

PostExilicProphets 21-07-01b

Let's continue our study now. We're looking at these visions and the details, there is an enormous amount here, but the details aren't what get us through our day. It's the main idea, God's assurance to his people that he has these situations under observation.

He has a plan for dealing with them. He is taking the measure of people while these situations are in effect. You can see me going through these visions.

God knows what's going on. He's got a plan to deal with it. He is taking the measure of those of us that are in the midst of these things and deciding where our future will be played out.

Are we gonna be in the city? Now, are we living in a way that shows that that's where we want to be? If we want God's presence in the future, then we really want it now. And if we want it now, we will do what it takes to enjoy that presence and exploit it and bear fruit within it. And then this central set of visions, vision four and vision five, these are the two primary aspects of the Lord Jesus' work for Israel.

And the priestly function is what we looked at. And it moves from the aspects of Jesus' work that God wants to emphasize through Joshua. And then he moves directly to talking about the branch.

Behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua. Now, what is the stone that he has laid before Joshua? Upon the stone are seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave its inscription.

And this is what the inscription says. This is what the Lord of Hosts says. On the stone it is inscribed, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

In that day, everyone will invite his neighbor under his vine and under his fig tree. The seven eyes are speaking again of God's observation. We're going to see these eyes again here shortly.

And we're gonna save our parsing of the stone and the eyes for just a bit. Because in chapter four, where we now pick up, the angel who talked with me came back and wakened me as a man who was wakened out of his sleep. This is the most head smacking verse that I've seen since the last head smacking verse I saw a few verses up.

Is this not remarkable? And here's why. He really emphasizes that he got waked up out of sleep. He doesn't just say he came back and wakened me and behold, and it goes on to verse two.

What does he say? The angel who talked with me came back and wakened me. Came back, it's like the angel started going forward and oh, wait a minute, Zechariah fell asleep. He has to come back and kick him in the ribs like the angel with Peter in prison, wake him up.

He came back and wakened me as a man who is wakened out of his sleep. Powerful stuff here. Do you see what this is? Can you guess what this is? The key is, where are we in the chiasm?

Vision four and vision five.

Vision four is Joshua representing the high priesthood of the Lord Jesus. Vision five here, which is going to be the lampstand with the olive trees and the pipes and the oil. And it is all keyed in verse six and seven to the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel.

Who are you O great mountain before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. Vision five is Zerubbabel, vision four is Joshua. Now, without getting mired in great detail, you remember the chiasm, we're in the middle, we're at the most important thing.

Here's the high priestly function with Joshua. Now we have the lampstand and the trees and the oil and Zerubbabel, who and what is Zerubbabel? In the current time of Zachariah, he is what? What's his office? He's the governor. Why is he only governor? He can't be king because there is no throne because they have not yet been delivered in reality, right? So what is Zerubbabel's function in this vision? We find it out in the Oracle.

This vision five is all about Zerubbabel, seed of Babel, right? Zerubbabel is a word for seed, Babel, Babylon. This all has to do with the nations, with mankind in general, right? Mankind at large, all of mankind. So what would be another way of saying seed of Babel? How about son of man, son of man, right? When the son of man comes in the glory of his kingdom and all the holy angels with him, he will sit on the throne of his glory.

Matthew 24, we're coming to it in our gospel study. Son of man, the son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. He has shepherdly authority to go after the sheep of the house of Israel, not the temple house.

This is the nation house, right? Zerubbabel represents the rulership, the civil rulership, kingly authority, governor in this case, because they can't yet return to the kingly aspect. So think about this now. We know that Joshua represents Jesus.

So who does Zerubbabel represent? Jesus. Joshua is the priestly aspect. Zerubbabel is the kingly aspect, the rulership aspect, and what he is going to do with that rulership authority, specifically in Israel.

