

(Through the Bible) Zechariah 1-5

by Chuck Smith

Zechariah's prophecy calls the Israelites to return to God and promises to rebuild the temple, with a double fulfillment referring to both the past and future restoration of God's people.

Duration: 1:29:50

Scripture: Micah 4:3, Zechariah 3:1-5, Zechariah 4:1-3, Zechariah 4:6

Topics: "Through The Bible"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the second vision of the prophet Zachariah. The vision begins with Zachariah seeing a man with a measuring line in his hand, who is tasked with measuring Jerusalem. The angel explains that Jerusalem will expand beyond its walls and become inhabited by a multitude of people and animals. The vision then shifts to four horns, representing four kingdoms that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. However, the Lord shows Zachariah four carpenters who will come to carve out and remove the horns of these Gentile kingdoms. The sermon emphasizes the fulfillment of these prophecies and the constancy of God's word.

Transcript

Shall we tonight now get into our study of the book of Zechariah, beginning with chapter one. Now if you remember when we studied the book of Haggai last week, Haggai was dating his prophecies in the second year of Darius the king. And his first prophecy was in, I think, the sixth month of the second year.

He had another prophecy in the seventh month, and his last prophecy was in the ninth month. Now Zechariah also dates his prophecies in the reign of Darius, the Medo-Persian king. And so between, and at the same time that Haggai was prophesying, you remember he prophesied in the seventh month and the ninth month.

In the eighth month, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah. The eighth month in the second year of Darius. So Zechariah and Haggai were contemporaries.

They were both prophets of the post-exilic period. The children of Israel had returned, that is a portion of them, 50,000 of them, from their exile in Babylon. Seventy years of Babylonian captivity had more or less weaned them from their idolatry, for it was because of the idolatry that they went into captivity.

But the Jews learned something in Babylon of commercialism. It seems that the Jewish people are very adaptable. And whatever they do, they learn to do it well.

Babylon was the commercial center of the world. And when the Jews were taken captive to Babylon, they began to go from the agrarian culture to a more commercial. And they began to excel in the commercial field so much so that by the time the 70 years of captivity was over, many of them had no desire to return to the land at all.

They were now wealthy merchants. They controlled the commerce of Babylon. And they had learned well the lessons of commerce, and they have not forgotten them.

And still are very successful many times in the commercial field. It is interesting that when the nation Israel was reborn, and the people went back to the land, that these people who had excelled so much in the commercial field, wherever they went in the world, they were always involved in commerce. But when they returned back to the land, many of them returned to the soil, and some of the most advanced agricultural techniques in the world are now being practiced in Israel, and they teach the world the art of agriculture.

Now, here were a bunch of bankers and businessmen and store owners and all. They go back to Israel, and they go back to the farm, and it isn't long before they've developed the drip system of irrigation. They've developed the sprinkling system of irrigation, and they've begun to farm the desert, and they have become extremely profitable now in their farming interests, and they actually fill Europe with fresh fruit and vegetables all year round.

So, they are a fascinating people. And they were so successful, as I said, in their commercial ventures, that many of them did not return. And this will be brought out in some of the prophecies here in Zechariah.

But those that did return were not really prepared for what they found. You know, it is interesting when you leave a place, so often in your mind you have memories of that place, and usually it was when you were a child, you grew up in a particular locality. And there always seems to be within the heart of a person a yearning to return to the place of your childhood.

And, oh, it was this, and it was that, and, you know, you've built it up in your mind over the years of absence. But sometimes one of the most disillusioning and disappointing things can be to go back to the place of your childhood, especially in these days, and especially if your childhood was in Orange County. And you find the whole place has changed.

It's not as old as you remember it, where you used to go hunting for cottontail and all. Now there are busy shopping centers, and the whole thing has changed. Those who returned came back to a desolation like they never dreamed.

The destruction of Jerusalem was so thorough by Nebuchadnezzar that there wasn't any rebuilding, really, of the city. All they could do was cover the rubble and the waste of the past and start building anew on top of it. They started the rebuilding of the temple, but they soon became discouraged.

When Solomon built the temple, he had hired 150,000 men with 3,000 superintendents and an unlimited supply of money. And he was able to build a beautiful, glorious temple unto the Lord, which was one of the sights of the ancient world. The Queen of Sheba, when she came and saw it, she said, Oh, I heard of the glory, but the half was not told to me.

He used great stones, cedars from Lebanon, covered everything with gold. But of course, the gold was taken by Nebuchadnezzar. The huge brass pillars were broken up and taken to Babylon.

And all that was left were these huge stones that they could hardly move around. And after a time of attempting to build the temple, there were a lot of people that were there in the land that were harassing them, and they finally just gave up. They just felt, can't be done.

We're just not strong enough. There's not enough of us. And they just, they just gave up the attempts to build the temple.

That's when Haggai started getting on them. Hey, you people look around. Check things out.

Your crops been bad? You're planting a lot of seed? Harvesting a little? Does it seem like your purses have holes in the bottom? Your money is just disappearing. The reason why is that you are dwelling comfortably now in your sealed houses while the house of God lies desolate. And Haggai was encouraging them to get back to the building of the temple, promising them that when they would, that God would begin to bless them.

Mark this date, put it on your calendar, and see if from this time God doesn't begin to bless you as you return to the work of building his house. So at that same time, Zachariah came on the scene. Zachariah was probably a young man at the time that he prophesied.

