## Kings and Prophets 17-10-19

This is Thursday, the 19th of October, 2017. Continue our study of Kings and Prophets. We are currently in the book of Zechariah, and we pick up tonight in Chapter 5. Let's take a moment as we begin our study to go to the Lord in prayer, dedicate our time, focus our concentration, enjoy the fruits of our fellowship and the blessing of the gifts that God has distributed in our midst, whether we are near or far.

We benefit from our communion with one another, informed and empowered by God's Holy Spirit, and where two or three are gathered, the Lord Jesus himself. Shall we pray? Father, how grateful we are for another time to devote to concentration on the revelation in your Word, to see its pertinence and its applicability to our own situation and circumstance, to enable us to anticipate the return of the Lord Jesus and our role, both present and future, in your plan and purpose. We pray that as we look at these things together that your Holy Spirit will illuminate the truth before us, make it real to us, help us to see its meaning and how we should then live so that our lives will be a reflection of your glory and enable others to be drawn to yourself through our Savior, the Lord Jesus.

We pray these things in his name, amen. Well, you will, I think, remember that the book of Zechariah begins with a half-dozen verses that call the returning Israelites, the returning citizens of Judah, and those who have lived there all along, everyone under the sound of the prophet's voice, to repentance, to renewed faith and obedience in God. And we've seen in both Haggai and Zechariah, as they minister in sort of a tag-team fashion, that the emphasis, the single emphasis, if you think back some future time and say, I know we went through Haggai and Zechariah, what was the big idea? It is not to substitute form for substance.

We have a physical temple, a building, we're back in the land, we have moved to the city that David established as his capital, we're back in the land of promise, so these things must mean that we are doing great. And God says, no, what you are measured by is not the outward appearance, it is the heart. And you can be doing these things and still be far from God.

Your iniquities can separate between you and your God, your sins can hide His face, and He sees the thoughts and intents, He sees the motivations and the superficialities that we sometimes even fool ourselves with. So these prophets call to the people not only to get on after a 16-year delay with getting the temple built, but to build it for the right reasons, with the right heart, and with the right goal in mind. And it isn't just to have old home week, it isn't just to be proud of their civic environment, it is preparation.

And what Zechariah begins to do is say, the reason you're building this temple isn't just to take you back to the good old days when there was a temple standing here, but it is an invitation for the return of the glory of God, and it is preparation for the coming of Messiah. And we'll see this explicitly in Malachi. You remember, there's a verse in Malachi that says, the Lord will come suddenly to His temple.

Well, He can't come suddenly if there's no temple. And so this is a necessary restoration, a necessary step for the presence of God, both in their immediate future and in their long-range hope and expectation. It is the same with us.

If you want to think in terms of application, if we have any sense at all, we long for the presence and power of God in our lives, but we don't always look at the two requirements for that, which are preparation in the sense of ensuring that we have constructed a habitation for God in our heart. What is that habitation made of? Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin? Well, it's the same thing, the washing of water, the washing of the word, the renewing of the Holy Spirit. It has to be sanctified.

It has to be cleansed. Any defilement has to be removed. God is not going to come into a polluted environment.

We saw with our priest Joshua last time that the filthy robes have to be taken off and replaced with clean. He has to be qualified. He has to be dressed for the job.

So, in a large sense, as we look at the Old Testament experience of Israel, and so often we see that it reflects truths that pertain to the New Testament individual believer. And it is one thing to want the presence and power of God. It is something else to do the work that is necessary to ensure that He can come and fulfill His promises.

And these people receive a chiding from the prophets, because these people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. So, with that as background, initially, in the first six verses, there is a call to repentance, a call to change of mind. And you find this echoed throughout the Bible, most prominently, perhaps, in the New Testament at the beginning of chapter 12 of Hebrews.

Let us go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of what? Change of mind, repentance, away from dead works, and genuine faith toward God. It's a two-part movement. Turning away from dead works and turning toward the life of faith.

You can't have the life of faith if you've not abandoned dead works, and you will not continue in dead works if you are dedicated to the life of faith, but we have to turn, as it tells us. So then we begin in verse 7 with this series of eight visions. They are dated.

There is a single night in which Zechariah receives all eight of these visions, and we actually know the date. I looked it up. It was February the 15th of 519 B.C. This is just a few months after they began the rebuilding of the temple.

You remember they started with Zerubbabel, laid the foundation, then it laid fallow for 16 years while people got distracted. We can think back, most of us were saved at a fairly distant time in the past, and it could be that there has been a period of years where we've been coasting or sort of going through the motions. Maybe it's not a genuine dedication for others.

