

PostExilicProphets 21-06-10b

Let's return to our study now. Our first session occupied itself with looking at the transcendent nature of our faith. We do not depend on a perfect text.

The text is good enough for God's purpose, and so are we. When we are willing, when we are faithful, when we are obedient, despite our faults, despite our failures, despite our inevitable mistakes along the way, we are good enough. And it's a wonderful source of encouragement.

I could never sit here and try to teach the word of God if I thought anything else. And we just rely on God's grace and on his leading through his Holy Spirit. And it's a wonderful comfort to know that God is on our side.

He is anxious for us to succeed, to adapt and overcome in whatever circumstances we are in. And so I think sometimes these issues in the text, by the way, I think probably everybody listening to me has seen this, but on the website under the bulletin board section, if you log in to that, I have posted an extensive list of questions about the Bible, alleged discrepancies and contradictions and so on. And all of these can be resolved to any reasonable person's satisfaction.

And there are innumerable examples of that in there. A lot of them have to do with Bible numbers in the Old Testament and how easily those were misunderstood by copyists. But they are in fact errors in the text.

But in every case where God hasn't preserved a pristine text, he has preserved enough information, vision and we can, more importantly, none of it will tell you there's a replete, no tenet of the Christian textual problems. Completely usable and wonderful form. And we have it in multiple translations.

We have an infinitude of commentaries. And a reasonable question is, will we respond to it? And that brings where we pick up tonight with the promise that God gives to his people. I am with you.

I will be with you. But the move forward from the information given by Haggai and victing element. You're living in these paneled houses.

You don't really care about my presence, God says. Where is my house? And they think, well, let's get busy and build this building but God uses this to turn a corner from looking back at the glory of Solomon's temple to looking forward to the Messiah, looking forward to Jesus Christ, looking forward to the one who will come and give meaning and fulfillment to all of those Old Testament shadows. God's not interested in rebuilding the temple of Solomon.

He doesn't ask these people to do it. And when they do finally finish the building, he doesn't come and inhabit it for several reasons. One of which is they have not built it for the right

reasons.

They did it under duress and after being goaded into doing it, but there is division. They're not doing it with a ready heart and a willing spirit as was done in the days of the tabernacle or in the days of the first temple under Solomon. And therefore God's glory never fills this temple.

When is the next time they are going to see the glory of God in a temple? Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. When's the next time the people of Israel, some of the people, a few of the people are gonna see the glory of God. It's our passage in Matthew 17.

It's the Mount of Transfiguration. When the glory of God is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ and in his glowing raiment and in his companions, Moses and Elijah, that's the next time the glory of God shines forth in Israel. That glory cloud comes and descends onto the Mount of Transfiguration.

That's the next time. It doesn't happen in these days. Why? These days are now, in the same way that in Matthew, we're at a turning point in the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He has been trying to impress upon the people of Israel the opportunity for the kingdom and its king to come, to be present, to fulfill the Old Testament promises, and they are not ready. These people are now being impressed with the possibility, that same possibility. And this is why these post-exilic prophets are so profoundly interesting because they are looking forward.

Prepare the way of the Lord. Make straight paths for his feet. Let the valleys be exalted.

Let the mountains and hills be laid low so that the king of glory can come in. And this is a forward look. And that's what these visions in Zechariah are going to do.

Let's survey these. I mentioned last time that there's a chiastic structure here. There are eight visions, four and four.

And what you might do is put in your notes. There is going to be a structure like this. A-BB-CC-BB-A.

You got eight letters there, right? The outermost two visions are going to correspond. You could put primes on the last half of those letters if you want to. A-BB-C.

Then you're going to have another C. That could also be C prime. Then prime is a little apostrophe. You know, it's just to show that it's the same letter, but it's different.

Then a dash. Then you're going to have B prime, B prime, dash, A prime. A-BB-C, that's four visions.

C-BB-A, that's another four visions. And there's a symmetry there. Let's take a quick look at these again.

Begins in verse seven, 24th day of the 11th month. The word of the Lord came to Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, not the son of Jehoiada. Son of Berechiah, the son of Ido the prophet.

This is repeated from verse one. And it distinguishes this message from the one that preceded it, which was interleaved with the prophecies of Haggai. Now, verse eight.

This is, you can put this in the margin or in your notes. Verse eight is vision number one. This is going to be verse eight through verse 11.

Following this is going to be oracle number one. Some people include this with the vision, but it's really not a part of the vision. It is an oracle.