Zachariah, of the minor prophets, has the clearest insight concerning the coming of Jesus Christ than any of the other minor prophets and writes more concerning Jesus Christ than all of the rest of the minor prophets combined. And as we get into Zachariah, you'll be amazed at his prophecies concerning Jesus Christ, both the first and the second coming. Zachariah makes some amazing predictions that we will be getting in our third study and final study of the book.

Predictions that are coming to pass right now. Predictions that have come to pass in the last few years. And as we read them, you'll see how clearly God gave him an insight into the history of the nation of Israel at the present time.

So let's get into Zachariah. The eighth month, the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord into Zachariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddu, or Iddu, the prophet, saying, The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore, say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, And I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts.

This basically is God's message to the people through the ages. If you'll turn to me, I will turn to you. When the king Asa had come back from great victory over the Ethiopians and the Nubians, the prophet of God came out to meet him and he said, The Lord is with you while you are with Him, and if you seek Him, He will be found of you.

But if you forsake Him, He will forsake you. Through the ages. This is always the case.

God is always waiting for man to come. And if you will come to God, you can have fellowship with God and the Lord will be with you. But the Lord does not force Himself on people.

God does not force you to love Him. God does not force you to come to Him. He does not force you to serve Him.

He just tells you of His love for you and because of His love for you, this is what He will do for you if you're walking in fellowship with Him. But when it comes right down to it, you are the one that has to make the decision. God has done all that He will do to save you.

He has provided all that you need. But you must initiate now. God has already done all the initiating He will.

In providing the way. And now He waits for you to come. And He invites you to come.

But you have to do it. So, turn to Me, saith the Lord, and I will turn to you. Your fathers, they forsook Me.

I was displeased with your fathers. But now if you'll just turn to Me, I'll turn to you. Don't be as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets cried.

Thus saith the Lord of hosts, turn ye now from your evil ways and from your evil doings. That's what they were crying to their fathers, but their fathers did not turn. They did not hear nor hearken unto Me, saith the Lord.

And your fathers, where are they? Learn a lesson. Your fathers perished because they did not turn to Me. Your fathers were carried away to Babylon because they would not turn to Me.

But My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants, the prophets, they did not take hold of your fathers. Your fathers wouldn't listen. And they returned and said, like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us according to our ways and according to our doings, so hath He dealt with us.

So that which the prophets had warned them would happen, did happen. They were defeated. They were carried away captives.

Now, the first of the ten visions that Zechariah received. A vision is similar to a dream with the exception that you are awake and conscious that you are awake when you have a vision. But it is much like a dream in that you have a picture in your mind of things like you do in a dream.

But as a dream is so often disjointed and seemingly unrelated, so with visions, in God communicating to men through dreams, there needed to be the interpretation of the dream because the dream was in symbols and thus needed interpretation. So with visions, so often, they are in symbolic form and a vision must be interpreted. Now, with Zechariah, the Lord gave him the visions and in many places gave him also the interpretation.

The Lord said, Do you understand that Zechariah? He said, No, I don't. What's it mean? You don't know what it means? Nope, tell me. And so the Lord would have to interpret for Zechariah the visions that he saw.

So, wherever God interpreted, then we understand the visions. Where God did not interpret, we can only guess. However, with parables, allegories, dreams, and visions, there is what is known as expositional constancy.

Now that is a word of hermeneutics that I don't expect you to remember. But what it means is that in an allegory, in a parable, in a vision, in a dream, where you have symbolic language, if, for instance, in parables, where the Lord is explaining the parable of the field and the types of seed that were planted in it, He said, Now the seed is the word of God and the field is the world. And the bird is the enemy who comes

and plucks up the seed.

So, in parables, allegories, visions, dreams, wherever you find the field, the field represents the world. Wherever you find birds, they are always in a bad sense. Wherever you find the seed being planted, that is the word of God.

And thus, oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, as the dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. And there are those what are called expositional constancies. That is, wherever they are used in an allegorical form, it remains through the whole Bible so that if you are trying to understand a parable or an allegory or a vision and you are dealing with an oil, you are dealing with a subject of the Holy Spirit.

If you are dealing with birds, you are dealing with the enemy to the true child of God. Where you are dealing with the field, you are dealing with the world. So, expositional constancy.

Now, on the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the second year of Darius, there came the word of the Lord to Zechariah, the son of Barakiah, the son of Edu, the prophet saying, I saw at night, and behold there was a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom, and behind him there were, there were there red horses, speckled and white horses, so different horses behind him. So, here is a man riding a red horse and horses behind him and he is standing there under the myrtle trees. Then said I, and I would have said the same thing, Oh my Lord, what is this? You know, because just from the outset you see a vision of this guy sitting on a horse and these other horses behind him under the myrtle trees and what can you make of that? Now, there is a type of sermonizing which I do not follow nor do I advocate.

And that is the spiritualizing of a text in order to interpret it. Where a person will take a parable for instance and he will make every part of that parable symbolic and this is like and this and he preaches his sermon using the parable as the basis for the sermon. Just this represents and this represents and this represents and you are spiritualizing the whole thing.

The Bible does not say that it represents those things but you can actually get good sermons out of the parables if you will spiritualize them because you can make them say anything you want them to say. But you really do not have real solid teaching of the Word of God but there are many who do follow that practice of just spiritualizing things. But really if you do that you can also if you run out of parables use the Three Little Pigs and preach a tremendous sermon from the Three Little Pigs and the importance of building a strong house.

