

Zechariah Chapter 6

Verses 6:1-8

The eighth and final vision completes the cycle and connects with the first vision.

It pictures 4 chariots with the horses introduced in the first vision (1:8), symbolizing God's angelic agents (verse 5), swiftly carrying out His judgment on the nations just prior to the establishment of the messianic kingdom.

The eighth vision, the vision of the "four chariots," shows that God's judgment has finally and fully rested on Babylon.

Even though there might be a flare-up, which was realized in the fifth year of Darius's reign (just three years later).

They need not let that deter them from building the temple, which was not completed until the sixth year of Darius's reign.

God has all things under complete control.

The chariots reveal to future Israel why the Messiah can reign universally over all the world, all enemies are judged and none can rise up against the authority of the King.

Zechariah 6:1 "And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains [were] mountains of brass."

"Two mountains ... brass":

Representing the reality of God's judgment on the nations who attack Israel.

The two mountains are probably Mt. Zion and the Mt. of Olives, where the Lord will return and judge (Joel 3:2, 12, 14; Zech. 14:4).

This valley, called Jehoshaphat ("Jehovah judges"), could refer to the Kidron Valley between these two mountains.

Jews, Christians, and even Muslims have long taught that the last judgment will be there.

The bronze has a symbolic relationship to judgment as in the case of the bronze serpent (Num. 21:9), and/or the bronze altar (Exodus 27:2), where sin was dealt with by God.

This is the eighth vision of Zechariah.

"Brass" symbolizes judgment and the number "4" symbolizes universal.

This then, speaks of universal judgment of the sinners.

The chariots speak of war.

We saw in the last lesson, how the sins were carried out of Zion (church), and were carried into Babylon (sinful world).

This is God's judgment on the sinful world.

They cannot hide from God.

He will find them out.

Verses 2-3

The judgment scene is further dramatized by these chariots and horses.

For the significance of the horses' colors (see note on 1:8).

The addition of "black" horses may represent famine and death.

The "grisled and bay" (i.e. spotted) horses.

A similar picture is found (in Rev. 6:1-8), where the horsemen of the apocalypse appear in judgment imagery, riding forth in vengeance on the nations.

Zechariah 6:2 "In the first chariot [were] red horses; and in the second chariot black horses;"

In the first vision (Zech. 1:8), there were horses only, with their riders, to go to and fro to enquire.

Here they are war-chariots with their horses, to execute God's judgments, each in their turn.

This vision may represent the ways of Providence in the government of this lower world.

Whatever the providences of God about us are, as to public or private affairs, we should see them all as coming from between the mountains of brass.

The immovable counsels and decrees of God.

Therefore, reckon it as much our folly to quarrel with them, as it is our duty to submit to them.

His providences move swiftly and strongly as chariots, but all are directed and governed by his infinite wisdom and sovereign will.

The red horses signify war and bloodshed.

The black, signify the dismal consequences of war, famines, pestilences, and desolations.

Rev. 6:4 "And there went out another horse [that was] red: and [power] was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword."

The "black horses" speak of troublesome times and mourning.

Rev. 6:5-6 "And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand." "And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and [see] thou hurt not the oil and the wine."

This is the time of God's wrath upon the sinful of the earth.

It is just before the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Zechariah 6:3 "And in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses."

The white horses signify the return of comfort, peace, and prosperity.

The mixed color, signify events of different complexions, a day of prosperity and a day of adversity.

The angels go forth as messengers of God's counsels, and ministers of his justice and mercy.

And the secret motions and impulses upon the spirits of men, by which the designs of Providence are carried on, are these four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from God, and fulfil what the God of the spirits of all flesh appoints.

All the events which take place in the world spring from the unchangeable counsels of the Lord.

Which are formed in unerring wisdom, perfect justice, truth, and goodness.

And from history it is found that events happened about the period when this vision was sent to the prophet, which seems referred to therein.

Zechariah 6:4 "Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What [are] these, my lord?"

"Then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me":

After he had seen the chariots come out, and had observed the different colors of the horses in them.

"What are these, my lord?"

That is, what do they signify?

What is the meaning of this vision?

This is Zechariah asking the angel to explain this to him.