I'm sure that we have had a continual pattern of priority and pursuing spiritual goals, but it is always a danger that we will begin to coast and rely on our momentum to carry us across the finish line instead of examining ourselves to see if we are in the faith and watching for even early signs of this malady where, well, we can look and see that the work has been begun, and it evidently was increasingly slower and slower and sort of ground to pretty much a halt, and it just didn't rise to a level of concern. Like Paul tells the Galatians, you began well, who hindered you from finishing the race? Who slowed you down? So beginning there in verse 7 of chapter 1, we have this eightfold revelation, these eight visions. Just by way of review now, we have covered the first five of them in detail.

The first one was the vision of the riders in the grove, chapter 1 verses 7 through 17. And this was the reconnaissance team of God who goes out and reports back that the world is sort of lazily at peace while the people of God are oppressed. And God says, I am aware and I'm going to fix that.

Don't think that God is unaware. When we have difficulties, we have setbacks, we have challenges, we are enduring through a long season of difficulty. This can comfort us because God is aware, and what is the promise in that first vision? God says, I will restore you.

I am aware and I'm going to act. God will act to restore his people. Subject to his timing, there is a reason why there were 70 years of captivity.

There is a reason why there is opposition allowed in to the rebuilding of the temple. And you remember, because of their hard hearts, God said, you're sowing and you're reaping a fraction. You're trying to buy, and by the time you get it home, you only have a fraction.

And there's a reason for this. There's a reason for everything. So, first vision in chapter 1, verses 7-17, God is aware, God will act to restore his people.

There is a condition though, it goes back to the first part of the chapter, when our hearts are tuned and attuned. Second vision began in chapter 1, verse 18, goes through verse 20, this is the four horns and the four craftsmen. And this is a reminder that these circumstances, situations, in this case it's nations, four horns, four entities, have been used to judge God's people, to move God's people, to awaken God's people to their spiritual dilapidation, their spiritual deleteriousness, their lack of spiritual malaise and apathy.

But those things themselves will be judged, and that's the craftsmen who are going to grind down these horns. There's been a lot of interpretive speculation on both the identity of the horns and the identity of the craftsmen. Four is the number of universality.

It could just mean that factors on every side have come in. And it could also mean that the four major entities, not the four empires that you see in the visions of Daniel, because this seems to be things that have been in the past at the time of Zechariah. So what are the four major entities that have harassed and caused trouble for Israel slash Judah in the past? That would be

Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, and Medo-Persia.

And if you look at sort of their general directions, you can figure that that could be. And then for the four craftsmen, you think of the four horsemen of the apocalypse. You also think of which is over in Revelation chapter 6, verses 1 through 8. You remember the rider on the red horse and the black horse and the pale horse and so on in Revelation chapter 6. That was the sword, famine, wild beasts, and plague.

And these are instrumentalities that God uses to judge those who are outside His protective care. So these could be the craftsmen. You can also put with that Ezekiel chapter 14, verse 21.

But for the second vision, what is the big idea? In the first vision, the big idea was God is aware, God will act, and God will restore His people. Sort of a three-fold whammy there. In the second one, the four horns and the four craftsmen, God will act to judge that which causes His people affliction, even if it is at His behest.

The classic example is Judas. These things must come, but woe to him by whom they come. It was prophesied that the one who shared the Lord's table would lift up his heel against his familiar friend and so on.

Man's enemies will be the members of his own household in some cases. But it does not excuse Judas from the decisions that he made. So God will act to judge.

So God will act to restore His people. God will act to judge those who are outside. There will be vindication for God's people in that act of judgment.

The third one, the man with the measuring line. This is a theme you see recurring in Scripture, either a measuring line or a measuring rod. You find that in Ezekiel, you find it in Revelation.

And the identity of the man with the measuring line in chapter 2, verses 1-13 is not given to us, but you think about the measuring that takes place in Ezekiel 47 with the ever-deepening river, seems to be sort of a parallel. But this goes beyond, since it says it's going to be a city without walls, and the measurement seems to extend almost limitless fashion, that this looks forward beyond the literal immediate Jerusalem of Zechariah's day to the Millennial Kingdom. This is the wheels of the airliner lifting off the runway here into flight into the prophetic future and looking ahead to the Millennial Kingdom.

And of course both Ezekiel and Revelation in their measuring rod passages conspire with this to give us certainly that viewpoint. And God says that His people are the apple of His eye, and if you touch His people, it's kind of like Merle Haggard said, if you're picking on my country you're walking on the fighting side of me, and if you pick on God's people you're walking on the fighting side of God. And He says those who touch you touch the apple of mine eye and I will recompense.

So He says that Jerusalem won't need walls because I will put a wall of fire around it. So again,

number one, God is going to restore His people. Number two, God is going to judge those who are outside that have been harassing and interdicting His people.