One that will stand because the devil will huff and puff and blow your house down if you have not really built a strong house and so you need to build a house of faith mingled with the Word of God and you know the bricks and the mortar and I mean you can go on and on you know with these things and you can spiritualize almost anything and read into it whatever you want. As I say I do not practice that kind of preaching because if I did not have the interpretation of this rider on a red horse with the speckled and white and red horses behind him I'm sure that I never would have come to what it is. And so Zechariah when he saw the thing very wisely said What in the world is this? And the angel that talked with me said unto me I will show you what this is.

And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees and said We have walked to and fro through the earth and behold all the earth sitteth still and

is at rest. Now the children of Israel at this time have been dispersed through the whole earth.

And so these who were sent more or less to oversee and to see the conditions of the earth and they came back and reported everything is at rest and peaceful throughout the earth. Now here were God's people scattered, dispersed and the world was resting and happy with that fact and so God was displeased with the treatment of His people that they were receiving through the world. Then the angel of the Lord answered and said O Lord of hosts how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah against which you have had indignation these seventy years.

And the Lord answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words. So the angel said to him Lord how long until you have mercy on Jerusalem and on Judah how long O Lord are the people going to be dispersed and scattered. And the Lord talked with him and I love this with good words and with comfortable words.

It seems whenever we're distressed and we come to the Lord He is so patient with us and I've always found that He talks with me with good words and with comfortable words. Oh what comfort. So the angel that communed with me said unto me cry thou saying thus saith the Lord of hosts I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy and I am very displeased with the heathen that are at ease for I was just a little displeased and they helped to forward the affliction.

In other words God was using the nations as an instrument of judgment against Israel but they in their destruction went beyond and therefore thus saith the Lord I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies my house shall be built in it saith the Lord of hosts and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem and so the Lord promises that the house will be built. Now they who had been working on it were convinced this time it wouldn't be built too much can't do it the job is too big it's too great but the Lord is here declaring the house will be built. Now there is yet another temple to be built and this prophecy not only dealt with the times then but has a double fulfillment because again the Lord has declared that his house will be built in Jerusalem and there will be definitely a temple built again in Jerusalem.

In the 11th chapter of the book of Revelation John is given a ruler and he is told to measure the temple and the courts. Now this is during the period of the great tribulation so I expect work to start most any time on the new temple in Jerusalem. The house of the Lord will be built in Jerusalem he promised and he said cry yet saying thus saith the Lord of hosts my cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion and shall yet choose Jerusalem though at this time Jerusalem was such a rubble such a wasted weight ruin yet the Lord promises the rebuilding.

Now the second of his visions then I lifted up my eyes and saw and behold there were four horns and I said unto the angel that talked with me what are these? And he answered me these are the horns which have scattered Judah Israel and Jerusalem.

Now the four horns represent four kingdoms for the horns symbolically are representing kings or powers and they are equivalent to the four metals in the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream or the four beasts of Daniel's dream the four kingdoms by which Israel was dispersed into the world beginning with the Babylonian kingdom and then the Medo-Persian Empire and then the Grecian Empire and finally the Roman Empire these nations under which God's people suffered and then the Lord showed me four carpenters now his visions are flipping from one to another first the red horse with a rider on it and the other horses under the myrtle trees and then the next thing I saw were these four horns now what can you make out of four horns so the Lord told him or the angel told him what was and now the

third vision the Lord showed me four carpenters or literally hewers or carvers then I said what come these to do what are these guys coming to do Lord and he spoke to me saying these are the horns which have scattered Judah so that no man did lift up his head but these are coming to fray them to carve them up to cast out the horns of the Gentiles which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it and so those carvers that are coming to fray the kingdoms that scattered God's people chapter two the next vision the fourth in the series of ten I lifted up my eyes again and I looked and behold there was a man with a measuring line in his hand he had a ruler I said where are you going and he said to me to measure Jerusalem to see what is the breadth thereof and what is the length

thereof and behold the angel that talked with me went forth and another angel went out to meet him and he said unto him run and speak to this young man calling Zechariah a young man and that is why I said he was probably a young man when he prophesied he said run and speak to this young man saying Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein in other words Jerusalem is going to grow far beyond the boundaries of the walls now if you go to Jerusalem today you find that this prophecy is fulfilled it wasn't really fulfilled until more recent years until really the last century but Jerusalem has expanded tremendously in fact there are new settlements in Jerusalem way out towards the city of Jericho probably 8 miles out of the center of