It's a doctrinal statement. This is some truth that is attached to the vision. So vision number one is verse seven through 11.

It is followed by an oracle in verse 12 through 17. So our first chunk, the A here, is gonna be seven through 17. It's got a vision and an oracle.

I saw by night and behold a man riding on a red horse stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow. Behind him were horses, red, sorrel and white, red, brown and white, if you will. I said, my Lord, what are these? So the angel who talked with me said to me, I will show you what they are.

The man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, these are the ones whom the Lord has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth. So they answered the angel of the Lord who stood among the myrtle trees and said, we have walked to and fro through the earth and behold, all the earth is resting quietly. We'll talk about this in more detail.

How many people are actually standing there? What are the significance of the horses and their colors? There is meaning in every single element right down to the trees. So then beginning in verse 12, we have the oracle. The angel of the Lord answered and said, oh, Lord of hosts, how long will you not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah against which you were angry these 70 years? The Lord answered the angel who talked to me with good and comforting words.

So the angel who spoke with me said to me, proclaim saying, thus says the Lord of hosts, I am zealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great zeal. I'm exceedingly angry with the nations at ease for I was a little angry and they helped but with evil intent. Therefore, thus says the Lord, I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy.

My house shall be built in it, says the Lord of hosts and a surveyor's line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem. Again proclaim saying, thus says the Lord of hosts, my cities shall again spread out through prosperity. The Lord will again comfort Zion and will again choose Jerusalem.

As you can probably guess, these are millennial prophecies. They will be fulfilled in the

millennium. They have not been fulfilled from the day of Zechariah to this, nothing you can see in the history of Judah from the times of Zechariah in 520, 518 forward has fulfilled this.

God has never again chosen Jerusalem. He has never again had his house built in it with his glory filling it and so on. That brings us to vision number two.

And there is kind of a formula here where Zechariah says, here's what I saw. Here's the question I asked. Here's the answer that I got.

This is kind of a format for all of these visions. So he raises his eyes and looks, this corresponds to verse eight, where he says, I saw by night. Here I raised my eyes and looked, I saw four horns.

I said to the angel who talked with me, what are these? Just like in verse nine, he said, my Lord, what are these? He's asking again, what are these? So he answered me, these are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. Horns, of course, are symbols of power. What are the four powers that up to that date had scattered Judah so that no one could lift up his head? Notice it doesn't say Israel, it says Judah.

What are the horns that had scattered Judah? Do you remember the first time that Judah had to send tribute wasn't to Nebuchadnezzar or Babylon? If you remember our Kings and Prophets study, who were the first ones to put the thumb on Judah? It was Egypt. Egypt, they had to send tribute to Egypt. Then Babylon conquered Egypt and the thumb started coming from Nebuchadnezzar.

But Egypt was first. So when you start counting horns, and we'll do this when we look at the vision in detail, we'll see the entities from that time to this. You've got Egypt and Babylon and the Medes and the Persians.

So then the Lord showed me four craftsmen, four workers. Craftsman is a little bit off the mark for this word in Hebrew, we'll talk about it. But they are workers.

I said, what are these coming to do? He said, these are the horns that scattered Judah so that no one can lift up his head. But these workers and craftsmen isn't even in there, you can see your text note. These are coming to terrify them to cast out the horns of the nations that lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.

And that tells you that the horns are the nations if there was any doubt and tried to scatter Judah. So that's the second vision. There are horns and then there are workers who are going to deal with those horns.

And we'll talk about that in detail. That's the second vision. There is no oracle associated with the second vision, just the vision.

Now in chapter two, you can put a number three up beside verse one. Notice the formula, I

raised my eyes and looked and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. Vision number three.

So, Zechariah asks his formula question, where are you going? Oh, man with a measuring line in your hand. And the man with the measuring line says, to measure Jerusalem, to see how wide it is and how long it is. How wide and how long? Earthly Jerusalem.

What would you have to do to measure the heavenly Jerusalem? Got to measure two more dimensions. It's a city built four square, right? This is the earthly Jerusalem. I'm going to measure Jerusalem.

What is its width? What is its length? And there was the angel who talked with me, different individual. You got the man with the measuring line and you've got the angel who talks with me. Going out and another angel comes to meet him.

We'll keep all the personnel straight and figure out why they're there and what their function is. So this second angel comes out and talks to the first angel who's been talking to Zechariah and says, run and speak to this young man, i.e. Zechariah, the young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. I, says the Lord, will be a wall of fire all around her and I will be the glory in her midst.