Number three, God is going to protect His people. He will be the walls, better than any wall, kind of like the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire. So that's the third vision, man with the measuring line.

And also a reminder that God not only has horsemen out reviewing the world and its state, but He is measuring His own people and ensuring that there is room for them, that they are qualified to live in the city and so forth. Number four was Joshua the high priest, chapter 3 verses 1 through 10. And we saw this in great detail where he had the raggedy robes, the soiled robes, bearing those.

They are removed and he is dressed in clean robes. He has the priestly hat put on. And in so doing, there is now a mediator between God and men who can bring God's people close through His own sanctification and His own righteousness.

It is as though he got soiled rubbing elbows with the people. He didn't get soiled in God's presence. He was out among the people and came in with the soiled robes.

God ensures that he has clean robes and that enables him to function as high priest to represent the people before God and it's a strong picture of what Jesus is going to do. He is also associated with three other concepts in that section. He is the branch, the netzer, the Nazarene.

He is the servant, remember the suffering servant of Isaiah. And he is the stone in verse 9 there, 3.9. He's associated with this stone and all of these are strong associated symbols with the Lord Jesus, aren't they? He's the stone cut without hands that's going to smash the feet of the statue in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. He is the rock upon which you fall and are broken or it falls on you and you are crushed to powder.

He is the rock of our salvation. He is the rock on which you build and the storms do not knock your house down. So again, extremely strong Christological prophetic value here.

And what is the message? We said number one, God is aware and will restore His people. Number two, God will judge those who have been interdicting and harassing His people. Number three, God will protect His people.

And number four, He will cleanse and sanctify and make a way into His presence. It's not just cleansing and sanctification for its own sake. This cleansing and sanctification qualifies us to stand in God's presence.

That's what the high priest enables. We are represented before God. We, especially as the church, can walk right into the throne room of God if you go to Hebrews chapter 10.

So then, last time we looked at the fifth vision, which is the gold lampstand with the two trees.

This was chapter 4, verses 1-14. And a very complex structure here in its beauty and its symmetry.

It has the seven lamp holders, each with seven pipes. So you've got 49 channels for the olive oil going to these seven lamps. And this is a single lampstand that is fueled by these two trees on each side.

And again, just by way of review, and in summary, my suggestion, we often think that, well, oil represents the Holy Spirit. And I want to suggest a slight refinement to that, partly based on this vision and its companion vision in Revelation chapter 11, which we also looked at last time. What was the difference in chapter 11, do you remember? See, I surprised you.

You were just listening to the mellifluous sounds of my voice and floating on the sea of verbiage there. But now you've got a pop quiz. What was the difference in the olive trees and lampstand vision in Zechariah chapter 4 and in a similar vision for John in Revelation chapter 11? There's a significant difference.

The number of lamps. The number of lamps. In both cases, you've got the two trees.

And the angel tells Zechariah these two trees are those who stand on each side of God, the Lord of the universe there, the Lord of all creation. Remember that? It tells us explicitly, because Zechariah has to ask twice. He says, verse 11, what are these two olive trees at the right of the lampstand and its left? I further answered and said, what are the two olive branches that drip into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the gold oil drains? He said, do you know not what these are? I said, no, my Lord.

These are the two anointed ones, it says in English, literally says the two sons of oil. The two sons of oil is what it literally says in Hebrew, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth. Now, who is the Lord of the whole earth in the Old Testament? If you had to pick a member of the Trinity, who would it be? It's God the Father, right? He's the God of Israel.

God the Father. So these are the two sons of oil who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth. People have said, well, these trees are Zerubbabel and Joshua.

Well, they don't stand beside the Lord of the whole earth. Not even typologically or functionally. As governor and high priest, governor sort of prefiguring king.

There's some valence there, some meaning in terms of prefiguring the Lord Jesus as prophet, priest, and king, and so on. So you have the priestly and kingly. But I personally don't see that here.

This is what I think, and I'll just toss it out. There's plenty of other ideas. But based on the fact that these, and Zechariah had to ask twice, because he asked earlier who they were.

And didn't get a straight answer. Back in verse 4, I answered and spoke to the angel, What are

these, my Lord? And he says, Do you not know what these are? So then he says, Not by might nor by power. We talked about the two pillars, Boaz and Jason, that were at the front of the temple.

And that they are sources of strength. There's might and there's power. And no one by itself can do the job.

You need them both. You can't hold up the portico of the temple with only one pillar. It's going to collapse.

You need them both. And he says, By my spirit. So in short, because we're summarizing here, let me just suggest to you, this is my suggestion.

I believe that the two trees are sources of oil. They are similar in that they are sources of oil. Well, we don't have two sources for the Holy Spirit, do we? So what does the oil actually represent? The anointing oil.