Jerusalem new settlements huge settlements Jerusalem has new settlements almost to Bethlehem they have settlements almost to Ramallah Jerusalem has expanded her borders tremendously and so this prophecy of Zechariah was not really fulfilled until our day and you can go over now and see how it is being fulfilled even now for I saith the Lord will be unto her a wall of fire round about in other words they will expand from the walls and the walled city of Jerusalem is now just a small little portion there in the center and it comprises just a little area of about one square mile where I would imagine that the city limits of Jerusalem proper now are probably somewhere in the neighborhood of 150 to 200 square miles as it has expanded so large so the Lord said I will be a wall of fire around

them they won't have to build a wall around it for I will be the wall of fire round about and I will be the glory in the midst of her of course that has not yet taken place will not take place until Jesus comes again that is his being the glory in the midst of her ho ho come forth and flee from the land of the north saith the Lord for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heavens saith the Lord so he speaks of their dispersion he spread them abroad as the four winds now in the New Testament Matthew chapter 24 when the disciples asked Jesus what will be the sign of your coming and the end of the age Jesus began to tell them the various signs to look for and incidentally it just so happens that one of the signs that Jesus spoke about took up a full page ad in today's LA Times

for one of the signs Jesus said that there will be false Christ who will be coming and in the LA Times today there was a full page ad and in the major newspapers around the world these full page ads were run proclaiming that the new Christ is now here and will be revealing himself to the world in two months in a worldwide telecast to be broadcast simultaneously throughout the entire world by satellite and he is going to bring in the new era of peace and prosperity for all mankind and that everybody around the world will understand his speech by mental telepathy so that it doesn't matter what language you speak you will understand him as he is speaking because through mental telepathy his speech will be translated into your language and you will think that he is speaking English because

you will understand him as though he were so far this group has spent about twenty million dollars in advertising the Messiah or they call him the Christ who will be revealing himself now in two months to the

world now Jesus said there will be false Christ and they will say lo he is here or lo he is there or he is in a secret place and of course right now the paper said he is at this moment in a secret place and nobody knows who he is except the few chosen people that he has decided to reveal himself to but he is already a world leader he already has spoken out on national issues and the world has been listening to him but he will reveal his true identity in two months to the whole world now and then Jesus said and then shall they gather together his elect from the four corners of the

earth now those people who declare that the rapture of the church will take place after the great tribulation use this as one of their key proof text that the Lord gathers together his elect from the four corners of the earth after he returns in power and great glory but here in Zechariah we find that those elect that God will be gathering together from the four winds of the earth are actually the nation Israel not the church and that is also confirmed by parallel prophecies in Isaiah so the Lord is saying come forth now there are thousands of Jews in Russia today wanting to immigrate to Israel but of course at the present time Russia has a very restricted quota against them and has been holding them back but God says oh oh let them go and they will flee from the land of the north as God

has spread them to the four winds of the heavens deliver thyself oh Zion that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon that is deliver yourself out of that commercialism into which you have fallen now in the book of Revelation God expresses his anger against commercialism as we know it that has been guilty of enslaving the souls of men those who have been taking advantage of other people and taking more profit than is necessary from their products and God speaks of the destruction of that commercial Babylonian system in Revelation chapter 18 chapter 17 is the destruction of the religious Babylonian system chapter 18 the destruction of the commercial Babylonian system now in Revelation when he speaks of the commercial he said come out of her my people that is the same thing that he is saying

here calling his people to come out from that Babylon commercial system for thus saith the Lord of hosts after the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you for he that touches you touches the apple of his eye now God is saying that concerning the Jewish people and I don't know what your particular opinion of the Jews may be but if you touch them you are touching the apple of God's eye now because I have taken a supportive position towards the Jews and towards Israel because I come from a biblical base you would be amazed at the mail that I get and how many ministers even write to me and castigate me for my pro-Israel stance and I get hate mail all the time because of my support for the Jews and the nation of Israel but I do believe that God said he will bless those that

bless them and curse those that curse them and the Lord said if you touch them you are touching the apple of my eye yes I know that they have turned their backs upon God yes I know that they have been guilty of corrupting the morals of the world I know that they have controlled Hollywood and I know that they have controlled a lot of things that have brought corruption into the world and yet I know that God has chosen them and you just better not touch them now a lot of people have become extremely angry because of the dealings that they have had where they have been taken and there are a lot of people that just have a bitterness towards the Jewish people but don't touch them for the Lord said you are touching the apple of his eye for behold I will shake my hand upon them and they shall be

a spoil to their servants and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me and turning to Israel he said sing and rejoice oh daughter of Zion for lo I come and I will dwell in the midst of thee saith the Lord a glorious prophecy of the second coming of Jesus Christ and they are exhorted to sing and rejoice because the Lord is going to come and dwell in the midst of them and many nations shall be joined to the Lord in

that day and shall be my people and I will dwell in the midst of thee and thou shalt know the Lord of hosts has sent me unto thee and the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the Holy Land and shall choose Jerusalem again be silent oh all flesh before the Lord for he is raised up out of his holy habitation so according to the scriptures Jesus is going to come again and

he's going to dwell upon the earth for a thousand years he's going to reign over the earth during this time and he will set his throne in Jerusalem and Judah the area of Judah will be his portion and it says the kings of the earth will come annually and present their gifts unto him and he will be the Lord over the earth at that time and the peoples of the world will worship him now in that glorious kingdom age we will be here to live and reign with Christ for a thousand years in fact in the book of Revelation it says unto him who has loved us and washed us with his blood and who has made us kings and priests unto God and then in the fifth chapter of the Revelation when we are singing praises unto the Lamb for his worthiness to take the scroll and loose the seals because he was slain and

has redeemed us by his blood and the song goes on to say and we shall reign with him and has made us kings and priests unto our God and we shall reign with him upon the earth so when you read of the kings of the earth coming and presenting their gifts unto the Lord in the kingdom age that's you that it's talking about annually we'll have a great tour to Jerusalem as we gather together from all over the world I'll come from Hawaii tell the Lord well things are going pretty well there on Maui Lord got things under control great worship services keep the surf up but the kings of the earth gathering and how glorious that's going to be when the Lord reigns over the earth and righteousness covers the earth as the waters cover the sea you know if you miss that you miss the whole reason for

living you miss the whole purpose of life the purpose of your being here is that you might come to know Jesus Christ now as your Lord and as your King in order that loving him living for him and serving him now you might continue loving him living for him and serving him forever that's why you're here if you miss knowing the Lord now you've missed the whole purpose of life and your life is in vain it's empty it's worthless and so many people have wasted their lives because they live for the present pleasures for the present glories for the present age and they haven't taken eternity into view at all now the fifth vision the Lord showed him Joshua now Joshua was the high priest who along with Zerubbabel a priest was in charge of the rebuilding of the temple stood side by side with