So now, why does the angel have to wake Zechariah up? Because what was Zechariah awake to see? Vision four. Didn't have to wake him up to see vision four. He was awakened around, right? And saw the priestly side of things, even contributed on the priestly side, right? Then he fell asleep.

What is sleep often a picture of in scripture? Death. Where is Israel now? The nation of Israel and the people of Old Testament Israel are sleeping in the dust of the earth, right? So to see the kingly manifestation of the Messiah, what do they have to do? They have to wake up. They've got to be resurrected.

Zechariah's awakening to me is a picture of the resurrection of the Old Testament saints at the

beginning of the millennial what? Millennial what? Kingdom. Kingdom. Kingdom.

Didn't have a kingdom when Jesus came the first time. They preached the kingdom. It was future.

It was potential. But Zechariah falls asleep right in the middle of the movie. Right in the middle of the representation of the Lord Jesus in his priesthood and his kingship, he falls asleep and has to be kicked awake.

Awaken me as a man who is sleeping has to be awakened. You get the idea. He really needed a pretty good thump.

Many Daniel says, Daniel 12, one and two, many who at that time, the prince of your people is gonna stand up and many who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake. Old Testament saints will awake. Some to glory and righteousness, others to shame and content.

They're all gonna wake up. We saw this last time. Everybody's gonna be regathered, but not everybody is gonna pass under the rod and be allowed into the kingdom proper.

I will gather them all, but they're not all going into the land. Some of them are going to be nudged aside. Why? Measuring line.

The city is only gonna be populated by people who want to be there. So now is the appointed time. Now is the day to demonstrate what kind of people we are and where we want to be so that God will apportion space for us in his heavenly eternal new Jerusalem.

We want to be there. There is nothing more devoutly to be wished, nothing. Because the relationship with God that that reflects and represents and fulfills and honors is important beyond anything.

Anything, any circumstance, any relationship, any trial, any success, anything in this life, nothing trumps living in the new Jerusalem with the lamb as its light, God on the throne, water of life coming out from under that throne through the river of life, nourishing the tree of life that gives a different fruit every month. Notice there are months. Some sort of heavenly time is going on that's different than our time.

I think in eternity, the clock is gonna run the way it did in eternity past, which explains perhaps the days of creation. It's a different kind of time, but there is time because they know that there's months and the tree of life gives out a different fruit each month. So this is critical.

That first set of visions pictured Old Testament Israel with their shortcomings, with their inability. Now, why are we so wildly more successful in our personal lives than Old Testament Israel was? What do we have that they did not have? What have we got? We have the Holy Spirit. Now, where did you see the Holy Spirit in vision number one? You didn't.

Where did you see it in, that was the horses and the myrtle trees, right? Where did you see it in

vision number two of the artisans and the horns? You didn't. Where did you see it in vision number three of the man with the measuring line? Where was the Holy Spirit? He wasn't there. Where did you see it in vision four? You got Satan, you got the angel of the Lord, you got Joshua the high priest, you got people coming and going with dirty clothes and clean clothes and hats.

You got Zachariah there. Where was the Holy Spirit? Not there. So, in case you missed it, in vision one, two, and three and four, no Holy Spirit.

Now, we're in vision five. Zachariah has awakened as out of a deep sleep. And what is the subject of this fifth vision? What do you see? I'm looking and there's a lamp stand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it.

Seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. Olive trees stood by it. One at the right of the bowl and the other at its left.

I spoke to the angel. I said, what is this? What are these? The angel who talked with me answered and said to me, do you not know? Now, think back to the previous four visions. When these visions were revealed and Zachariah was standing there, how many times did the angel say, do you not know? Never.

He never did. So, are we seeing a contrast in the after number four visions compared to the previous number four visions? Zachariah asks plenty of questions in the first four visions. The angel never says, why are you asking me this? Don't you know this already? But here, now that he's awake and he starts asking his same questions, the angel says, essentially, you should know this.

