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## **THE 8 VISIONS OF ZECHARIAH & THE MINISTRY IN ZECHARIAH 11**

In the Book of Zechariah we find that God gave the prophet 8 different visions in one night. Zechariah recorded the exact day on which he had those visions, that being the 24th day of the 11th month of the 2nd year of King Darius (Zechariah 1:7). I am not aware of any specific significance for that date. But it was about 5 months after the Prophet Haggai had delivered his message (see Haggai 1:1).

By giving the prophet all these visions on the same day, it tells us that all 8 visions have a common subject or theme. They are all related to one another in some way. They complement one another, very likely presenting something like a partial chronological sequence of events. Therefore they were all given at the same time.

To help us understand where one vision ends and another begins, the prophet uses expressions like “then I lifted up my eyes ...”, “and he showed me ...”, “I turned and lifted up my eyes ...”, etc. to introduce a new vision.

The theme for all 8 visions is **the return of Jesus Christ** and the establishment of the Kingdom of God here on earth, and events surrounding this process. That is also the theme for the vast majority of all other prophecies. The visions here also present information about **certain individuals** who will be involved in some of those end-time events.

The last book of the whole Bible, the Book of Revelation, enables us to understand some kind of chronological sequence for the events surrounding the second coming of Jesus Christ. That sequence is established by the sequential opening of 7 seals. The 7th seal is then made up of 7 Trumpets. The last 3 of those 7 Trumpets are also identified as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Woes, because those last three Trumpets each involve devastating wars. When the 7th Trumpet is blown, another sequence of events is introduced. Those events include the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ, the 1st resurrection, and the pouring out of the 7 last plagues. Then after the 7 last plagues the millennial rule of Jesus Christ is established.

This is the general picture that is presented in the Book of Revelation.

The 8 visions of Zechariah fit into that framework for end-time events. They cover some of the events discussed in Revelation. It is up to us to figure out how and where these 8 visions tie into the greater picture.

The historical context of Zechariah's ministry is the early part of the Medo-Persian Empire, contemporaneous with Haggai. The Jews had returned from Babylon about 20 years earlier, under the leadership of the High Priest Joshua and the Governor Zerubbabel, and both of these individuals feature in Zechariah's visions. The Jews had started to build a Temple for God, but had then become

unmotivated and stopped building. Everything lay in ruins, and things looked utterly hopeless for all Israel. The people were discouraged.

About 3 months before giving Zechariah these 8 visions, God had already given Zechariah some general instructions. Those instructions are recorded in the opening 6 verses of this book. They are like an introduction before the visions are then revealed.

### **THE LEAD-UP TO THE 8 VISIONS**

In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the LORD unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, The LORD has been **sore displeased** with your fathers. (Zechariah 1:2)

The Hebrew words here translated as “sore displeased” refer to wrath and great anger. God’s opening statement to Zechariah is: I have been **extremely angry** with your fathers. That great anger was expressed in the national captivities, first for the House of Israel and then also for the House of Judah.

So the next verse presents God’s instruction to the small number of people who had returned from the Babylonian captivity.

Therefore say you to them, Thus says the LORD of hosts; **Turn you unto Me**, says the LORD of hosts, and **I will turn unto you**, says the LORD of hosts. (Zechariah 1:3)

Repent and change your ways, and then I will be with you, is God’s message to those Jews. Obey God willingly and eagerly, and God will bless you. Don’t be rebellious like your fathers. Your fathers never did change, and so I sent them into captivity.

Be you not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus says the LORD of hosts; Turn you now from **your evil ways**, and **from your evil doings**: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto Me, says the LORD. (Zechariah 1:4)

The whole way of life that existed in Israel was evil and wicked. People’s motivations were selfish and anti-God. As Paul tells us, the natural human mind is hostile towards God and unwilling to be subject to God’s laws (see Romans 8:7). That human mind needs to be rejected by us ourselves. Without such a rejection, evil ways of living and doing things will always remain with us. But the Old Testament Israelites had never been willing to really reject that selfish mind-set. So God then asks the question:

Your fathers, where *are* they? and the prophets, do they live for ever? (Zechariah 1:5)

Your fathers never learned the lesson, and so they died in captivity. And the prophets are not always going to be there to warn you, and to urge you to change. So I punished your fathers just as I had

warned them so many times.

This is a vital lesson about human nature.