Zechariah 6:5 "And the angel answered and said unto me, These [are] the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth."

"Four spirits of the heavens":

This imagery represents divine angelic agents sent out to execute judgment on behalf of the "Lord of all the earth," a millennial title designating the universal rule of the Messiah in the kingdom age (4:14; Mica 4:13).

The four spirits here, possibly, mean the 4 angels.

They do whatever God commands them to do.

These spirits are ministering spirits.

Hebrews 1:7 "And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire."

They stand before God, waiting to do His wishes upon the earth.

Zechariah 6:6 "The black horses which [are] therein go forth into the north country; and the white go forth after them; and the grisled go forth toward the south country."

The black horses referring to the second chariot; of the first the angel makes no mention, because the empire designed by it had ceased to exist.

They had red horses, to show the cruelty of the Chaldeans towards the Jews, and the carnage they committed in the land of Judea.

The black, Cyrus, at the head of the Persians and Medes, bringing devastation and death among the Chaldeans, called the north in many parts of Scripture.

The white, Alexander who was splendid in his victories, and mild towards all that he conquered.

The grisled, The Lagidae or Ptolemies, who founded an empire in Egypt.

Of these some were good, some bad, some despotic, some moderate, some cruel, and some mild, represented by the partly colored horses.

The North Country was Babylon.

This is possibly, symbolic of the sinful world.

The black horse was the horse that brought mourning and problems.

The white horse is victorious over them.

The south country symbolizes Egypt, Ethiopia, and Edom.

Verses 6-7

“Went forth ... through the earth”:

These angelic judgment carriers unleash catastrophic judgment on the earth (Rev. 6:1-19:16 for similarities).

Nothing is said about going east and west because of the sea and the desert.

Israel’s enemies came from the north (Assyria, Babylon, Seleucids, and Romans), and the south (Egyptians).

This north, south exit leads to a worldwide unleashing of judgment on the nations all over the earth (Matt. 25:31-46).

Zechariah 6:7 "And the bay went forth, and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth: and he said, Get you hence, walk to and fro through the earth. So they walked to and fro through the earth."

"And the bay went forth, and sought to go":

Without leave: these design either the Romans; or, since distinct from the grisled, the Huns, Goths, and Vandals; who sought to go out of their own places into other countries: and were desirous:

"That they might walk to and fro through the earth":

Without control; overrunning as they did the Roman Empire, and set up ten kingdoms in it.

Unless this is to be understood of the land of Judea only, through which the Romans walked to and fro at pleasure, and subdued it.

"And he said":

That is, the Lord of the whole earth, before whom they stood.

"Get ye hence, walk to and fro through the earth":

As being filled with indignation at them, and yet suffered them to have their will.

And so Kimchi interprets the phrase "he gave them power to go and subdue lands.

And to the same purpose Jarchi, "he gave them power to rule with great authority.

And this is the kingdom of Edom or Rome.

"So they walked to and fro through the earth":

Either the land of Judea, as the Romans did, and made it a Roman province.

And these may represent Rome Papal, set up and supported by the above people, even the beast of Rome, which has reigned over the kings of the earth.

To whom the ten kings gave their kingdom and power.

This horse speaks of famine and pestilence.

This is walking to and fro today in many lands.

Zechariah 6:8 "Then cried he upon me, and spake unto me, saying, Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country."

"Quieted my spirit":

As a result of God's judgment of His enemies, His wrath can rest.

God has been avenged by this action; particularly in regard to the power from the north being judged finally.

This likely refers to the final Babylon (Rev. 17 and 18).

Until this judgment is done and God's wrath rests, the kingdom can't be established (see Rev. chapters 19 and 20), with the Messiah on His throne.

Verses 9-15

Joshua served as an illustration of the Messiah in this passage in that Zechariah's crowning of Joshua, the high priest, was a miniature, advance illustration of the future coronation of Messiah, the Branch.

Who will unite the two offices of priest and king (verse 13).

This appendix supplements visions (4 and 5; 3:1-10; 4:1-14), and culminates the series of eight visions with the climax of history, the coronation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Zechariah 6:9 "And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,"

“And the word of the LORD came to me”.

The visions being closed, Zechariah marks the change by adopting the usual formula, with which the prophets authenticated, that they spake not of themselves, but by the Spirit of God.