Zerubbabel he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord and Satan was standing at his right hand to resist him Satan is seeking to resist you from whatever work you may desire to do for the Lord or be called to do for the Lord and the Lord said unto Satan the Lord rebuke thee oh Satan even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke you now I do feel that in the scriptures we do have a pattern when we are dealing with Satan and that is of not directly dealing with him I have heard people say I rebuke you Satan and every time I hear them say that I shudder because I am certain that he is saying Paul I know Jesus I know who are you it is interesting in the book of Jude we are told that when Michael who is one of the chief angels of heaven when he was disputing

with Satan over the body of Moses Satan was probably wanting to desecrate the body of Moses and Michael was standing there and they were disputing over the body they were fighting over the body of Moses that Michael did not bring any railing accusations against Satan he didn't rail on him but Michael this archangel said the Lord rebuke thee Michael didn't say I rebuke you but he said the Lord rebuke you here when he saw Satan standing at the right hand of Joshua the high priest seeking to resist him and Joshua was standing before the angel of the Lord that the Lord said unto Satan the Lord rebuke you and

so I think that if you are going to be rebuking Satan that is the way you should do it that rather than saying I rebuke you Satan or even I rebuke you in the name of Jesus I think that

you would be better off to just say the Lord rebuke you Satan in the name of Jesus I always like to keep the Lord between me and Satan I feel so much safer when I do the Lord rebuke thee oh Satan even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee is not this a brand plucked out of the fire referring actually to Satan he is like a brand a coal a live coal that has been plucked out of the fire now the Bible uses this phrase in the New Testament as far as our winning some of the lost that we in winning the lost are plucking coals right out of the fire and there are people that are almost in hell and by our bringing the glorious news of Jesus Christ and their reception of it they are like brands plucked out of the fire now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments now here is the high priest

clothed with filthy garments as he stood before the angel now in the scripture garments are representative of a person's righteousness and filthy garments represent a person's self righteousness or that righteousness that you have created for yourself by your own good works Paul speaks about his endeavors under the law in Philippians chapter 2 and in speaking of all of his adherence to the law he said those things which were gained to me I counted lost for the righteousness of Jesus Christ for whom I suffered the loss of all things and do count them as refuse that I may know him and be found in him not having my own righteousness which is of the law but the righteousness which is of Christ through faith so here was Joshua standing there before the Lord in filthy garments Jeremiah said our

righteousness is as filthy rags in the eyes of the Lord how crass can we be trying to present ourselves to God in our own righteousness well Lord here I am let me tell you what I've done for you this week sit down Lord let me brag a bit you know and I'm trying to present myself to God in my righteousness and there as filthy rags in his sight in the book of Revelation John sees the saints of God clothed in fine linen pure and clean and the fine linen, the white linen is the righteousness of the saints but what is the righteousness of the saints it is that which God has imputed to you because you have believed in his son Jesus Christ now if I can be clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ then it's sheer stupidity for me to try to come before God in my righteousness and in my goodness

that just doesn't make sense when God is willing to accept me in the righteousness of Jesus Christ it's absolute folly for me to try to present to God my own righteousness so he answered and spake unto those that stood before him saying this is the angel of the Lord take away the filthy garments from him and unto him he said behold I have caused your iniquity to pass from thee and I will clothe you with a change of raiment oh what a glorious day that was when God did that for me standing before the Lord he said take off his filthy garments and then he said behold I'm going to clothe you with new raiment the righteousness of Christ in which I am clothed tonight through my faith in Jesus Christ oh I'll tell you this was one of the most glorious experiences in my whole Christian walk and it

came to me right out of Romans and we're in that book right now on Thursday nights if you want to get rid of your old rags I invite you to come out to Thursday night studies and I said let them set a fair mitre or crown upon his head so they set a fair mitre upon his head and they clothed him with garments and the angel of the Lord stood by and the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua saying thus saith the Lord of hosts if you will walk in my ways and if you will keep my charge then you shall also judge my house and shall also keep my courts and I will give thee places to walk among these that are standing by so walk in my ways do my charge do my work and you can dwell in my courts and judge there now the sixth vision here now oh Joshua the high priest you and all of your fellows that

sit before you for they are men wondered at for behold I will bring forth my servant the branch and here we have now the prophecy of Jesus Christ in Jeremiah and in Isaiah Jesus is referred to as the branch the righteous branch that shall come out of the root of Jesse Jesus Christ I am going to bring forth my servant the branch for behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua upon one stone shall be seven eyes behold I will engrave the graving thereof saith the Lord of hosts and I will remove iniquity of the land in one day and in that day saith the Lord of hosts shall ye call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree looking on into the glorious kingdom age when Jesus comes again the branch and establishes his kingdom and the iniquity will be purged in a day and the