Well, anointing is like anointing with the Holy Spirit. Well, why anointing with the Holy Spirit? What does the presence and power of the Holy Spirit do for someone? Does it sanctify them? Does it enable them to fly? Does it transport them into another dimension? What does the presence of the Holy Spirit actually do? Old Testament and new. What did Jesus tell the disciples in Acts 1.8? After the Holy Ghost has come upon you, you will receive what? Power.

What happened to Bezalel and Aholiab when the Holy Spirit came on them? They received power. What happened to Samson when the Holy Spirit came on him and he picked up the jawbone? He received power. What happens to everybody on whom the Holy Spirit either comes by way of endowment or filling? What happens? What happened on the day of Pentecost? The Holy Spirit descended like doves on the heads of the people and they started speaking in other languages.

That is a new power. I would suggest to you that the oil, while closely associated with the Holy Spirit because He is generally the source of our power, but the oil specifically represents power. Now, if there are two sources of power, one on each side of God on His throne, what would the other one be and do we have any scripture that would document that there is another source of divine power in the heavenlies? Let's say the Holy Spirit is at the left hand of God.

What would be the right hand of God? What does Paul say in Philippians 4, verse 13? I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Right? So, wouldn't it be symmetrical if you've got a three-fold picture at the throne of God with the Lord Jesus Christ at the right hand, the Holy Spirit at the left hand and those two agencies of God's plan and purpose pumping power through channels into this lampstand with its perfect seven-fold ability to reflect the fire and the power and the glory of God, each of those fed by seven pipes of power for a total of 49 and you begin to think of Jubilee and the year of Jubilee and the 49 and then the 50 idea there. So, I would suggest that the lampstand, the golden lampstand is Israel and that this is a picture of

Israel's future glory when God fulfills the new covenant to the house of Israel and the house of Judah I will do what? I will pour out my spirit on all flesh.

Your old men will see visions, your young men will dream dreams. All Israel will be enabled and empowered. Now, they missed that when they missed the Messiah and went out.

So, when you go to Revelation 11, how many lampstands are there? Fed by the same two trees? With the same power mechanism? How many lampstands did we say are in Revelation 11? Well, there's two lampstands there, right? And we asked ourselves the question last week, where did the other lampstand come from? Because there was only one lampstand in the Old Testament vision of Zechariah. Hint, hint, Old Testament Revelation. So, what would the second lampstand be that John sees in God's presence, fed by the same two olive trees and the same oil? What is the second lampstand? With its seven lamps.

Think Revelation chapter 1, chapter 2, and chapter 3. The church. So, in the full Revelation of chapter 11 of Revelation, you see God's people, Israel, and Christ's people, the church, side by side, both, with the purpose of reflecting the glory and the light of God. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

And this power flowing into those lampstands enables that wonderful reflected glory off of that golden structure. So, that's what we looked at last time. In chapter 4, verses 1 through 14.

And what does that tell us? We've said that in the vision of the writers, God is aware of our situation, and God is going to vindicate, God is going to restore. We saw in the vision of the four, of the man with the, I'm sorry, the four horns and the craftsman, that God is going to judge those that have been besetting us. And even if they've been used for judgment.

So, God is going to restore, God is going to judge. In the man with the measure, God is going to be the wall of fire and protect His people. God is going to, with Joshua the high priest, cleanse and sanctify for service, and qualify for His presence, His people.

He's solved the sin problem. And in the fifth, the gold lampstand, the big idea there is that these trees have this inexhaustible source of oil that the lamps are worthless and useless and pointless without that oil. That's what makes them go, and that comes from the very throne of God.

So, what does that represent? It is enablement, it is empowerment. Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. And it is strengthening and enablement and empowerment from God's spirit that makes this whole thing work.

So, God will restore His people, God's going to judge the outsiders, God's going to protect His people, God is going to cleanse and sanctify and bring into His presence, qualify for service and fellowship His people, and God is going to enable His people to do things they could not do in the energy of the flesh, in the strength of man. Now, that brings us tonight, finally, to the sixth vision, which is in chapter 5. I turned and raised my eyes, Zachariah says. I always like this,

because it's so often overlooked.

What did I just read? Say it out loud. I turned and raised my eyes. I turned and raised my eyes.

Lift up your eyes to the hills. Abraham was trudging toward the mountain of sacrifice with Isaac, and he lifted up his eyes. How many times does the Bible talk about lifting up the eyes? It is so easy to have our eyes down in the material world, our eyes down, looking at where our next footstep is going to be.

To see heavenly things, to see at any distance, it's just like your high beam headlights. You've got to lift up your eyes. You've got to shift the focus.

