

The Gospel of Zechariah

The night visions (Zechariah 5)





Redemptive History





Darius: Chronology of the Persian Period¹

Persian King	Dates	Biblical Correlation	Context
Cyrus	539-530	Declaration of Cyrus (539) Return of Zerubbabel and Jeshua (Ezra 1-3)	Stirred up to rebuild the temple
Cambyses	530-522	Rebuilding at Jerusalem stopped (Ezra 4)	Discouraged and afraid to rebuild
Darius I	522-486	Haggai and Zechariah prophesy (520) Temple completed (516) (Ezra 5-6)	Rebuilding of the Temple begins again
Xerxes	486-464	Story of Esther (Esther 1-9)	
Artaxerxes I	464-423	Return of Ezra (458) (Ezra 7-10) Return of Nehemiah (445) (Nehemiah 1-2) Prophecy of Malachi (433)	



Our Response

- What is the faith response? (indicative and imperative)
 - Zechariah 1-6 - narrative flow with overarching message
 - God's call to return to him
 - rebuild the temple - call to faith
 - God's faithfulness to his people
 - promises in which to trust
 - the already, and the not yet
 - fulfillment in Christ
 - consummation yet to come
 - **ideal images**
- Our response
 - return to him (die unto sin)
 - repentance
 - means of grace (word, prayer, and the sacrament)
 - faithfulness to him (live unto righteousness)
 - grateful obedience
 - hospitality
 - fellowship
 - service



Zechariah 5 (ESV)

5:1 Again I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, a flying scroll! And he said to me, “What do you see?” I answered, “I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits.” Then he said to me, “This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land. For everyone who steals shall be cleaned out according to what is on one side, and everyone who swears falsely shall be cleaned out according to what is on the other side. I will send it out, declares the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter the house of the thief, and the house of him who swears falsely by my name. And it shall remain in his house and consume it, both timber and stones.”

Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me, “Lift your eyes and see what this is that is going out.” And I said, “What is it?” He said, “This is the basket that is going out.” And he said, “This is their iniquity in all the land.” And behold, the leaden cover was lifted, and there was a woman sitting in the basket! And he said, “This is Wickedness.” And he thrust her back into the basket, and thrust down the leaden weight on its opening.

Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, two women coming forward! The wind was in their wings. They had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. Then I said to the angel who talked with me, “Where are they taking the basket?” He said to me, “To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it. And when this is prepared, they will set the basket down there on its base.”



scroll

Again I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, a flying scroll! And he said to me, “What do you see?” I answered, “I see a flying scroll. Its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits.” (Zechariah 5:1-2 ESV)

- lifted my eyes - scene transition
- flying scroll - message being carried across the land
- what do you see? - engaging Zechariah
- 20 x 10 cubits
 - disproportionate
 - huge - 10 x 5 yards
- what does it say?



...clean out...

Then he said to me, “This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole land. For everyone who steals shall be cleaned out according to what is on one side, and everyone who swears falsely shall be cleaned out according to what is on the other side. (Zechariah 5:3 ESV)

- two sides
 - against theft
 - against dishonesty
- summary of the law
 - theft - against neighbor (first table)
 - dishonesty (swearing by God’s name) - against God (second table)
- also, focus has been
 - rebuilding of the temple and covenant faithfulness of Yahweh
- call to grateful obedience of the covenant people
 - love for God
 - but also, love for neighbor



...clean out...

- clean out?
 - purge
 - remove wickedness from the land
- removal of those who break the covenant in sin

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send it out

I will send it out, declares the LORD of hosts, and it shall enter the house of the thief, and the house of him who swears falsely by my name. And it shall remain in his house and consume it, both timber and stones.” (Zechariah 5:4 ESV)

- Yahweh of the Heavenly Armies (LORD of hosts)
 - language of God’s strength and might
- God’s law will be effective
 - enter the house
 - remain in the house
 - consume it
 - timber and stone
- judgment against unfaithfulness
 - sobering
 - terrifying
 - saddening
 - language of the covenant



send it out

- covenant language
 - who is being cleaned out?
 - whose house is being consume?
- God's unfaithful people
 - reminder to the church
 - examine ourselves
 - examine our church
 - confess - corporate and private
 - trust in our great high priest (Hebrews 4:14)

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- Proverbs 28:13 -
 - Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy. (ESV)
- 1 John 1:9 -
 - If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (ESV)
- Romans 8:34 -
 - Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. (ESV)



going out

- lift your eyes - new vision
- but tied to the first in theme
- something is going out

Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me, “Lift your eyes and see what this is that is going out.”
(Zechariah 5:5 ESV)



the basket

And I said, “What is it?” He said, “This is the basket that is going out.” And he said, “This is their iniquity in all the land.” (Zechariah 5:6 ESV)

- basket - something to be carried by another
- going out - being taken away
- iniquity in all the land (already and not yet)
 - already
 - people’s return from exile
 - people’s return to Yahweh express in the rebuilt of the temple
 - restoration of the priesthood (Joshua)
 - restoration of davidic leadership [partly, foreshadowing] (Zerubbabel)
 - not yet
 - church - wheat and tares (Matthew 13:24-30)
 - sad reality
 - final judgment
 - resurrection



... a women

- leaden cover - heavy to keep its contents secure
- a women - personification of Wickedness
- thrust her back - angel's authority from Yahweh
- thrust down - secured wickedness

And behold, the leaden cover was lifted, and there was a woman sitting in the basket! And he said, “This is Wickedness.” And he thrust her back into the basket, and thrust down the leaden weight on its opening. (Zechariah 5:7-8 ESV)



two women

Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, two women coming forward! The wind was in their wings. They had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. (Zechariah 5:9 ESV)

- two women
 - not angels - revealed as male in the scripture
- wings link a stork
 - unclean animal (Leviticus 11:19)
 - Leviticus 24:14
 - “Bring out of the camp the one who cursed, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head, and let all the congregation stone him. (ESV)
- wickedness as a woman, the two women
 - Jeremiah 2 - Jerusalem as a bride and became unfaithful in idolatry
 - Revelation 17 & 18 - Babylon represented as prostitute, image of wickedness
 - Revelation 21 - New Jerusalem, the bride of Christ made perfect and faithful



Shinar

Then I said to the angel who talked with me, “Where are they taking the basket?” He said to me, “To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it. And when this is prepared, they will set the basket down there on its base.” (Zechariah 5:0-11 ESV)

- Shinar
 - ancient name for the area where Babylon is
- house for it
 - temple for a false God, in a wicked land
- on its base
 - a powerless idol that will be worshipped by a wicked people
- God’s sovereign power over even wickedness and evil
- Picture
 - a purified or renewed Jerusalem - the New Jerusalem, the bride of Christ, the Church
 - wickedness outside Jerusalem, outside the gates, outside the camp - Babylon, the great, the world



our response

- live a life of constant confession and repentance
- seeing ourselves as the bride of Christ, beloved by the Father
- responding in grateful obedience
- living not for the present but looking toward the not yet, the New Jerusalem, the consummation of redemptive history in Christ