Lord will reign and every man neath his vine and fig tree shall live in peace and be not afraid and they will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks now the angel that talked with me came again and he walked and he waked me as a man that is wakened out of his sleep and he said unto me what do you see and I said I have looked and behold there is a candlestick of gold and there is a bowl on the top of it and there are seven lamps and the seven pipes are leading to the seven lamps which are upon the top of it and there are two olive trees by it the one upon the right side of the bowl and the other upon the left side so I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me saying what are these my Lord and the angel that talked with me said don't you know what

these are and I said no my Lord and he answered and spake unto me saying this is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel saying not by might nor by power but by my spirit saith the Lord of hosts who art thou O great mountain for before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof shouting grace, grace unto it so this next vision is like a Rube Goldberg contraption one of the jobs of the priest was to daily fill the cups of the menorah, the lampstand, the golden lampstand in the tabernacle with oil because God commanded that the light should never go out the golden lampstand within the tabernacle was a symbol that Israel was to be the light of the world or that God would through them shine forth his light to the world even as Jesus said to the church you

are the light of the world the city set on the hill cannot be hid neither do men light a candle to put on their bushes but on the candlestick that it might give light unto all that are in the house so let your light so shine before men that when they see your good works they'll glorify your father which is in heaven God's people he has always intended to be a light in this dark world and that is why God said don't ever let the light go out so everyday the priest had to pour the oil into these cups and any task that you do everyday can get monotonous dishes, diapers, whatever when you do it everyday it can become tedious and so man is always using his inventive mind to get out of work and we are always figuring out contraptions by which we can make our work a little easier isn't that true?

you're working on some kind of job and you think well now if I did this and fasten this here I can make this and always make it a little easier so Zachariah being a priest was struck with this brilliant idea he said if there were just plumbing pipes connected to the olive trees that would go right into the bowls then the oil could flow right out through these pipes and keep the bowls full there would be a constant supply of oil and so when Zachariah saw this contraption with the pipes coming from the olive trees into the bowls he said what in the world is this? constant supply of oil never running out of oil the Lord said don't you know what this is? no this is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel saying it's not by might nor by power but by my spirit sayeth the Lord now in allegories,

parables dreams, visions oil is always symbolic of the Holy Spirit that is why the Lord said it's by my spirit sayeth the Lord that is there is a constant source available of power for you through the Spirit and the work

of God for the filling of the oil and so forth was the work of the Lord assigned to the priest but the work of God is not to be accomplished by might or by power but the work of God can only be accomplished by the Spirit of the Lord therefore it is extremely important before we engage in any work for God that we seek to discover the leading of the Spirit the secret to any successful work for Jesus Christ is discover how the Spirit is moving and move with the Spirit for it is not by might nor by power the word might is the assembling of armies the organizing of forces or

committees to organize forces the word power is the word force itself now we see so many people trying to force the work of God trying to force the gospel down their friends trying to force the issues I've often said to people who have asked me concerning how can you know the leading of the Lord and how can you know what God wants to do I've said God so often leads us through open doors and if God opens a door go through it but if He closes it don't break it down that's where we make our mistake so often we think oh God wants me to do this and a door will close and I'll say alright I'll bash that one down and I'm going to push it through I'm going to make it go and more energy and effort and money has been spent in trying to make a dead program go I spoke a few years ago in Lubbock Texas

at a Southern Baptist Church Pastor Jones back there and he said you know I came to the place in my ministry when I was so tired of pushing a program we decided that we weren't going to give artificial support to any more programs in the church if it didn't run on its own initiative we were going to let it die a decent death and he said you'd be amazed at how many things have died around here just not going to push programs anymore we're just going to let the spirit operate and govern in the church that which He wants and if it doesn't run on its own initiative we're just going to let it die with dignity their Sunday school even died I said well what about that he said great we love it they've gone to junior churches and all but it's I think legitimate I think that the church has made a

terrible mistake in trying to push programs trying to force a program to work trying to organize and mobilize the forces to get the work of God done it's not by might nor by power but by my spirit saith the Lord of hosts when we had built a little chapel a block away and things were going great into triple services had enlarged the sanctuary putting 500 chairs out in the patio and the place was just jammed all three services on Sunday morning we were faced with a dilemma winter was coming what are we going to do fellow in the church said well he said I was with the syndicate we bought 10 acres over on Fairview and we've just lost it he said we've been trying to make deals on it for years nothing works he said I believe that God wants that for the church I think that's why the Lord had me

go with the syndicate to just hold the thing four years ago so that the church could have it and he said I would be very glad to just accept my losses if the church got that 10 acres he said we just couldn't keep up the payments anymore in fact they took a four year note from the lady who owned it and the four years had come due and they just didn't have the money to go on they had purchased it four years earlier for \$456,000 and I said well we don't have that kind of money there's no way we can afford 10 acres then I got to thinking well let's see if we sold off 5 acres we could probably get our money back if we could buy it for a decent price if we could say move into what their position was even and buy it for \$456,000 maybe we could sell off half of it and all we need is 500 that's