Why do you not know this? Are you a teacher in Israel and you do not know these things? Jesus to Nicodemus, John three. Are you a teacher? Are you a prophet? Are you a priest? You knew about the hat. You did great with the hat.

You're the Christ, the son of the living God. Oh, good job, Peter. My father revealed this to you.

You're blessed. Son of the living God is from a different passage, but you know what I'm talking about. Peter does well.

Five minutes later, oh Lord, you shouldn't be going to Jerusalem. Let's talk about death. You're scaring the other.

I'm strong enough to take it, but these other 11, they're kind of weak and you start talking about dying and being arrested. Far be it from you, Lord. Get thee behind me, Satan.

Zechariah does so well when he sees Joshua outfitted with the new, clean, rich robes and he says, where's his hat? And they say, you're right. And they put the hat on him. And he turns right around here and he says, I don't get the lamp and the trees and the oil and the, what is up with this? Do you not know what these are? And Zechariah does his 1 John 1, 9 and confesses

the fact that he does not know.

He should know. Now, why should he know? Revelation in scripture. Why should Nicodemus have known what Jesus meant when he said you must be born again? Jesus really kind of upbraids him, kind of rebukes him.

You're a teacher in Israel? This is baby stuff. I say that tongue in cheek. Why is it baby stuff, being born again? So do you not know? No, my Lord.

So he answered and said to me, this, what does this refer to? What's the antecedent for this? This picture, you're the prophet. I'm showing you this vision of the lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps, all of trees, one at the right hand, one at the left. This, this tableau is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, lampstand being supplied with the oil necessary to do its job.

Now, this could have been anything. If this was a humanly devised vision, I would have just said, behold, here's an olive tree. And it's like Moses with the burning bush.

It's burning with its own fuel. It's creating olive oil and thus the flame and it's the burning bush. It burns and is not consumed.

Isn't that great? This is not the vision. What is the vision? The vision is this golden lampstand. What's the most famous golden lampstand ever? They've made movies about this thing.

What's the most famous lampstand ever? More copied than any other lamp in the history of the world. It's the menorah. It's the seven branch candlestick that is in the holy place, right? And what does it represent? A little bit tougher question.

Well, let me put it this way. What is its purpose? Why is there a seven branched lamp stand in the holy place? How many windows are in the holy place? How many skylights are in the holy place? If you don't have this thing lit, you are blanketed in utter and complete darkness. And with its illumination, what does it reveal? The purpose of the lamp is revelation.

What does it reveal? You've got the table of showbread with the loaves anointed with oil. You've got the altar of incense. You've got the veil leading to the holy of holies.

It's, you've got all of the ornamentation woven into the curtains and everything. It is a means of revelation, but not outside, not in the courts, in the holy place, second only to the presence of God itself, which by the way, needs no lamp, interestingly, no seven branch lamp in the holy of holies. How did the high priest see what he was doing in there? Remember, same way in the new Jerusalem, you don't have to carry a torch, bring a torch, Jeanette Isabella, don't have to do that, why? The lamb is the light in the holy of holies, the glory of God is the light.

And you don't need to bring any flashlight in there. So as soon as you see a golden lamp stand, there's only one connection to make, right? We can get this far. This is why the angel says,

Zechariah, you're a priest for crying out loud.

Do you not know what a lamp stands for? Do you not know what this signifies? And notice he also doesn't answer the question. He doesn't explain as Jesus will do for the disciples. Well, you know, the seed is the word and what does he say? He says, look, I'm not going to explain all this.

This is the word of the Lord, who's a rubble and what does it represent? Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit says the Lord of hosts, great mountain before Zerubbabel, you're a plain, he will bring forth the capstone with shouts of grace, grace to it. Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me, verse eight and nine, the hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house. This house is which house? It is the house that we saw back in verse seven.

If you will walk in my ways and keep my command, you shall judge my house and I've charged in my courts that surround it. That's going to be the priestly job. The priest will officiate and serve and judge and walk around in the house and in the courts.