Notice, this is very significant in this third vision. This is the second of the two Bs. Remember, we got an A. B is the horns, C is the measuring line and Jerusalem, the city being measured.

And this is the oracle in verses four and five. The vision is in verses one and three, one through three. Oracle is in verse four and five.

And it follows on in verse six, up, up, flee from the land of the north, says the Lord. I've spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven, says the Lord. Up, Zion, escape you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon.

Thus says the Lord of hosts. He sent me after glory to the nations which plunder you. He who touches you touches the apple of his eye.

Surely I will shake my hand against them. They shall become spoiled for their servants. Then you will know the Lord of hosts has sent me.

Similar to what God did when he delivered Israel from Egypt, the spoils of Egypt came out and back to the land of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob with the Israelites. God says, I'm gonna do that again. The spoils of the nations are gonna come back with my people.

Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion. Verse 10, for behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst. Once again, this is millennial.

I am coming, second coming. It was offered at the first coming and they missed it, but he is coming and he will dwell in their midst. Didn't dwell in their midst the first time, came and left,

but he will dwell in the midst.

Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day. That didn't happen in the first advent, the first coming, but it will happen in the second. Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day.

And they shall become my people. I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you.

And the Lord will take possession of Judah as his inheritance in the Holy land. Wanna know why they call it the Holy land? There's your verse. In the Holy land and will again choose Jerusalem.

Be silent all flesh before the Lord, for he is aroused from his Holy habitation. End of the second oracle and the third vision. Chapter three begins the fourth.

This is the vision of the high priest. And this one is different in many respects. It doesn't say I lifted up my eyes and beheld.

It doesn't say the angel said, look, what do you see? Then he showed me Joshua, the high priest, standing before the angel of the Lord and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. The Lord said to Satan, the Lord rebuke you, Satan. The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you.

Is this not a brand plucked from the fire? Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and was standing before the angel. So he answered and spoke to those who stood before him saying, take away the filthy garments from him. To him he said, see, I have removed your iniquity from you and I will clothe you with rich robes.

And I said, well, let them put a clean hat on his head. So they put a clean hat on his head and they put the clothes on him and the angel of the Lord stood by. That's the fourth vision.

Now we have the third oracle in verses six through 10. Much, much to discuss in here. I will point out to you that the angel of the Lord and the presence of Joshua here is highly significant.

We talked about this in our Kings and Prophets study. We'll review that and summarize it. But then you have the oracle beginning at verse six.

The angel of the Lord admonished Joshua saying, thus says the Lord of hosts, if you will walk in my ways and if you will keep my command, you shall judge my house and likewise have charge of my courts. I will give you places to walk among these who stand here. Here, oh Joshua, the high priest, you and your companions will sit before you for they are a wondrous sign.

For behold, I am bringing forth my servant, the branch. For behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua upon whom, upon the stone are seven eyes. I will engrave its inscription, says the Lord of hosts and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

In that day, says the Lord of hosts, everyone will invite his neighbor under his vine and under his fig tree. Oh my goodness, what an interesting chapter three is. I can't wait to get here and further excavate it.

We did a fairly light coverage when we did Kings and Prophets, but there is so much in here. It's gonna be a real labor of love to try to finish it in anything like a reasonable time. I will say this much.

The reason that Vision 4 is so different in its format and its presentation is because of its content. What is here is different and far more important. What do you know about a chiasm? The important stuff's at the center, right? Where are you in A, B, B, C, C here? We're at the first of two Cs, right? And this is all about Joshua, his dirty clothes and his hat, right? Oh my goodness, there's a lot here.

Now look at verse four. Now the angel who talked with me came back and wakened me as a man who was waking out of his sleep. This is such an important verse, I can't even tell you.

This verse is explosive. That verse we just read, explosive, dynamite, TNT in that verse right there. It's just blows my tiny mind.

My little hamster just went to sleep when he read this about him waking up out of his sleep. Think about it, it'll come to you. And he said to me, what do you see? I said, I'm looking and there's a lamp stand of solid gold with a bowl.

And the clue here, timing. Your clue for verse one, timing. Timing and content in the C and C prime here, these central two visions.

What do you see? I'm looking and there's a lamp stand of solid gold, a bowl on top of it, seven lamps, seven pipes to the seven lamps, two olive trees, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left. I answered and spoke to the angel and asked my usual question except for vision four. What are these, my Lord? The angel who talked with me answered and said to me, do you not know? Circle it.

