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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Zechariah 4.

(2014)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

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Zechariah 4.

Topics.

- Zechariah sees a lampstand of gold, with seven lamps and two olive trees.
- Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit.
- The great mountain will become a plain and the top stone of the temple
- Zerubbabel has laid the foundation of the temple.
- Whoever has despised the day of small things will see the plumb line.
- The seven eyes of the LORD
- Two olive trees, two branches, two golden pipes and two anointed ones.

INTRODUCTION: the following introduction is quiet long, but it does help understand the the background of Zechariah, to skip the introduction scroll down to Zechariah chapter four. As Haggai encouraged the returned Jewish exiles to rebuild the Temple, Zechariah encouraged them to repent and renew their covenant with God. Such spiritual renewal would be necessary for the people to be ready to worship God once the Temple was rebuilt (about 515 B.C.). Zechariah accused them of doing the very things their ancestors had done before the exile. He was concerned about social justice for widows, orphans, and foreigners. As the people endured opposition from the non-Jewish inhabitants of Judea, Zechariah reassured them of God's abiding comfort and care and that He would continue his covenant with Israel.

The Messianic hope was rekindled during Zechariah's ministry by the ordination of Joshua as priest and Zerubbabel as governor. From Zechariah chapter one through to the end there is a beautiful message of comfort and encouragement for the people of Israel during the era of Zechariah and for those who are rebuilding the temporal Temple of God, but as the visions progress through the chapters the focus slowly shifts from the era of Zechariah and transcends time to a future age where God is building an eternal Temple in the Lord Jesus Christ. The visions then progress to Jesus returning in glory and climax's in the final chapter with Christ reigning from Jerusalem as King over the entire earth and ends with the promise that the Lord would establish his rule over all the earth (Zechariah 14:9).

The historical background: twenty years after untied Israel returned from their seventy years in captivity to Babylon, the Temple was still a blackened ruin and the discouraged people did not see how it could be restored. At this critical moment God raised up the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to encourage the Jews to rebuild the Temple. The prophecies of the two men were delivered almost at the same time. Zechariah gives a series of eight symbolic night-visions, to encourage the Israelites to complete the Temple.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

Zechariah sees a Lampstand of Gold, with seven Lamps and two Olive Trees.

Zechariah 4:1-7 ----- ¹And the angel who talked with me (Zechariah) came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep. ²And he said to me, "What do you see?" I said, "I see, and behold, 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 that are on the top of it. ³And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left." ⁴And I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" ⁵Then the angel who talked with me answered and

said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." ⁶Then he 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. ⁷Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it!'"

The following verses show that the lampstand is a symbol of light (a symbol of God's truth) and the Spirit of God.

- The lampstand also for the light, with its utensils and its lamps, and the oil for the light. (Exod. 35:14).
- For a tent was prepared, the first section, in which were the lampstand and the table and the bread of the Presence. It is called the Holy Place. (Heb. 9:2).
- Jesus said, "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent." (Rev. 2:5).

See also (Exod. 39:37) (Exod. 40:4) (Lev. 24:4) (Num. 4:9) (Num. 8:2-4).

Light allows a person to see clearly it removes darkness so in Zechariah's visions the lampstand is a symbol of the prophetic word of God (Zech. 4:1-4).

Olive trees: olive trees speak of food and nourishment and were also good for trade so when olive trees are used figuratively they are a symbol of the prophetic word of God, prosperity and blessing.

Two olive trees: the following verses from the book of Revelations show that the two olive trees and the two lampstands are two prophets.

- I (the LORD) will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth." ⁴These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. (Rev. 11:4).

At the time of Zechariah the two prophets proclaiming the LORD'S word and encouraging the people of Israel to re-build the Temple were Haggai and Zechariah himself. The lampstand and the two olive trees are Zechariah and Haggai, the prophetic word was, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit," refers to the LORD'S Temple being rebuilt.

Great mountains: (v7) refer to all the obstacles, negativity and discouragement that there is against the re-building of the Temple.

Zerubbabel; when Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to their own land, he appointed Zerubbabel governor of the colony. Joshua was the high priest and religious leader. When they reached Jerusalem, they first set up the altar then they proceeded to lay the foundation of the new Temple. Soon, however, adversaries of the Jews made an apparently friendly offer of assistance, but Zerubbabel and the other leaders rebuffed them; where-upon they wrote to the king and succeeded in stopping the work, nevertheless the work was later resumed and completed four years later. A great celebration was held at the dedication of the new Temple and so far as the record tells, the work of Zerubbabel was complete. Zerubbabel was heir to the throne of Judah and is listed in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit: (v6) means the Temple will be rebuilt from a willing heart there will be no need to use forceful authority to motivate people to build the Temple, because they will volunteer to help do the work of the LORD. This same principal applies to the eternal spiritual global Temple God is at this present time building in Christ, people who join come from a willing heart. God is inviting not forcing people to join His eternal family.

The great mountain will become a plain: (v7) means all obstacles to the rebuilding of the temporary Temple will be removed and by extension echoes Jesus who through his death and resurrection removed all obstacles that would

hinder and stop anyone, Jew or Gentile from being able to become part of the eternal Temple God is building in Christ.

The top stone of the Temple: the words, "The top stone of the Temple will be brought forward amid shouts of grace, grace to it" (v7), means when the final stone of the Temple is laid and the Temple completed there will be great rejoicing and the people will know God's grace.

This of course also echoes the Lord Jesus Christ the head stone returning to the eternal spiritual global Temple God is building now in Christ and all those who are part of it rejoicing greatly with loud shouts of grace, because they will know that it is only by his grace that they are part of God's eternal Temple.