500 more than we'd ever need for our church I had tremendous faith one of the fellows in the church then I dismissed it oh that's just too much money we just don't have it we can't do it you know you can't borrow churches have difficult time borrowing money so a fellow in the church came to me and he said I believe that the woman who owns that property would sell it for \$300,000 cash he said you see her taxes have

lapsed and she's been living off of the money the interest that these guys have been paying her and now that she doesn't have the money coming in she's in bad shape and actually the taxes are due and she can't pay them I think she'd take \$300,000 cash just to get out of it and that will last her well for the rest of her life because she's in her late seventies I said oh she'd

never take \$300,000 cash she'd just foreclose on a \$456,000 note and they bought it four years ago the price has gone way up since then he said would you give me the permission to offer her \$300,000 cash in the name of the church I said sure of course foolish man and he called me up on the phone all excited he said she accepted it I said great what do we do now where do we get \$300,000 cash he said well he said I have a note that I think she'll take it's a first trust deed on some apartments and it's for \$90,000 and I'd be glad to loan that to the church for one year interest free the church had \$60,000 in the bank and he said I think the savings and loan because it's such a good buy will loan you half of it on a property loan for two years so we went down to the savings and loan and it

was such a good buy they said yes they would loan us \$150,000 for two years and 11% interest so we bought it now this was obligating us pretty heavy because this was just bare farmland at that time and we knew that we had to put parking lot we had to put street improvements on sunflower boulevard sidewalks over there we had to put you know we had to put the buildings in and everything and we knew it was going to run a parcel of money and so I would drive home from church coming up sunflower avenue here and I'd park at the left turn signal to go on down Fairview and I would look over at this bare 10 acres and I'd start getting heart palpitations and I'd say Chuck what are you doing obligating those people for that property and the purchase of the property is just the beginning what are you

getting yourself into and I begin to think I wonder if we can back out of it I wonder if there's something we can do to get out of it what am I doing what am I doing you know and I just would start getting frantic thinking about the money that was going to be needed for all of this and as I was sitting there my palms would begin to sweat and I'd think oh please light turn green I can't stand this I can't stand looking at that property over there it's wiping me out and the Lord would speak to me and he'd say whose church is it I said it's your church Lord he said then what are you worried about if it's my church what does it matter to you if it goes broke what difference does that make to you if it's my church I said well we don't know Lord I guess it doesn't make any difference your

church fine you created the problem take care of it and by the time I'd hit the San Diego freeway I had such glorious victory just praising the Lord for his church I was driving up the street parked at the corner looking over here and the first payment was coming due on the we were paying interest only on the \$150,000 that we borrowed in the same amount and it was \$1100 a month which wasn't bad at all and it was well within our budget we could handle it and I said Lord it's your church huh do you think that's a wise way to spend your money what are you getting from that that's just interest Lord that's just going right into their coffer and you're not going to even see that again do you think that's a wise way to spend your money Lord as long as it's your church why don't you pay off the

\$150,000 you ought to be able to do that and I got home and my wife said honey Ed Riddle called why don't you call him back Ed Riddle was the realtor who was in the syndicate that bought the property and lost it told us about it so I called Ed he said Chuck he said I just got a call from Shell Oil Company he said they looked on the records and they thought our syndicate still owned the property and they want to buy the corner for \$150,000 he said you suppose the church would be interested in selling off the corner for \$150,000 you notice the Shell station on the corner I'll tell you after that I didn't worry again his church and

he's been doing a fantastic job taking care of it and it makes it so easy for me because I can just kick back and watch the Lord develop his church because it's

not by might not by our organized efforts it's not by our forcing issues driving and forcing it but it's just the glorious power of the Holy Spirit by my spirit saith the Lord of Hosts and the mountains they'll become a plain before Zerubbabel those mountains will disappear those mountains will just level right out before him and you know it's glorious the way the Lord can level the mountains before him it's interesting that so much of our worry is about things that are yet in the future yes I've got enough for today but oh I don't know what I'm going to do next week you know God's taking care of me up till now I'm here God's taking care of me up till now but it's not right now I'm worried about I'm worried about next week next month but it's interesting that so often those things that we

spend so much time worrying about by the time we arrive there the mountain has already been removed and it's just a plain it's flat land how God can remove the mountains before us it's glorious when the Spirit of God is working in your life now with Zerubbabel the word of the Lord it was a word of encouragement he had been discouraged in the building of the temple he had given up they had quit can't be done they had organized the men they had organized the efforts they had men that were in charge of cleaning up debris men that were in charge of carrying rocks and they had organized the whole efforts and they were pushing and forcing the men and they weren't doing anything they weren't getting the job done they gave up it was just too much and the word of the Lord came and said hey it

isn't by your organized efforts it isn't by your force but it's by my Spirit saith the Lord the women who were on their way to the tomb said who is going to remove the stone and they were worried as they talked among themselves and who is going to roll away the stone from the door of the sepulcher all worried about it when they got there what did they find the stone was already rolled away so typical of so many of our worries what are we going to do when we get there we find that when we get there the Lord has been there already and took care has taken care of everything for us and the mountains turn into plains before the Lord moreover the word of the Lord came to me saying the hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house and his hands shall finish it Zerubbabel had given