This is a part of the explosion of verse one. Do you not know? Are you a prophet in Israel and you don't know? Have you awakened from sleep and you don't know? Do you not know what these are? I said, no, my Lord. He answered and said to me, this is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel.

Who's the figure in C, vision four? Joshua, who's the figure in C prime? Zerubbabel. Who's standing on each side of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration? Moses and Elijah. Anyway, we'll get there.

So this is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel. You've got these olive trees next to the golden lamp stand and look at these trees. These trees are not Joshua and Zerubbabel.

Many people think that. These trees are the source of oil, not its destination. Human beings like Joshua and Zerubbabel need oil flowing on them, anointing them, empowering them, enabling them.

If oil were the Holy Spirit, that would be the idea. It ought to be flowing from the lamp to the trees, right? It's going the other way. The trees are not Joshua and Zerubbabel.

And your clue here, the overt statement is right here in verse six. This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel. Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of hosts.

Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel, you will become a plain. Now, who is the one individual in all of human history before mountains turn into plains? What did John the Baptist come to do? The latter day, Elijah. What did he come to do? We'll see it in Malachi.

Prepare the way of the Lord. Straight paths, fill in the valleys, level the mountains. The mountains become plains before whom? Who do we know for sure is gonna get mountains leveled in front of them? The Lord Jesus.

So who is Zerubbabel in this vision? Jesus. C, C prime. So who is Joshua in C? Jesus.

Priest, king. Priest, ruler. Moses, Elijah.

Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. It's, this is, you can't get it all into one. Goat, so you gotta have two.

You can't get it all into one dove, so you have to have two. You can't get everything about the Lord Jesus into a single vision, so you've got to have two. And they're right at the center.

And at the center of the center is the golden lampstand with the seven bowls and the oil flowing from the source of oil, which is not human. What is the source of oil just in general? Is it human or divine? It's divine. So if you've got three elements all associated with the oil, how many members are there in God incorporated? There's your clue.

You want a good Trinity passage? You're looking at it. Anyway, we'll get there. I want to go for the big picture here and establish our chiastic structure.

Do you see the relationship between Joshua and Zerubbabel as two sides of a single coming individual who will be enabled and empowered by the Holy Spirit, who is going to be relieved of dirty clothes and given clean, who is going to have his hat changed? Right? These two individuals at the center represent aspects of the coming one. You can understand why John the Baptist in prison says, are you the one who shall come or do we look for another? Are there one Messiah or two? It would be easy to look at some of these Old Testament passages that are prefiguring Jesus Christ and say, well, maybe there's two guys. Maybe there's a Joshua and there's a Zerubbabel.

Maybe there's two olive trees that are coming, one on the right hand and one on the left. It's an

easy, you don't have to fault John the Baptist. He's up in the advanced class of theology and he's asking a really intelligent, important question to the Lord Jesus.

Are you the one that should come or do we look for another? I'm working through my Old Testament knowledge while I'm sitting here in the dungeon. And if I could just get a clue and Jesus gives him that clue, he says, go back and tell John what you've seen. And what you've seen is that the one that he himself identified as the Lamb of God is doing the works of the coming one.

So that answers his question. And John says, ah, you can freely take my head now because the answer is inside it, it's gonna go with. Anyway, that is vision number five.

This is C prime here coming back out of the chiasm in chapter four. And it ends, it's in verse one through five. And notice when Zechariah asks the question, what are these my Lord? The angel doesn't immediately answer him.

Do you not know what these are? He says, no. So he answers and now we have the oracle stuck in the middle of the vision. Usually we have vision and explanation, horns and craftsmen, these horns are nations, these craftsmen are gonna deal with these that have scattered Judah and so on, right? But here the oracle begins at verse six and interrupts the vision and its explanation.

So the oracle comes in verse six, not by might nor by power, but by my spirit who are you a mountain, you'll become a plain. Verse eight, moreover, the word of the Lord came, the hands of Zerubbabel will lay the foundation of this house, his hand shall also finish it. Who is actually going to build the house of the Lord? Who is gonna be the dwelling place for God on earth? It is the person of the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

He is the founder of the next true temple. The one that the glory of God will inhabit and shine forth from, right? So Zerubbabel clearly foreshadowing the Lord Jesus just as Joshua does in the preceding vision. His hands will finish it, then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you for who has despised the day of small things? Such a fascinating statement.

These seven rejoice to see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. Here we begin to see the stitching together of these visions. Where did we see the plumb line? That was back in vision number three, chapter two, verse one.