Zerubbabel has Laid the Foundation of the Temple.

Zechariah 4:8-9 ----- ⁸Then the word of the LORD came to me (Zechariah), saying, ⁹"The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you.

Zechariah is told that Zerubbabel has laid the foundation of the LORD'S House and he will also complete it, then all Judah will know that the words of Zechariah are from the LORD. This also echoes the Lord Jesus Christ laying the foundations of the eternal spiritual global Temple God is building in Christ. The following verses show that Jesus not only laid the foundation of God's eternal Temple, but that he will also complete it.

- No one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 3:11).
- You are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. (Eph. 2:19-20).
- For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁵For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. (1 Thess. 4:1-18).

Whoever has despised the Day of Small things will see the Plumb Line.

Zechariah 4:10 ----- ¹⁰For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel." "These seven are the eyes of the LORD, which range (roam in KJV) through the whole earth."

Small things: refers to the laying of the foundation stones of the Temple, some who have seen the foundation of the Temple are disappointed because it is not as big as the original House of the LORD, but the LORD tells them they will rejoice when they see the completion of it. Contained within this vision and these prophetic words of Zechariah is another eternal Temple that the LORD will build in a future age by His Spirit and which will begin with a very small foundation stone, named the Lord Jesus Christ which will ultimately grow into a Temple that will supersede all the glory of the preceding Temples.

Plumbline: means to build and by extension can refer to a stone or a stone mason. In this context the plumb line; refers to the Temple being rebuilt (a plumb line is always an exact straight line). The plumb line is another echo of Christ, (the corner stone) who spoke, lived and walked in an exact straight line.

The seven eyes of the LORD (v10) refer to the seven spirits of God that the following verses of Revelation speak of: -

- Between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. (Rev. 5:6).

NOTE: the seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth is the same as the lampstand with seven lamps and seven lips in (v2) it is referring to the word of the LORD going out to all the earth, but it also embraces the following seven things the LORD is against: -

- A superior, condescending, or arrogant attitude.
- Lies and killing the innocent.
- Planning and plotting to do evil.
- Going out with the intention to do wrong and a false witness.
- Sowing discord and strife among God's family (Proverbs 6:16-19).

God by His Spirit is watching over Judah while they rebuild the Temple, means God is going to be protecting them from these seven destructive forces that have the power to hinder or even bring to a stop the construction of the Temple.

All of the above seven attitudes also have the power to destroy the eternal spiritual global House God is building in the LORD Jesus Christ, but God by His Spirit of love and grace is also watching over this Temple and will bring it to pass because it is being built as Zechariah prophesied, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD," (Zech. 4:6) as the following verses shows: -

- Praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to their (all who believed in the Lord) number day by day those who were (in the process of) being saved. (Acts 2:1-47).

Two Olive Trees, two Branches, two Golden Pipes and two Anointed Ones.

Zechariah 4:11-14 ---- ¹¹Then I (Zechariah) said to him (the angel), "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?" ¹²And a second time I answered and said to him, "What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out?" ¹³He said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord." ¹⁴Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

NOTE: to understand what Zechariah is saying and the meaning of the symbols it is important to know the following history. Twenty years after the return, the Temple still lay a blackened ruin, and the discouraged people did not see how it could be restored. At this critical moment God raised up the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to encourage the Jews to rebuild the Temple. The prophecies of the two men were delivered almost at the same time.

Two Olive Trees, two Golden Pipes, Golden Oil and the Lampstand.

There are two olive trees standing by two golden pipes from which golden oil is poured out.

The two olive branches and the two anointed ones: are the same people, Zechariah and Haggai.

The two golden pipes: are symbols of God's Spirit going to Zechariah and Haggai.

The golden oil: is the prophetic word of God.

This is a picture of Zechariah and Haggai standing on either side of God speaking His prophetic word by the Spirit of God. The two olive trees are the two anointed ones, Zechariah and Haggai; they are standing on either side of the lampstand, which is a symbol of the God of the whole earth. From God come two golden pipes a symbol of God's Spirit going to Zechariah and Haggai. From these two golden pipes comes golden oil, a symbol of God's prophetic word being poured out to Zechariah and Haggai to pour out to the people.

This can also be seen as an echo of the eternal spiritual global Temple God is now building in Christ (made up of Jews and Gentiles) with the two golden pipes being a symbol of God's Spirit going to Christ and the apostles and the golden oil as the prophetic word of God and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a picture of Christ and the apostles standing on either side of God speaking His prophetic word by the Spirit of God.

The two olive trees are the two anointed ones, who are Christ and the apostles they are standing on either side of the lampstand, which is a symbol of the God of the whole earth. From God come two golden pipes a symbol of God's Spirit going to Christ and the apostles. From these two golden pipes comes golden oil, a symbol of God's prophetic word being poured out to Christ and the Apostles. They laid the foundations of the eternal Temple of God which is progressively being built until the Top Stone is laid which will be at the glorious return of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory.

VISIONS: a vision can relate to a spectacle gazed at by the eyes or a movie played out in the mind. Sometimes the same biblical event or experience is spoken of as an actual and real event, while at other times the same event maybe recorded as a vision (an image or mental experience within the mind). A biblical vision communicates the God's will or future events and is always under God's control.

It can appear as a movie played out on the screen of the imagination of the mind (similar to a dream) or it may appear as a hologram appearing in the air that is actually seen by the eyes of whoever God chooses to give the vision to. Those who have had such a vision tell the vision to the people, sometimes in their own words and at other times in the exact words that God has spoken to them in the vision.

For further information see the title: -

- Visions and Prophecy.
- In Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

End.