Raise your eyes. And Zachariah sees this next vision, because he lifted up his eyes. I turned and raised my eyes, and I saw there a flying scroll.

It's funny in the Old King James, because it says I saw a flying roll, and I have to think of a croissant or something, like a food fight. Is there going to be another one or a whole flurry of them? But it is a flying scroll, which is a rolled parchment or papyrus. And he said to me, What do you see? So I answered, I see a flying scroll.

Its length is 20 cubits, and its width is 10 cubits. So this thing is pretty big. A cubit is roughly a foot and a half.

So if it's 20 cubits, that would be about 35 feet. That's a fair size scroll. And if it's 10 cubits, that's going to be about 15 feet high.

Your standard ceiling is 8 feet. So it's twice as wide as it is high, and it's big. It's a big piece of scroll.

Nobody has a scroll this big. So why would it be so big? Why couldn't it be two cubits by one cubit? Something you could carry around. Why is it so big? Well, they don't make scrolls like that on Earth, so what is its origin? Something that big had to come from heaven.

It's a supernatural scroll, and it flies. It's not a flying carpet, but it's big enough. You could put your family and several friends and have a picnic on this thing.

It's pretty big. But you get the idea that maybe it flies not horizontally but in a vertical fashion so that it can be read. It is a scroll, and scrolls generally have writing on them.

This is not a sealed scroll like you find in Revelation. It is an unrolled scroll. And I can tell you what is written on this scroll even though it doesn't appear to be given in the... At least I think I can.

I'm going to presume and suggest that I can tell you what's on this scroll. I see a flying scroll, 20 cubits, 10 cubits. He said to me, This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth.

Every thief shall be expelled according to this side of the scroll, and every perjurer shall be expelled according to that side of it. Now, what do you get from that? Keep your finger here and turn back to Exodus chapter 20. God spoke all these words saying, I'm the Lord your God, brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

You shall have no other gods before me. That's commandment number one. Number two, You shall not make for yourself any graven image.

Number three, Do not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Number four, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Number five, Honor your father and mother.

Number six, You shall not murder. Seven, Do not commit adultery. Eight, Do not steal.

Nine, Do not bear false witness. Ten, Do not covet. Right? Of course, I like to think there's an extra one in there.

Six days, Thou shalt labor. But we'll leave that aside for now. Ten commandments.

You will notice that the two things that are spoken of here, one side says, Every thief shall be expelled. Right? That's your eighth commandment. You shall not steal.

Right? And the other side says, Every perjurer. That would be your third commandment. Do not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

This is swearing that you're telling the truth by God. You know, So help me God. And then you commit perjury.

So these two statements are the center command on each of the two tablets. See how we're getting there? It's the central command on the two tablets of stone. Don't take the name of the Lord in vain.

This was swearing an oath by God's name and not telling the truth. You know, I swear by heaven and by God's throne and the gold on God's throne and all the rest of it that I'm telling you the truth. Do not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

It doesn't mean don't curse, although that's tacky and rude, and I wouldn't use the name of the Lord in any sort of a corrupt context. But this specifically that the third commandment there is swearing falsely and using God as your pledge and then not stealing is on the other. So why is this a curse that goes out through all the earth? Because this is God's standard.

The law is not sin. You remember the whole argument in Romans? The law is holy and righteous and good, but by it sin is exposed. And we are redeemed from the curse of the law.

How? The curse of the law is its conviction. And we have been redeemed from the curse of the law by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, which was prefigured by Joshua exchanging his soiled priestly robes for clean ones. So this curse goes out over the whole earth.

Every thief shall be expelled according to this side. Every perjurer shall be expelled according to that side of it. And you can get the idea that you're supposed to think of the tablets of the law because it's twice as wide as it is high.

So you think there is a doubling here. There is a two. And you get the idea also that the two sides are the left side and the right side, not the front and the back.

They did not typically write on the back of a scroll. You rolled the outside up to protect the writing on the inside. So a scroll was only written on the inside.

And so this is the left side and this is the right side. This is tablet number one in Hebrew, of course, would be on the right. And tablet number two would be on the left.

You see this messed up a lot when people make little representations of the Ten Commandments because they always put the first tablet on the left. But in Hebrew, you've got to read the right-hand tablet first because you're reading right to left. So this is the standard of God.

This is God's righteous and universal standards, right? Even the Sabbath is part of God's universal moral law, meaning you should set aside quality time to stop working and reflect on God. We're not tied to a specific day, but we observe, recognize, and should follow the Sabbath principle, which is there should be a regular time set aside for reflection, appreciation, prayer, revisiting what we have learned of God's Word. That is the Sabbath.

What was the purpose of the Sabbath in Israel? He had to schedule it, and he said, you'll stop everything and sit in your house to give you time to reflect. Of course, a lot of times they didn't do it. They were busy peeking out the window, seeing if somebody else was violating the Sabbath so that they could report them.

