

PROPHECY IN THE LATTER PROPHETS

The chronological order followed here is approximately that of Unger in his *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament*.

Obadiah (ca. 840 BC)

Joel (ca. 800 BC)

Jonah (ca. 763 BC [or 800 BC])

Amos (ca. 760 BC)

Hosea (ca. 750-715 BC)

Micah (ca. 740-700 BC)

Isaiah (ca. 740-695 BC)

Nahum (ca. 660-650 BC)

Habakkuk (ca. 609-605 BC)

Zephaniah ca. 640-612 BC

Jeremiah (ca. 626-585 BC)

Ezekiel (ca. 593-571 BC)

Daniel (ca. 603-538 BC)

Haggai (ca. 520 BC)

Today: **Zechariah, cont'd.**

The Post-Exilic Prophets

- Haggai** Both Haggai and Zechariah have an immediate concern: the rebuilding of the temple
- Zechariah** the temple
- Malachi** Malachi has a spiritual concern: the rebuilding of the people

I. Zechariah 5.1-11

“The priests and the kings in Israel were responsible for justice in the nation (cf. Deut. 17:9; 2 Sam. 15:2–3), though neither group could prevent wickedness from proliferating. The sixth and seventh visions deal with the removal of wickedness.”¹

A. The vision of the flying scroll (1-4)

1. The vision is of a large unrolled scroll, flying for all to see, large enough for all to make out the words (1-2)
2. The scroll contains curses, in keeping with Dt 28 and God’s message to the nation if they sinned against him (3)
 - a. Those who steal are under the curse of the writing on one side of the scroll
 - b. Those who swear (take the name of the Lord in vain) are under the curse of the writing on the other side of the scroll
3. God will purge all wickedness out of the land, in accordance with his word (4)

¹ Tom Constable, *Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Zech 5.1.

4. The eschatological meaning of the vision

- a. God's people must realize that no wicked ones will enter the Kingdom
- b. When the kingdom commences, any who sin in subsequent generations will find themselves purged from the kingdom

B. The vision of the ephah and the woman (5-11)

1. The vision described (5-7)

- a. Zechariah sees an ephah basket (normally held about five gallons)
- b. The basket has a lead cover, which would prevent whatever was inside from getting out (due to weight)
- c. Inside the basket, Zechariah sees a woman

2. The angel names the woman as "Wickedness" and casts her back in the basket and shuts the lid (8)

3. Next the prophet sees two women, with storks wings, who carry the basket out of the land to an appointed place (9-11)

- a. The basket goes to a prepared place in the land of Shinar (Babylon)
- b. There it will be ensconced as an idol (sit on a pedestal in a temple)
- c. No explanation is given here, but in the book of Revelation, false religion also appears as a woman — the whore of Babylon (See Rev 17, 18)

1) The removal of the basket symbolizes the removal of wickedness from the land

2) The NT adds that the great wicked woman of the last days will come to destruction (Rev 17, 18)

II. Zechariah 6.1-15

A. Four chariots go forth in judgement (1-8)

1. This is parallel to the four horsemen of the apocalypse (Rev 6.1-8)
2. The colours, as those in Revelation could symbolize various aspects of judgement
 - a. Red = war and bloodshed
 - b. Black = famine and death
 - c. White = victory and triumph
 - d. Dappled = plague and disease

3. The vision interpreted (4-6)

- a. The chariots represent four spirits (“winds,” *i.e.* angels) who are the agents of God’s will
- b. The black horses went north (the direction of Israel’s traditional enemies)
- c. The white horses followed in the same direction
- d. The dappled horses went south, toward Egypt
- e. Presumably, the red horses followed the dappled

“Since the chariots went in compass directions we should probably understand their judgment to be universal (cf. 2:6; Jer. 49:36; Ezek. 37:9; Rev. 7:1). They went north and south out of Palestine, but they executed judgment in every direction. The total picture is of God executing His judgments against all nations that oppose Israel.”²

4. The effects of the vision (7-8)

- a. The strong ones (angels) eagerly patrolled the earth
- b. The Lord declared their success, eliminating Israel’s enemies (in the near term, Babylon; in the long term, universal deliverance)

² Constable, Zech 6.4.

The “night visions” of Zechariah end, the next verse involves a new prophecy.

B. The crowning of Joshua the high priest (9-15)

1. Zechariah receives instructions to take an offering of the exiles, fashion a crown from it, and crown Joshua, the high priest (9-11)
 - a. The crown is a regal crown, not the high priest’s turban
 - b. Joshua the high priest becomes typical of the Messiah (11)
2. The prophetic act explained (12-15)
 - a. Joshua receives the name “Branch” as part of the prophetic act, taking the part of type to Messiah’s antitype (12)
 - b. The Branch will spread far, signifying the growth of his kingdom
 - c. The Man whose name is the Branch will also build the temple of the Lord
 - 1) In those days, Zerubbabel built the post-exilic temple, not Joshua
 - 2) Thus, this must refer to the millennial temple (12)
 - 3) The Branch will bear the glory and will rule (13)
 - d. The Messiah will be both a priest and a king (13)
 - 1) He will unite in Himself the offices of King and Priest
 - 2) He will vindicate the OT prophecies (15)
 - 3) Many that are far off will come and join in to rebuild the temple and worship the Lord (15, see Isa 56.6-7)
 - e. The crown made by Zedekiah became a memorial, housed in the temple, of God’s prophetic word (14)
 - f. The name Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua; the involvement of Joshua the son of Jehozadak is no coincidence.