Who is going to build that house? The building of the house. Let me ask you this. When the tabernacle was created in the wilderness, did Aaron and his sons build it? Did God say, you know, the Levites are the only ones qualified to carry the ark and do this and that and offer the sacrifices.

So they will build the house. The house was built by others, right? You've got Bezalel, Aholiab, you've got the other workmen under their supervision, but the priests did not build the house. It was built for them by a different kind of function.

This is civil engineering, so to speak, right? Same thing here. Joshua, high priest, both literally and at representing the line of high priests and representing in prospect, the overarching function of the Lord Jesus himself is going to function within this house, but it is going to be built in a different way and by a different means. The Ways and Means Committee.

So not by might nor by power. The words might and power here, you can make a little note, just circle might. I won't go through the Hebrew, I will just tell you.

Might is a word associated in Hebrew with hordes, with hosts, with armies, lots of troops. Might is force of numbers. Lots of people on your side.

We can get our agenda passed because we've got the votes. We can overwhelm and take this fortress, this citadel, this hill, because we've got superior numbers. That's might.

This is numerical strength. Power is generally vested in a single individual. So this message is kind of coming backwards and it really reminds me, I think it's almost an intentional effort to tell us that we're in the mirror image of the chiasm here.

And this message is essentially backwards. Not by might nor by power, by my spirit. This is

quoted all the time.

I've quoted it as, you know, we should live in the power of God's spirit. Nothing wrong with that, but that's not what it means here. By way of application, it can mean that for us.

But what it specifically means here is Zerubbabel is supposed to do something and is going to do something. And this something that he's going to do is not going to be accomplished with hosts. And it's not going to be accomplished by personal power.

This thing that he is going to do is going to be accomplished by God's spirit. In, by, and with. This is the instrumental case in Greek.

In, by, or with. It's the word N in Greek, E-N. In, by, or with.

Sometimes all three. So what is it he's going to do? Well, he is going to have to overcome some kind of obstacle to do it. We find that in verse seven.

There is a great mountain standing in the way that needs to be leveled and become a plain. What does that remind you of? Every hill shall be made low. Every valley shall be exalted.

Every valley, remember the Messiah, Christmas in July, play the, try to play the Messiah at least once in July every year, just because I hate to only have to wait till Christmas to listen to it. Every valley will be exalted. Every mountain and hill shall be made low.

The crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain. Why? The King is coming. The Lord is coming.

The Lord will come suddenly to his temple, right? So the obstacles preventing the occupation and habitation of the temple. Notice we're not talking about a throne. We're not talking about a palace.

We're not talking about Lord of the armies. We're not talking about general of the armies. We're not talking about David going out and whipping the Philistines.

This is something that Zerubbabel in his civil government capacity is going to accomplish i.e. by authority, by the employing of workmen and so on. He's going to get this done. And there's going to be a great impediment.

There is a mountain standing in the way and that mountain is going to be removed. It will become a plain and he will bring forth the capstone. The capstone of what? This is, I was tempted to make a funny here because Joshua got a hat.

And so Zerubbabel is going to get a capstone, but this is not something he wears on his head. What is the capstone? What is the final finishing stone of? Well, keep reading. The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, i.e. God's house, the temple.

They put the word temple in your New King James, but the word is bait, it's house. His hands shall finish it. Notice, he shall bring forth the capstone.

That's what he's going to finish the house with. The stone that the builders rejected has become the head of the corner, has become the capstone, the stone the builders rejected. There's a giant stone mountain that is going to be removed out of the way so that Zerubbabel can finish this house that he laid the foundation of, and he's going to put in the capstone.

The foundation for millennial worship and opportunity for national Israel was laid by Jesus in his Zerubbabel capacity. The foundation has been laid. Remember this prophecy is given.