up he had quit working but the Lord said look he started it and he's going to finish it and thou shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you for who hath despised the day of small things now this of course was one of the discouraging things as they laid the foundation the old men started wailing you know terrible you know because they could remember the glory of Solomon's temple and now these people are building this little dinky thing and all the young guys had never seen Solomon's temple they were so excited oh look the foundation they were all excited but the old men were there wailing and weeping quite a scene but those who were wailing and weeping discouraged those that were building oh such a little thing it's nothing and who hath despised the days of small things now

there are many times we are wanting to get ahead of the work of God in our lives God brings us in our spiritual growth along in a very important pace but there are many times we're not satisfied with the pace that God has set we want to get ahead of it and so often we despise the days of small things in our own lives a person comes up to me and says you know I really feel like I want to serve the Lord and I like to serve the Lord here at Calvary Chapel and I usually will say to them wonderful go over and talk to Mike in our Sunday school we're in need of Sunday school teachers and there's an excellent opportunity for you to serve the Lord oh well that's not what I had in mind I was thinking if Romaine maybe wanted to quit or if you wanted to resign I could pastor Calvary Chapel they

despise the days of small things they want to do a big work for God and there are a lot of people sitting around not willing to do the little things waiting for the big door to open waiting for Billy Graham to call and say hey I'm ready to step out and I want you to come and take over and preach at these great meetings alright I've been waiting for that yes but you're not prepared for that you see God starts us out in the little things I started out teaching Sunday school classes then I was advanced to teaching and leading a youth group started out in small things too many people despise the small things but if you're not faithful in the small things God will never be able to raise you up to the bigger things don't despise the days of small things whatever it is that God has called you to

do get in and do it for the glory of God and if you are faithful in the little things then God will make you ruler over the bigger things and so there were those who despised the days of the small things and that's true today and that's always sad because you'll always be restricted and limited you'll never grow, you'll never develop until you're willing to get in and to be satisfied with the least thing that God has called you to do and be faithful to those least things to which the Lord has called you for who hath despised the day of small things they shall rejoice and see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven these are the eyes of the Lord which run to and fro throughout the whole earth the seven eyes are the seven spirits which stand before the throne of God in

Revelation chapter 5 then I answered and said unto him what are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick upon the left side thereof and I answered again and said unto him what are these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out by themselves and he answered and said don't you know what these are and I said no my Lord then he said these are the two anointed ones that stand by the Lord of the whole earth the two anointed ones these are the two witnesses of the book of Revelation read it in chapter 11 these are the two olive trees of the branches that stand before the Lord of the earth there in Revelation chapter 2 God's two witnesses in the last days and we pointed out that Malachi tells us that Elijah will be one of the two witnesses

and it is possible that Zerubbabel himself will be one of the other two witnesses according to the prophecies of Haggai it would appear that perhaps Zerubbabel will be one of the other two witnesses in the last verse of Haggai chapter 2 verse 23 in that day saith the Lord of hosts I will take thee O Zerubbabel my servant the son of Shittil saith the Lord and I will make thee as a signet for I have chosen thee saith the Lord of hosts and he's speaking of the last days and the overthrow of the kingdoms of the world so then I turned and I lifted up my eyes and I beheld a flying roll now this must have been a weird looking sight a flying saucer kind of a thing and he said unto me what do you see? and I answered and said I see a flying roll and it's about 30 feet long and it's about 15 feet

wide then he said unto me this is the curse that goes forth over the face of the whole earth for everyone that steals shall be cut off on this side according to it and everyone that swears shall be cut off as on that side according to it and I will bring it forth saith the Lord of hosts and it shall enter into the house of the thief and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name and it shall remain in the midst of the house and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof so there is judgment associated with this scroll or the flying roll now beyond that I don't know because the scripture doesn't tell us anything beyond that the last or the ninth of the tenth visions then the angel that talked with me went forth and said unto me lift up now your eyes and see

what is going forth and I said what is it? and he said this is an e-path which is actually a bushel equivalent to about a bushel and three pints that goes forth and he said moreover this is their resemblance through

the whole earth and behold there was lifted up a talent of lead and this is the woman that sits in the midst of the e-path and he said this is wickedness now we are dealing actually with e-path and the talents with commercialism and God's view of it is it's wickedness and he cast it into the midst of the e-path and he cast the weight of the lead upon the mouth thereof then I lifted up my eyes and I looked and behold there came out two women and the wind was in their wings for they had wings like the wings of a stork and they lifted up the e-path between the earth and heaven

then I said to the angel that talked with me where are they carrying the e-path and he said unto me to build it a house in the land of Babylon Shinar and it shall be established and set there upon her own base so the God's rebuke against the commercial system that would be headquartered in Babylon that was headquartered in those days in Babylon and does speak of the modern day commercial system that will be destroyed in Revelation chapter 18 when Zachariah gets out of these visions and we have just one more then you'll find the reading a lot more clear and your understanding will be a lot clearer once we get out of these visions I have a little hard time with these visions you know they're sort of weird some of them and they do take explaining and I'm glad that the Lord did explain them

or else we would really be lost may the Lord bless you and keep you steadfast in the love of Jesus Christ our Lord and may you experience each day more of His love more of His spirit working in your life as you yield yourself to God may you know that power through the Holy Spirit and may God thus enable you to do His work and may your life be blessed as you serve the Lord in the opportunities that He gives to you this week maybe they seem like very small things but God help you to be faithful in the little things and not to despise the days of small things for if you are faithful in the little things then God will place more responsibility upon you but don't force it just flow with the spirit and have a beautiful week in Jesus

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