**In certain situations we will very easily do what is wrong in the sight of God, even when we know that we will surely be punished, and even when we have been warned.**

Warnings only very seldom deter us from doing something wrong, from something we really, really want to have or do. That is sad but true for most of us human beings. In our pursuit of greed and lust and covetousness the common attitude frequently is:

The things we produce may well be toxic or bad for us or for the environment, but they will make us rich. And when the dangers become irrefutable, then we will **add warning labels**. We don't stop producing what is bad, because that earns us a lot of money. We only print tiny warning labels, knowing full well that those labels have **close to zero effect** on the use or consumption of our products. Consumers and users never read those labels.

#### **Examples:**

**Warning labels** on cigarettes, on chemicals in paints and in household goods, side effects from drugs and medications, skin irritants in laundry detergents, toxic food coloring, toxic pesticides for growing food, feeding hormones to animals for meat production, total junk foods, air pollution, water pollution, shrink wrap for food items & micro-plastics in our brains, etc. The list of bad things we use and produce just goes on and on.

[Comment: All of us who are over 50 years old right now already have about one third of an ounce of **micro-plastics in our brains**, from our exposure to plastics. That's my brain and that's your brain. That's obviously bad, but hey, plastic is cheap to produce, and we can make a lot of money by selling our products in plastic wrapping. Check out the subject "micro-plastics in the brain" for yourself on the internet. You may be surprised at what you'll find.]

Whenever toxicity problems are pointed out to producers of goods, our answer almost always is: okay, we'll print a warning label. But we still want to sell the product that is making us money. And **stupid warning labels** on certain toxic products don't do anything to deter us from using those products. No, we'll just be careful, and we'll destroy our lives and our world carefully. That's the natural human mind's response.

We know that these things have bad consequences for us and for our children and for the environment, but we sell them / use them anyway. **Money is always the driving factor**. Amos 8:6 identifies junk foods as "**the refuse of the wheat**", and that typifies our world today, trying to make more money in any way we can, even from "refuse".

At times we want things even when we know that they are bad for us. We are no different from O.T. Israel. We frequently resent people telling us that certain things (things we eat or drink or things to which we expose our bodies, or conduct we like to engage in) are bad for us. We'd rather not know.

That's the way our minds work naturally. And **that is the way of thinking God wants us to eradicate** from our lives.

Yes, we keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days, and we tithe and don't eat unclean meats. But at times the attitude also is: **don't tell me** what I should or shouldn't do when it comes to things that are not specifically addressed in the Bible. For those things I make my own decisions. And in many cases "making my own decisions" really means:

I willingly go along with all of the world's ways that are not explicitly forbidden in the Bible, because those ways appeal to me.

Making our own decisions is fine. That's how it should be. We all do have to make our own decisions for everything we do. But sometimes that approach also means: I am not interested in determining **the principle** that underlies the letter of the law. The letter of the law is all I need. And based on the letter of the law I will do what I have to do. But beyond that I will do what I want to do.

When that is the attitude, then that is obviously not what God is looking for in us. True Christianity is not really about keeping the Sabbath and the Holy Days. And those are not the primary signs that identify a true Christian. Yes certainly, true Christians are absolutely required to keep the Sabbath and the Feasts and Holy Days. But what true Christianity is really about is **changing that hostile mind** that doesn't really want to look for, and put into practice all of the principles that underlie all of God's laws.

So when that selfish hostile mind is confronted and dealt with **first**, then willing obedience to all of God's laws is an automatic result. A converted, changed mind gladly lives by all of God's laws, because it recognizes the value and the benefits of God's way of life. And a changed mind is really the primary identifying sign of a true Christian.

Here's how the Apostle John put it:

And whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we **keep His commandments**, and do **those things that are pleasing in His sight**. (1 John 3:22)

The **secondary sign** of a true Christian is that we keep all of God's commandments. And **the primary sign** of a true Christian is that we "do those things that are pleasing in God's sight". This is the primary sign for true Christianity because it is on **a higher level** than simple obedience to God's commandments.

Every individual who seeks to do what is pleasing in God's sight will obviously be keeping all of God's

commandments. Without keeping God's commandments it is impossible to please God. But not every individual who keeps God's commandments is also motivated to seek out the things that will please God. Some commandment-keepers (e.g. they may keep the Sabbath, etc.) don't want to know the extent to which the principles on which all the commandments are based affect **other areas of their lives**.

Commandment-keepers who don't want to know the far-reaching applications of the principles that apply to all of God's laws are really still "in the flesh". Their minds have not been changed.

We've already referred to the natural human mind's hostility to God's laws, as identified in Romans 8:7. Now the next verse presents a conclusion for this hostile human mind.

So then **they that are in the flesh cannot please God**. (Romans 8:8)

But some of those who are still "in the flesh" (i.e. whose minds have not undergone a change) actually keep the Sabbath, or they may tithe or keep God's annual Feasts and Holy Days. If their minds have not been changed, which is the primary sign for true Christianity, then they "cannot please God". That's what Paul tells us.