The act enjoined is a symbolic act, pointing and summing up and interpreting the visions, as some of the visions had been already expanded by fresh revelations following immediately upon them.

This is a break in the vision.

A new subject begins.

The Word of the LORD comes to Zechariah.

Zechariah 6:10 "Take of [them of] the captivity, [even] of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah, which are come from Babylon, and come thou the same day, and go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah;"

“Take of them of the captivity”:

Jewish exiles who remained in Babylon, but who had come bearing gifts for the building of the temple are identified.

Zechariah was told to meet them that same day and receive their gifts.

Some of them that were returned from the captivity of Babylon, and who are mentioned by name.

"Even of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah, which are come from Babylon":

Either with Zerubbabel and Joshua, when they came from there; or who were now just come from those that remained there.

"And come thou the same day":

This very day in which they were come from there.

"And go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah":

Where the above persons were; or where they were to go along with him.

This Josiah might be either a goldsmith, and therefore the prophet is sent to him to make the crowns later mentioned.

Or else he might be a treasurer belonging to the temple, who had gold and silver in his hands, which had been put there for the use of it.

Take of those who had been in Babylon (sinful world).

This is calling them out of this sinful place.

"Heldai" means worldly.

Tobijah means "the Lord is good.

"Jedaiah" means Jehovah knows.

"Josiah" means Jesus saves.

It appears they had been left in Babylon.

Now, they are called out of Babylon.

Zechariah 6:11 "Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set [them] upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest;"

"Make crowns":

Zechariah was to make not a high priest's crown or turban, but an ornate crown, one constructed of many circlets.

A majestic crown (like the one on the returning Messiah in Rev. 19:12).

This crown was to be set on the head of the high priest, Joshua.

In the Old Testament, the kingly and priestly offices were kept rigidly distinct.

The office of king belonged only to the house of David, while the office of priest was only for the house of Levi.

Uzziah's mingling of the two brought about his death (2 Chron. 26:16-23).

But here this act is ordered by God to depict the coming King/Priest Messiah.

The name Joshua is the same word as Jesus.

Jesus is the High Priest that all the others are a type and shadow of.

He will wear a crown of Gold, when He reigns as King of kings and Lord of lords.

Revelation 19:12 "His eyes [were] as a flame of fire, and on his head [were] many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself."

Verses 12-15

In this brief section, 8 facts are given about Messiah, the Branch:

1. He will come from Israel (verse 12);
2. He will build the millennial temple (verses 12b, 13a);
3. He will be glorious (verse 13);
4. He will be king and priest (verse 13);
5. He makes peace (verse 13);
6. He opens the kingdom to Gentiles (verse 15a);
7. He will corroborate God's Words (verse 15b); and
8. He demands obedience (verse 15c).

This as always, is the essential matter.

After Israel believes, the Messiah will come to set up His kingdom (12:10 – 13:1; 14:9-21).

Faith and cleansing must come first.

"He shall build the temple of the LORD":

The building of the restoration temple was promised to Zerubbabel (4:9-10).

The building of this temple, promised to Messiah, points to the construction of the millennial temple (Isa. 2:2-4; Ezek. Chapters 40 – 43; Hag. 2:6-9).

Zechariah 6:12 "And speak unto him, saying, 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:"

“Name is The Branch”:

Though the crown was placed on the head of Joshua, the high priest (verse 11), the act was a symbol of that future crowning of Messiah, the Branch (3:8).

In Messiah, the offices of king and priest will be united.

This BRANCH is the One we know as Jesus.

Mark 14:58 "We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands."

John 2:21 "But he spake of the temple of his body."

1 Corinthians 3:9 "For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, [ye are] God's building."

Ephesians 2:20-22 "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner [stone];" "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord:" "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Zechariah 6:13 "Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both."

"Even he shall build the temple of the LORD":

Which is repeated, as Kimchi observes, for confirmation sake.

"And he shall bear the glory":

That is, of building the temple.

And the phrase denotes that the glory of it shall be upon him, shall be hung upon him (as in Isaiah 22:24).

And so shall be visible; that it would be weighty and heavy, he having many crowns on his head, put there by all the saints, who every one of them ascribe glory to him.