Remember, I saw a man with a measuring line in his hand. The plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. So now we know who the man is back in chapter two, the vision three.

They rejoice to see the hand of the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the Lord scanning to and fro throughout the whole earth. These seven, seven what? Remember back in chapter three, verse nine, there are seven eyes that are inscribed upon the stone.

There are seven bowls on the lampstand. They belong to the lampstand. They are connected to the lampstand.

All of this is gonna lay out like a beautiful, perfectly assembled puzzle when we finish. These are the eyes of the Lord scanning to and fro throughout the whole earth. So that's the oracle, verse six through 10.

Now we return to the vision. This is so great. This is just like Jairus and his daughter.

And then you have the woman with the issue of blood. You've got that sandwich that makes the whole thing make sense. You have Jairus, then you have the woman with the issue.

Then you finish up Jairus. Here you have the vision, then you have the oracle. Now you've got the rest of the vision.

What are these two olive trees, verse 11, at the right hand of the lampstand and at its left? And I further answered and said to him, what are these two olive branches that drip into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden oil drains? He answered and said to me again, do you not know? Circle it. Just like verse five, do you not know? We're stitching together our outside brackets around this great oracle. Do you not know? And he said, no, my Lord.

These are the two anointed ones who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth. Now, if I did nothing but come to you out of a clear blue sky and say, hi there, fill in your name here, who stands by the side of the Lord of the whole earth? Who would you pick? If God, the father, hint, hint, is the Lord of the whole earth, who are the anointed ones standing at his right hand and at his left? Who's seated at his right hand right now? That'll give you one of them. So who are the anointed ones? Who are the commissioned ones? Who are the ones that have been assigned a purpose by the father for all of human history in general, in this context, Israel in particular? We're talking about the Trinity, right? The Lord Jesus is Christ, the anointed one, the visible anointed one.

Who is it that is commissioned by God to provide anointing to us, to transfer heavenly things to us and things from here to heaven? He brokers our prayers. He interprets scripture for us and interprets our prayers for God, the father in heaven. So who are the two anointed ones? Does it make sense that these two trees as God's two fellow divine entities are providing the oil? They are the source of the oil.

The olive trees generate the oil, right? This is not a human source. These are divine sources. The oil can only come from divine sources.

So that may be an improvement over our last coverage we'll see. That brings us to, and so that's our fifth vision and fourth oracle, right? Now we come to the sixth vision in chapter five. I turn to raise my eyes, saw there a flying scroll.

Love the flying scroll. Twice as long as it is wide and there is a curse that goes over the face of the whole earth. Can you think of a scroll that as it unrolls unleashes curses over the whole earth? Ever heard of anything like that in the Bible? Well, it's pretty much takes up the whole

last book of the Bible, doesn't it? Break those seals, that scroll unrolls, all kinds of havoc breaks loose on the earth.

Flying scroll, what do you see? I answered, I see a flying scroll. It's twice as long as it is wide. 20 cubits long, 10 cubits wide.

This is a big scroll. 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.

Every perjurer shall be expelled according to that side of it. We've talked about this before. These are the central commandments on the two tablets of the law.

You get the idea that this is the revealed word and will of God and the curse of the law. The curse of judgment on those who are faithless and disobedient is going to come. Send out, says the Lord of hosts, it shall enter the house of the thief and the house of the one who swears falsely by my name.

Remain in the midst of the house, consume it with its timber and stones. These are representative commandments that stand for everything in the commandments of God, everything in the scroll of God. No oracle, unless you want to call verse four, the oracle, but this is really the explanation of the scroll.

It's directly related to the vision. It's the explanation of the vision. So there's no oracle with vision number six, just as there was no oracle with our vision number eight.

With our previous vision, the vision of the horns, number two, so there's no oracle associated with this. Then vision number, but this would correspond, number six is gonna correspond to number two, right? So we've got a symmetry there. Then number seven, the angel who talked with me came out and said to me, lift up your eyes and see what is this that goes forth.

I asked, what is it? We're back to this great symmetry. It is the basket going forth. This is the resemblance throughout the whole earth, a lead disc lifted up.

There's a woman inside the basket. This is wickedness. So many allusions in the revelation back here to Zechariah.

You've got an evil woman, the scarlet harlot. In revelation, this is her, this is wickedness. Thrust her down into the basket, threw the lead cover over its mouth.

Raised my eyes and looked, two women coming with the wind in their wings. They had wings like the wings of a stork. They lifted up the basket between earth and heaven.