But, I will send out the curse, says the Lord of hosts, verse 4. It shall enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who, notice, who swears falsely by my name. That's how I know he's talking about the Third Commandment. Swears falsely by my name.

This is not bearing false witness. He stole my ox when he really didn't. This is perjury in the name of God.

And that scroll is going to remain in the midst of his house and consume it. Now, you think about the size of your average stone or clay dwelling in the ancient Near East. How well is that great big 15 by 35 foot scroll going to fit in there? It's going to get inside, as it flies around, it's just going to wreak havoc.

It's too big. They probably had 6 or 7 foot ceilings. Well, this thing is 15 feet high.

And it's 35 feet long. Their dwellings typically weren't that long, end to end, unless they were extremely wealthy. This thing is going to get inside, just start flying around and wreak complete

havoc.

It's going to destroy the thing from the inside out. And what is this? This is the convicting power of God's righteous standard. It is a curse to those who have no means of getting out from under the curse.

It is the curse of the law that Paul talks about. It will consume it with its timber and stones. Everything that people rely on for structure, for shelter, for definition, for identification, this is my house, this is where I live, I am Simon the Tanner, I live in the Tanner's house, here is where I am, here is where I located, here is my stuff, all destroyed.

All of that will be taken down. The things that people rely on and think this is the structure and this belongs to me, this is what identifies me, is going to be destroyed by this. Then there is another vision.

So what can we say about this one as we sort of line it up with the previous five? The flying scroll two times as wide as it is high, sort of harking back to the two tables and the middle commandment on each table. What does it say? What is the law? What are these standards against thieves and those who bear false witness? Both of these, by the way, are self-centered sins, most of them are anyway, but you get the idea that a thief, this goes back to Achan and the battle at Jericho and he took things and hid them in his tent and introduced sin into the camp. And you have the same thing when you pervert the name of God because you are swearing falsely, this has an effect on others.

When you steal, you affect others. They say, well, there are victimless crimes. Well, these are not victimless crimes.

This is going to negatively affect other people and these sins will be judged. So in the same way that God will restore His people, God will judge those who are outside who have been afflicting God's people. God will protect His people.

God will sanctify and cleanse them and qualify them for His presence. God will enable them, the trees with the oil flowing. God will judge and remove sin from the midst.

And this looks particularly forward to the millennial kingdom when the Lord Jesus and the sons of David are ruling with a rod of iron. Sin is going to be purged out and notice it is not by human hands that this purging is done. This is a scroll from heaven.

This is the word of God literally coming in and destroying households that harbor thieves and perjurers from the inside out. And of course you will see when we move forward in Ezra and Nehemiah, Nehemiah particularly, this effort to try to purge out the people that brought in foreign wives. This is man's effort to purge sin out of the camp, so to speak.

And that's not what God is picturing here through Zechariah. It is the word of God that convicts. It is the Holy Spirit that convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.

And what does He use to do it? He never takes of Himself. The Holy Spirit doesn't just speak extemporaneously when He comes into the heart of everyone in the world and convicts them of sin, righteousness, and judgment. The Lord Jesus described this in great detail.

He uses the moral standard revealed from heaven. It is burned into our conscience. What may be known of God is manifest.

We know, we have an innate sense of right and wrong and it is spelled out in God's word. And that standard will be the standard of conviction. And if you don't opt out of the curse, the curse will destroy.

So God will deal with sin. He will judge it. He will purge it.

He will destroy it out of the midst. It's going to go into these households and that house is going to be a vacant lot. That brings us to the second half of chapter 5, which is the vision of the woman in the basket.

The angel who talked with me came out and said to me, lift your eyes now and see what this is that goes forth. It's interesting to me that at the beginning of the chapter, Zechariah himself turned and raised his eyes. But he's still, it seems like he's fascinated.

You know how you see film after a hurricane, after an earthquake, after some great devastation and it just, you look at it, the fires in California these past few weeks, the film of it is just riveting. You think, California, seriously? Modern day civilization and a seemingly simple thing like a fire and we're so helpless before it. And it just incinerates everything in its path and you look and you can hardly tear your eyes away.

Evidently, Zechariah is still looking at the houses that have been devastated by this flying scroll and the angel has to kind of tap him on the shoulder and he says, alright, I need you to lift your eyes and look over here. I've got another vision for you. So he does.

Lift your eyes now and see what this is that goes forth. So I asked, mana, what is it? And he said, it is a basket that is going forth. He said, this is the resemblance throughout the earth.

Here is a lead disk lifted up and this is a woman sitting inside the basket. Then he said, this is wickedness. And of course, it's the woman who's wickedness.