The foundation's been there and been sitting for a good long time, but they haven't finished the house yet. They're not going to do that until the days of really Ezra. They kind of finish it and they kind of build an altar and they kind of, kind of, kind of, kind of, they never really get it done.

Zerubbabel laid the foundation and he is going to finish it. Now, Zerubbabel's not going to live long enough to see Herod's temple in all of its glory, but in his depiction of the Lord Jesus, stay with me now, priestly side before Zacharias leaves, establishing worship. And you've got the Holy Spirit all over this thing.

There's oil, there's by my spirit, Zerubbabel is going to finish this house, not by might nor by power. That's what Jacob tried to do. I will not let you go until you bless me.

Zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. By the works of the law, no flesh is justified. What do people need? To do the will of God and to be acceptable in his sight, to come before him and worship.

Jesus told the woman at the well, what? You're worried about which mountain you're going to worship on? We're getting the mountains out of the way. It's not going to be a mountain issue. You're not going to worship at, you know, Mount Zion or Mount Gerizim.

The day is coming. What did Jesus tell that woman? They who worship him will worship him how? In spirit and in truth. Spirit, this is all about the Holy Spirit.

When does Israel get the spirit? When they wake up. What do you have in Ezekiel 36, verse 25 and following? I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and all your idols.

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you. I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And verse 27, I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and to carefully observe my ordinances.

This is not so much cause in the sense of an irresistible force. This is cause in the sense of enablement. I will enable you.

I will give you the power to walk in my statutes and carefully observe my ordinances. You've never been able to do this before because you didn't have the spirit. That's Ezekiel 36, 25 through 27.

Same thing, remember in Jeremiah 31, this is what the Lord says. And it's a long prophecy, but I'm gonna skip down to verse 23. This is Jeremiah 31, 23.

This is what the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel says. When I restore them from captivity, they will once again speak this word in the land of Judah and in its cities. May the Lord bless you, O righteous dwelling place, O holy mountain.

And Judah and all its cities will dwell together in the land, the farmers and those who move with the flocks for I will refresh the weary soul and replenish all who are weak. The English major in me reminds you there is no T in replenish. Then the next verse, verse 26.

Listen now, Jeremiah 31, 26. At this, I awoke and looked around. Promise, a future blessing and opportunity, sustenance and refreshment, right? Jeremiah gets that word from God.

And in 31, 26, at this, Jeremiah says, I awoke and looked around. My sleep had been most pleasant to me. He awakes, now he gets the rest of this prophetic word.

At this, I awoke. The days are coming, declares the Lord. Verse 27, when I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man and of beast, just as I watched over them to uproot and tear down, to demolish, to destroy and bring disaster, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, declares the Lord.

In those days, it will no longer be said the fathers ate sour grapes, the teeth of the children set on edge. Instead, each will die for his own iniquity. If anyone eats the sour grapes, his own teeth will be set on edge.

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, a covenant they broke, though I was a husband to them. This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord.

Remember, Jeremiah woke up to hear this word. I will put my law in their minds and inscribe it on their hearts. I will be their God, they will be my people.

No longer will each man teach his neighbor or his brother saying, no, the Lord, because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. I will forgive their iniquities and remember their sins no more. Taking out their heart of stone, giving them a heart of flesh.

I will put my spirit on them, Joel 2.23 and 24. I will put my spirit on them. Old men will see

visions, young men will dream dreams.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Daughters will prophesy. That was a shocker.

God can fix the gender disparity in his time and in his way, and it's done through the Holy Spirit. So what are we saying here? As we wrap up our study for this evening, this fourth and fifth vision at the center, at the center, you have the Lord Jesus having accomplished his priestly work on the cross, having donned his rich robes and his priestly turban. That's when Zechariah falls asleep.

When he wakes up, he's looking at what God is going to do in the kingdom. This is now, instead of prospect and promise, and you've got to bear with the nations that are at rest in their evil and the horns that have scattered the people of God, God is provisioning the city. He brings his priest.