Where are they carrying the basket? They have built, they're going to build a house for it in the land of Shinar. This is where the Tower of Babel was assembled. More about that when we cover this in detail.

So that is your seventh vision. I think I said that the sixth one corresponded to number two. It corresponds to number three.

That one corresponds to number two. Now we have number eight, which corresponds to number one. The vision of the four chariots.

Turned and raised my eyes. Look, 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, strong horses. I asked the angel, what are these, my Lord? Angel says, four spirits of heaven go out from the station before the Lord of all the earth. The one with the black horses going to the north, white going after them.

The dappled are going toward the south. Strong steeds went out eager to go that they might walk to and fro throughout the earth. He said, go walk to and fro throughout the earth.

They went to and fro throughout the earth. Very repetitious there for a reason. He called to me and said, see those who go toward the north country have given rest to my spirit in the north country.

What was the reported reconnaissance in vision number one? Everybody in the earth has rest. Now who has rest? My spirit. My spirit has rest and the nations are confounded where before the nations were at rest and the spirit of God was stirred up to remedy that situation.

Then we have this wonderful postscript that relates back to our fourth vision. The word of the Lord came and you have this vision of Joshua who gets a silver and gold crown and there is an oracle. Behold the man whose name is the branch.

And we already saw this branch back in chapter three, verse eight. This is a direct allusion back to that vision. It is an echo and a fulfillment of the things that took place.

So you've got two visions of Joshua. You've got a first one and you have a second one. Knowing who Joshua prefigures, this is not surprising.

We have a first and second coming of the Lord Jesus and this elaborate crown. And then in chapter seven, we have the book of Zechariah taking a new turn. So we have covered our eight visions.

We've seen their symmetry. We've seen an overview of the content. We've seen what a fascinating look forward.

My whole goal tonight is to show that God by moving from Haggai to Zechariah has moved from looking at the immediate situation of the earthly house in the earthly Jerusalem at the time of the return of the captives. He is now looking forward to the divinely provided house, the

divine presence, the divine time of glory and fulfillment that is future. Zechariah is no longer saying, but you didn't put enough gold on the walls.

You didn't build a nice enough altar that could have been a better implementation of the priesthood. You're not doing the sacrifices quite right. All of this is looking forward.

There is a time well before the return of God in the person of Jesus Christ to Israel. Well before that, centuries before that, there is this prophetic encouragement to begin looking for him, to begin preparing for him. That's what Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi do.

In the same way, we in this time toward the close of our own dispensation should not be living too much in this world, too invested in immediate circumstances, too bogged down by the imperfections and the inelegancies and the challenges of this life. We should lift our eyes unto the hills, the prophetic hills that remind us of the soon coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to us. Just as Israel, Judah in particular, was reminded of the soon coming of the Lord Jesus to them and the offer of the kingdom.

When it came, they weren't ready. God forbid that when the Lord Jesus comes back to prepare us for service and function in his kingdom and in the kingdom of the father, that we're not ready. These messages in Haggai and Zechariah and Malachi give us all of the encouragement, all of the means, all of the visionary motivation to do in our day and in our lives, what God through his prophets encourages his people in Judah to do in these days, preceding the first coming of the Lord Jesus.

God forbid, as in so much of Christianity, that the prophet communicating these things and these truths gets slain between the temple and the altar, utterly missing the significance of that altar and the significance of that temple. Both the altar and the temple spoke so clearly of the Lord Jesus Christ. In our day, these visions speak so clearly of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What a tragedy if we should miss it or become distracted because Nahash rears his ugly head, gets into the midst of things and offers us the kingdoms of this world by ignoring the cross and ignoring the opportunity to follow the Lord Jesus by taking up our cross, following him and arriving at his glorious destination. So it's an exciting section of scripture. I so look forward to delving into these visions again and seeing their meaning and pertinence and application for us.

And we'll begin doing that next time, but we'll close here for tonight in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the power of your word. So many have relegated the Old Testament to the dusty past and to pertinence only for Israel and miss the wonderful treasures that you have preserved for us.

And in the hands of your Holy Spirit, how dynamic and how motivating these things are for us, for understanding who we are, why we are here and where we are going. We pray that as we reflect on what we've seen in your word, that God, the Holy Spirit will illuminate it and enlighten

it and fill in those gaps in the presentation and in the communication so that each one of us can be thoroughly equipped for every good work, have our minds renewed to understand your good and acceptable and perfect will, and be ready for opportunities in this life and those in the ages to come. We pray it in Jesus' name, amen.