She corresponds loosely to the scarlet harlot, the whore of Babylon that you have in Revelation 17 and 18. It is wickedness personified. He thrust her down into the basket, threw the lead cover over its mouth.

I raised my eyes and looked and there were two women coming with the wind in their wings. They had wings like the wings of a stork. What have we said about the symbolism of wings in the past? Angels have wings.

He will shelter us under his wings. Under his wings we take refuge. This is divine enablement of

a different sort.

Instead of the oil that fuels light and reflection of the glory of God, wings, those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They will do what? They who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They will mount up with wings like eagles.

This is strengthening and what happens when you mount up with wings? What happens to your perspective? I used to think about this all the time when I was a little kid. My grandmother had some books that had been printed way back in like 1920 or something back, maybe the 30s when my dad was a little kid and it had projects you could do and one of them was you would fly a box kite and then you would attach a box camera with a string on the shutter. You know the old light box cameras with the little roll of film in it and they showed how you could attach a parachute to the camera and fly the thing with its second string on the shutter up your kite string and get the box camera way up high on your kite then yank the shutter string and take a picture up there.

Then bring your camera back down and get it developed and you could get aerial photos all by yourself and I thought, oh, that would be so fantastic. Now, of course, they've got drones you can buy and take little pictures and send them to your phone but I was really fascinated by that. At an elevation, this is why people used to go up in the Empire State Building or the Statue of Liberty or the Bunker Hill Monument.

We climbed all the way up to the top of that thing and looked around and you get this wonderful panoramic perspective. You see the big picture. You put things in context and perspective.

Well, these two women have wings. Wings represent divine enablement for service, for overview. This is what the angels use to work God's will in the earth and they are also used for protection and for covering.

So there are two women with wings and they have the wind in their wings. They have wings like the wings of a stork. They lifted up the basket between earth and heaven and I have to think, you know, it seems like angels so often in the Old Testament are very definitely men or manly.

The masculine pronoun is used. I've always wondered why is it that angels always seem to be women in medieval and art that we see all over the place. They always look like women and many times they're very manifestly women.

And perhaps it comes from this passage, women with wings. And they are doing God's will here by taking this basket to the plain of Shinar and when it is ready it will be set there on its base. Well, they're going to build a house for it.

This is the same terminology that was used at the beginning of Zechariah when he says, you need to be building my house. And so you get the idea that this is a house of worship for this woman. And to build a house for it in the land of Shinar when it is ready, the basket will be set

there on its base.

This is the alternative. For those who do not repent, those who do not recognize the moral standard of God represented by the flying scroll, they're going to have an alternative. They will have something to which they can turn.

If you change your mind away from dead works and have faith toward God, what is the opposite of that? If you're faced with the opportunity for faith in God and you reject it, as in the last half of Romans chapter 1, here is going to be the alternative. This woman, she's kept in the basket with a lead lid. She can't push her way out.

But there will be a house built for her, not necessarily by these two winged women, but she's going to be in the plain so that a house can be built for her. And this bookends. This is your chiastic Tower of Babel idea.

And you get the idea that this reflects all the way down to the Gog Magog rebellion. There will be a time, and who is doing God's will? Who are the two entities that are reflecting God's glory and doing God's will during the time of the millennium? Remember Revelation 11? You get the two lampstands. Well, now you've got the two women.

And you get the idea that this twofold service that keeps the lid on evil during the millennial kingdom will be both Israel and the church, the two entities that God has both reflecting His glory and serving Him, whether it's ruling and reigning or functioning in the millennial kingdom. But they are going to keep the lid on evil for a thousand years. But there's going to be a house built for evil.

And when the time is right, the lid's going to be taken off that basket and out she pops. And this corresponds to taking the lid off the bottomless pit so that Satan can emerge and gather everyone to himself. And it's just like the Tower of Babel.

It is a mirror image in the end times. So that's your sixth vision. I'm sorry, your seventh vision, the measuring basket.

Six was the flying scroll, seven is the measuring basket, the two women. And you see again Revelation 17 and 18. What does this tell us? We've seen, and I'm reviewing these sequentially, this is like one of those songs, you know, 99 bottles of beer on the wall or whatever it is where you keep repeating everything over and over.

So number one, first vision, God is going to restore His people. Number two, He's going to judge the opposition. Number three, He's going to protect His people with the wall of fire.

Number four, He will cleanse, sanctify, and qualify for fellowship, those people. Number five, the lampstand vision, He will enable His people to reflect His glory. There will be power emanating from these two wonderful sources.

Number six, the flying scroll, He is going to judge sin wherever it occurs. That flying scroll is going to go in and destroy it. Number seven, the measuring basket, God will control evil.