Now he brings his completer of the house of God, who is going to complete it in the power of the spirit. This is why Jesus is so emphatic about, when he leaves, I will send you another comforter, the Holy Spirit of God. He will lead you into truth.

He will enable you. He will give you what you need to say. You will do what you do and greater things than I have ever done in the power of the spirit, Jesus says.

That's what is this fulfillment in the fifth vision. That's why in broad outline, there's one lampstand. What does that lampstand represent? What is supposed to shine the light of God to the world in the Old Testament day? The nation of Israel.

In John 1, and then explained in chapter two and three, I'm sorry, Revelation 1, written by John. How many lampstands do you have? Seven. Why? Instead of one lamp fed by that which the olive tree supplies in having this oil, you've got seven lampstands, the sevenfold manifestation of the spirit.

It's even called the sevenfold spirit that is before the throne, right? And so you've got the seven lampstands, God, the Holy Spirit manifesting the glory of God in seven completely unique and different situations in the church. Some of them are oppressed. Some of them are where Satan dwells, just like the priest here.

Some of them are at ease and have forgotten in their prosperity that they were once poor and miserable and blind and naked and actually still are and need to come to God for forgiveness and cleansing and salve to put on their eyes so that they can see and so on. Sevenfold spirit, but those seven lampstands, this is the representation of God in the power of the spirit on this earth. Israel was never able to do it because they never had the full or ministry of the spirit like they will have in the millennium.

That's why this comes here. This is why in front of Zerubbabel, you've got this stone with the seven eyes instead of a heart of stone, you've got a stone that's got the eyes of God on it and

the inscription that God is removing sin. The removal of sin is what makes it possible for the spirit to be present, for the lampstand to be fed with this oil.

It's the fulfillment of those promises. What does it mean for us as we go through the center of the chiasm and start coming back out? What does this tell us? Not only do we have the spiritual restoration, refreshment and opportunity that comes from the priesthood of the Lord Jesus, but the vindication and mastery of circumstances so that the dwelling of God can be with man. The Emmanuel name of the Lord Jesus can be fulfilled in us.

God with us. This is going to be literally fulfilled for Israel in the millennial kingdom. But for us now, this is why Jesus promises in the upper room when he's starting to talk about the church age for the first time, and he says, the one who has my words and keeps them, I and my father will come to him and make our home with him.

He'll already have the Holy Spirit. You've got the full-orbed presence of God. If we want it now, we will get it now in the spiritual benefit, and we will get it in the literal sense when we are ushered to our place in the capital city of God.

For Israel, it was literality, and it's going to be followed by spirituality. For us, it is spirituality, and it's going to be followed by literality. Israel had a physical kingdom, which they fumbled away and lost because they didn't get the spiritual thing straight.

If we get our spiritual priorities correct, we will enjoy the literal kingdom of the son followed by the kingdom of the father. It's the chiasm of human history reflected in the chiasm in these visions, and when we come next time, we're going to see as we move back out to vision six, seven, and eight, how this perspective solves our problems. What is going on with the flying squirrel? What is going on with the woman in the jar with the lead lid? What is up with all of that? Now, we are going to see what it means for national Israel and what it means by way of interpretation and application for us now, particularly in the ever more trying and frustrating times in which we live.

This lady under the lid is such a great figure in scripture and has so much meaning and value for us, and I can't wait to get to it. So we'll close here for tonight in a word of prayer, and we'll pick up our study next week. Father, thank you for the truth of your word.

Thank you for the promises that you have made to us guaranteed by your own character, by the presence and power of your spirit, by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. There could be no more powerful two or three witnesses than those that you have provided directly to us. We pray that as we reflect on these things that your spirit will impress them on our hearts and help us to see where in our lives they are most applicable.

Give us peace, give us strength, enable us to bear the fruit from and of your Holy Spirit in the light of what we learned from your word this evening. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.