

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown
Bible Study Notes
1-30-19

Zechariah 4

The Gold Lampstand and the Two Olive Trees

¹Then the angel who talked with me returned and woke me up, like someone awakened from sleep. ² He asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a solid gold lampstand with a bowl at the top and seven lamps on it, with seven channels to the lamps. ³ Also there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left." ⁴ I asked the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" ⁵ He answered, "Do you not know what these are?" "No, my lord," I replied. ⁶ So he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty. ⁷ "What are you, mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become level ground. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of 'God bless it! God bless it!'" ⁸ Then the word of the LORD came to me: ⁹ "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands will also complete it. Then you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. ¹⁰ "Who dares despise the day of small things, since the seven eyes of the LORD that range throughout the earth will rejoice when they see the chosen capstone^[a] in the hand of Zerubbabel?" ¹¹ Then I asked the angel, "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?" ¹² Again I asked him, "What are these two olive branches beside the two gold pipes that pour out golden oil?" ¹³ He replied, "Do you not know what these are?" "No, my lord," I said. ¹⁴ So he said, "These are the two who are anointed to^[b] serve the Lord of all the earth."

4:1-3 The gold lampstand with a bowl and seven lamps on it indicate a steady supply of oil, signifying that God's power would be reflected in the light. Oil was obtained from crushed olives and used in bowls with wicks to produce light. The two olive trees stood for the priestly and royal offices.

4:6 Zerubbabel was given the responsibility of rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 3:2, 8; Haggai 1:1; 2:23). While the prophets Haggai and Zechariah gave the moral and spiritual encouragement to resume work on the temple, Zerubbabel saw that the task was carried out. As the work was being completed, the prophets encouraged Zerubbabel and told him of a time when spiritual apathy and foreign oppression would forever be abolished.

4:6 Many people believe that to survive in this world a person must be tough, strong, unbending, and harsh. But God says, "not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit." The key words are "by my Spirit." It is only through God's Spirit that anything of lasting value is accomplished. The returned exiles were indeed weak—harassed by their enemies, tired, discouraged, and poor. But actually they had God on their side! As you live for God, determine not to trust in your own strength or abilities. Instead, depend on God and work in the power of his Spirit! (See also Hosea 1:7.)

4:10 Many of the older Jews were disheartened when they realized this new temple would not match the size and splendor of the previous temple built during King Solomon's reign. But bigger and more beautiful is not always better. What you do for God may seem small and insignificant at the time, but God rejoices in what is right, not necessarily in what is big. Be faithful in the small opportunities. Begin where you are and do what you can, and leave the results to God.

4:14 The two anointed ones may be Joshua and Zerubbabel, dedicated for this special task in the Lord's service. Also note that in Revelation 11:3, two witnesses arise to prophesy to the nations during the time of tribulation. These witnesses will be killed but will rise again.

Zechariah 5

The Flying Scroll - Verses 1-4

¹ I looked again, and there before me was a flying scroll. ² He asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a flying scroll, twenty cubits long and ten cubits wide." ³ And he said to me, "This is the curse that is going out over the whole land; for according to what it says on one side, every thief will be banished, and according to what it says on the other, everyone who swears falsely will be banished. ⁴ The LORD Almighty declares, 'I will send it out, and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of anyone who swears falsely by my name. It will remain in that house and destroy it completely, both its timbers and its stones.'"

5:1-9 The judgment of the flying scroll was leveled against those who violated God's law, specifically by stealing and lying (5:1-4). The woman in a basket personified wickedness, and so this vision showed that wickedness would be not only severely punished (the vision of the flying scroll), but also banished (the vision of the woman in a basket, 5:6-9).

The Woman in a Basket - Verses 5-11

⁵ Then the angel who was speaking to me came forward and said to me, "Look up and see what is appearing." ⁶ I asked, "What is it?" He replied, "It is a basket." And he added, "This is the iniquity of the people throughout the land." ⁷ Then the cover of lead was raised, and there in the basket sat a woman! ⁸ He said, "This is wickedness," and he pushed her back into the basket and pushed its lead cover down on it. ⁹ Then I looked up—and there before me were two women, with the wind in their wings! They had wings like those of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between heaven and earth. ¹⁰ "Where are they taking the basket?" I asked the angel who was speaking to me. ¹¹ He replied, "To the country of Babylonia to build a house for it. When the house is ready, the basket will be set there in its place."

5:9-11 The woman in a basket was carried away "to the country of Babylonia," which had become a symbol for the center of world idolatry and wickedness. This woman was a picture to Zechariah that wickedness and sin would be taken away from Israel and that one day sin would be removed from the entire earth. When Christ died, he removed sin's power and penalty. When we trust Christ to forgive us, he removes the penalty of sin and gives us the power to overcome sin in our lives. When Christ returns, he will remove all sin from the earth, allowing people to live in eternal safety and security.