That it would continue, and not pass away like the glory of this world.

And that he, and he alone, should bear it; not Joshua, nor Zerubbabel, nor the ministers of the word, nor members of churches, nor any other, but himself.

He, and He alone, shall be exalted.

"And shall sit and rule upon his throne":

In heaven, having done his work on earth, where he is at ease and rest, and exercises power and authority.

He rules over the whole world and the kings of it in general and in particular over his saints, by his Spirit, word, and ordinances, feeding, protecting, and defending them.

"And he shall be a priest upon his throne":

He is both Priest and King, and exercises both offices at one and the same time, and even now in heaven.

Having offered himself as a sacrifice on earth, by which he has put away sin forever, and perfected his people.

He is set down upon his throne, as a King crowned with glory and honor.

And ever lives as a Priest on the throne, to make intercession for them; by appearing in the presence of God for them.

By presenting his blood, sacrifice, and righteousness, to his divine Father.

By offering up the prayers and praises of his people; by declaring it as his will that such and such blessings be bestowed upon them.

And by applying the benefits of his death unto them.

"And the counsel of peace shall be between them both":

Not between Joshua and Zerubbabel, who should agree together, as they did, in the administration of government belonging to their distinct offices.

Rather between the priestly and kingly offices of Christ.

Not by the council of peace between the Father and the Son, concerning the salvation of the elect; for that was past in eternity.

But better the Gospel of peace, called the whole counsel of God.

Which, in consequence of Christ being a Priest on his throne, was preached to both Jews and Gentiles.

Which brought the glad tidings of peace and salvation by Christ to both, and was the means of making peace between them both.

The temple of the LORD is made up of all the believers in Christ.

He is the High Priest forever.

All believers are priests, subordinate to Him.

Jesus Christ will be both High Priest and King.

He brings peace to all the earth.

He is the King of Peace.

Col. 1:18-20 "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all [things] he might have the preeminence." "For it pleased [the Father] that in him should all fulness dwell;" "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, [I say], whether [they be] things in earth, or things in heaven."

Zechariah 6:14 "And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the LORD."

The crown was not to be kept by Joshua, but was to serve as both a memorial to the devotion of the men who came from Babylon and, more importantly, as a reminder of the coming of Messiah and the ultimate hope of Israel.

“Helem ... Hen”:

Helem is apparently another name of Heldai, and Hen another name for Josiah the son of Zephaniah (see verse 10).

This is speaking of those faithful, who remain unto the end.

They shall receive a crown of glory.

Zechariah 6:15 And they [that are] far off shall come and build in the temple of the LORD, and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you. And [this] shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God.

Those that come from afar off are speaking of the Gentiles who come to Christ.

They, along with the Jews that believe in Christ, make up the temple of God.

His church is the temple of God.

Jesus is the chief Corner Stone and we are the lively stones.

1 Peter 2:5 "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

John 17:21 "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, [art] in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Look with me, at the following verses that speak of both Jew and Gentile being one in Christ.

Ephesians 2:13-22

"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

"For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition [between us];"

"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, [even] the law of commandments [contained] in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, [so] making peace;"

"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"

"And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh."

"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God;"

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner [stone];"

"In whom all the building fitly framed together growth unto a holy temple in the Lord:

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Zechariah Chapter 6 Questions

1. In verse 1, what did Zechariah see?

2. "Brass" symbolizes _____.
3. "Four" symbolizes _____.
4. Then, what is this speaking of?
5. The chariots speak of _____.
6. The first chariot has _____ horses.
7. The second has _____ horses.
8. The "red horses" speak of _____ and _____.
9. The "black horses" speak of what?
10. When do these things happen?
11. The third chariot has _____ horses.
12. What color horses does the 4th chariot have.
13. What do the "white horses" symbolize?
14. What does the author believe the 4 spirits to be?
15. The North Country was _____.
16. What were the crowns to be made of?
17. Joshua is the same name as _____.
18. Jesus is the _____.
19. Who is the BRANCH?
20. Who is the chief corner stone?
21. What is the temple of the LORD?
22. Who are those that dwell afar off?
23. What kind of House is all of this speaking of?