Thus: *Who are **you** O great **mountain**? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a **plain**. And he (Zerubbabel) shall bring forward the **top stone** amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'* [7] likely at a **special ceremony** for laying on the **capstone!** And it would not be that long either, for *the **hands** of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; **his hands** shall also **complete** it!* [9]

It was obvious that many were **so discouraged** at the slow progress the rebuilding took, that they began to **despise** the times in which they lived - for Zech had to **rebuke** them - yes with a wonderful promise *whoever has **despised** the day of **small things** shall **rejoice** and shall **see the plumbline** in the hand of Zerubbabel* [10] Plumbline showed that the work was finished accurately! **APP** And many Zerubbabels today in the church who despise the feebleness and little progress of the church in our culture, must learn this lesson! It is **not** by **military might**, it is **not** by any **human power** that the church will be built but by God's **Holy Spirit!** **APP** It is **so wrong** to be **negative** about the day we live in! It is **not actually** a day of small things but of big things! God is at work **today!** Do not complain about the times we live in - God is **fulfilling** His purposes of **good!!** God is at work **behind the scenes!!** Look:-

The VISION

You see the vision was this: There was a **lampstand** all of gold with a **bowl** on the top of it and seven lamps on it with seven lips on each of

*the lamps. And there were **two olive trees** by it one on the right and one on the left [2,3] The lampstand in the temple was to burn **constantly**. Fire shall be **kept burning on the altar continually**; it shall not go out [Lev 6:13] + You shall command the people of Israel that they bring to you pure beaten **olive oil for the light**, that a lamp may regularly be set up to burn [Ex 27:20] As long as the lamps were burning, there was hope - it symbolised **God's presence** and help. Now the Olive Trees (which produced oil, were **feeding oil** into the 7 channels/pipes - **so that** the lamps would be burning all the time. They would never run out of oil! Now, oil in OT **symbolised** the Holy Spirit who would provide the **means** of supplying strength, wisdom, etc. God would **help** Zerubbabel! Thus *not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit says the Lord of hosts* [6]! This was **assurance** that God was with Zerubbabel! **APP** Applies to today!*

So Zech ministry then, was a ministry of **encouragement** to God's people! He also encouraged the Israelites to not to be **discouraged** at lack of fruit and the smallness of blessings! Not to **despise the day of small things?** [10] Godly men who are **obedient** to God's revealed will, will yet **rejoice** [10] **APP** It is so easy, is it not, to get discouraged at the smallness of the Church and the disinterest of so many people in the struggles the Church has to survive. But we must **trust** God's promises the glory of the Lord **will cover the whole earth!**

Zech here talks of *the eyes of the Lord range through the **whole earth*** [10] and He notices His people, He hears their prayers and He cares/protects them. The **call** is to the **two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the **whole earth** [13]! Who are these two anointed ones? Very likely **Zerubbabel** and **Joshua** the high priest! They must **stand faithful** to the Lord of the whole earth!**

Malachi too said about the **few** who were faithful to God- but he also told us about what God said about them! *they shall be **mine...in the day when I make up My treasured possession*** [3:17] **APP** My friends - God can do what we cannot - but we must remain faithful and **believe more** in the **Holy Spirit**. God is behind the Church **feeding it** with the oil of His **Holy Spirit!** *No one can destroy the true church - because God is behind it, constantly feeding it!