He will keep the lid on evil for a thousand years. In the millennial kingdom, it's got a lead lid. That woman is not getting out of the basket.

She was riding the beast in Revelation 17 and 18. And in that vision of John's, she is then destroyed. The beast turns around and destroys her.

Well, in this vision, she's not totally destroyed. She's put in a basket where you can't see her. And she's stuck over in the plain of Shinar.

And there's going to be that great Gog Magog rebellion and Satan's release. He's going to gather all of these that have been chafing. They didn't like their houses being destroyed.

They didn't like their woman being in the basket. And they're going to gather to Him like iron filings to a magnet at Gog Magog. And they're going to surround the camp of the saints.

And that is going to be the ultimate and final disposition of sin and evil culminating in the great white throne and destruction in the lake of fire. So, that is your seventh vision. We have one final vision to go.

We're out of time for tonight. But as you can already see, when you look at chapter 6, I turned and raised my eyes, and behold, four chariots coming from between two mountains. The mountains are mountains of bronze.

First chariot, red horses. Second chariot, black horses. Third chariot, white horses.

Fourth chariot, dappled horses. And they are strong. Well, you think back to the very first vision where we had horses in a grove.

Now, and that was a very ironic scene. And these are the eyes of the Lord going out and doing a reconnaissance. Now you've got battle horses, battle chariots.

You've got mountains, not a pleasant valley grove. They're coming from between these bronze mountains. So you get the idea that while there is a link, there is a reflection, there is a huge difference.

And just remember that at the beginning of human history, where are Adam and Eve? Garden full of? Trees. It's a garden full of trees, right? Of all the trees in the garden you may eat, except this one, right? At the end, right before the kingdom of the Father and the judgment of the lake of fire, what do you have? With Gog Magog, you've got this final great cataclysmic battle, the most destructive battle. It'll make Armageddon look like a slingshot fight, like a BB gun fight.

That last great climactic battle, you begin to see prefigured here in the symmetry of these eight visions. But we'll look at it in detail next time. But what is our overall conclusion? We say that as

goes the nation in the Old Testament, not just in the Old Testament, but also in prophecy.

What God does for His Old Testament people, He does for us through Christ. So all of these things that I have been constantly reviewing tonight, just remember, these are our heritage, not waiting for the millennial kingdom, we have them now. Right now, we have restoration from God.

Regardless of how bad we mess up, God will restore us, He will renew us. He will deal with the opposition, whether it is people, or circumstance, or environment, or culture. God has got it under His purview, and He will judge it.

He is going to protect us. We have a wall of fire around us even now. And it is such a tragedy for us to forget that we have God's restoration.

We have God's purview and oversight, dealing with and only allowing certain things through that wall of fire. And He is going to judge those things that afflict us. He cleanses us, and sanctifies us, and qualifies us for fellowship with Himself.

We can go boldly before the throne of grace and find help in time of need. He enables us. We have the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit.

We have the presence and power of the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember when Jesus said, the one who has my words and keeps them, He is the one that loves me. I and my Father will come to Him and make our home with Him.

You have got the triumvirate of the Father on His throne, and those two trees. He will judge sin in our lives, and we need to find it and judge it first, so that the flying scroll doesn't come flying into our lives to obliterate the source of the problem. He will control evil.

He will mitigate it. He will suppress it. He will keep it from ruining us.

And we'll see the final point of application when we cover the four chariots and the four horsemen, but you can already see that there is an ultimate hope and a final victory that we will have at the resurrection when we are united with the Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thessalonians 4, when the Lord Himself descends from heaven with a shout, the voice of the archangel, the trump of God, and the dead in Christ rise, we who are alive and remain are caught up together with them in the clouds, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Never again to be afflicted.

Never again to be stymied. Never again to be challenged in the way we are now by both sin and evil. God, in that sequence of visions, shows how He is going to deal with each of these, qualify us to serve in His presence, and reflect His glory like those great lampstands.

So it's a message of encouragement, and as you can see, presented to the returning exiles of Judah, it is focusing attention on the coming Messiah. They are to look at Him in prospect, and in the fulfillment of His second coming. We already enjoy these things as a result of His first

coming, but it is a person at the center of all of these hopes and fulfillments, and that's our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let's close in a word of prayer. Father, thank You for the truth of Your Word. Thank You for the wonderful encouragement that it offers to us.

So often we see You speak to surrounding nations in Old Testament prophecy, and You are really speaking to Your people, and we see here as You speak virtually in the first person to the returning exiles of Judah, we find Your voice speaking to us. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will make these things real and pertinent to us, that we can live in the light of them, that Your enabling grace will bear that fruit in our lives that will reflect Your glory and the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray these things in His name.

Amen.