Let's get back to the Book of Zechariah.

The ancient Israelites didn't even keep God's laws, never mind seeking to do what is pleasing in God's sight. They practiced "evil ways" and "evil doings", obviously breaking God's laws.

It was only once God imposed penalties for disobedience that the Israelites acknowledged: "like as the LORD of hosts thought to do unto us, **according to our ways**, and according to our doings, so has He dealt with us" (see Zechariah 1:6).

This concludes the information presented before Zechariah saw the 8 visions. It concludes with the people of Israel being in two different national captivities, and then acknowledging that their captivity (here in this context for the House of Judah) was God's penalty for their sins. By Zechariah's time a small number of Jews had in fact returned to the area of Jerusalem. But they were still in very bad and discouraging circumstances.

Now let's look at the visions.

## **VISION 1**

This vision is recorded in Zechariah 1:8-17.

I saw by night, and behold **a man riding upon a red horse**, and he stood among the **myrtle trees** that *were* in the bottom; and behind him *were there* red horses, speckled, and white. (Zechariah 1:8)

The vision presents a man riding upon a red horse. From the four horsemen in Revelation 6 we see that **a red horse represents warfare**, red being for the blood that is shed in war. So this vision is very likely about a war at the time of the end.

This horse and rider stood “among myrtle trees”. Now myrtle trees are used in the Bible to represent peace and prosperity. So we have a bit of a conflicting picture here, with “red horses = war, and “myrtle trees” = peace. How does that work out? Let’s see more of the picture.

Next, behind this horse and rider stood other horses. Some were red horses. Others are described as “speckled and white”. The Hebrew word translated as “speckled” refers to a reddish-brown color. So these other horses are reddish-brown and white. And this ties in with the other horses there that are described as “red horses”.

Zechariah himself then asks the angel: what are these other horses (verse 9), to which the angel replies:

... These *are they* whom the LORD has sent **to walk to and fro** through the earth. (Zechariah 1:10)

These other horses then carry out God’s instruction to **assess human conduct** throughout the earth, and they report back as follows:

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 sits still, and is at rest**. (Zechariah 1:11)

The picture is coming together.

The war that is the subject of this vision hasn’t quite started, and so all the earth is in a condition of a fragile peace. It is somewhat like **the calm before the storm**. That is why “the war” (the red horse) is standing next to “peace” (the myrtle trees), and this tenuous condition is confirmed by the angels who inspected the whole earth (reddish-brown and white horses).

While by itself this is not enough information to pinpoint the identity of this event, once we have considered the other 7 visions, it seems likely that this first vision is a reference to **the imminency of the 1st Woe**, which is also known as the 5th Trumpet. But it has not yet been blown.

The great tribulation has started and the nations of Israel are in national captivity. The world at large has accepted these developments, and dealt with the catastrophes of the first four Trumpets; and for the time being they have a fragile peace.

The next verse is not a prophecy but a reference to history, to something that had already been completed before the time of Zechariah.

Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, O LORD of hosts, **how long** will You not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You have had indignation **these threescore and ten years**? (Zechariah 1:12)

The “70 years” refer to the captivity of the House of Judah, which had come to an end about 20 years earlier. But the statement “how long will You not have mercy” refers to something **yet future**.

While the 70 years of captivity had come to an end, Jerusalem and the other cities of Judah were still in very bad shape. God answers this question in the following verse.

And the LORD answered the angel that talked with me *with* **good words and comfortable words**. (Zechariah 1:13)

God answered with “comforting words”, rather than “comfortable words”. Those “comforting words” for Israel are then presented in verses 15-17.

Now the point is this: since the time of Zechariah up to our time today Jerusalem has never been at peace and well off and without foreign domination for very long. It has seen more warfare than most other cities. So the good and comforting words from God very likely refer to a time yet future; i.e. after Jesus Christ has returned.

Notice God’s words:

And I am very sore displeased with the nations *that are* at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction. (Zechariah 1:15)

God is very displeased with the nations that will be used to punish Israel, because those nations will deal with Israel much more harshly than God had intended. Therefore God will then punish those nations.

The vision then concludes with God again choosing and establishing Jerusalem. That is what will happen after Jesus Christ’s second coming.

Therefore thus says the LORD; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: **My house shall be built in it**, says the LORD of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. Cry yet, saying, Thus says 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. (Zechariah 1:16-17)

When God says “My house shall be built in Jerusalem”, then this is not a reference to the Temple that was built at Zechariah’s time, and it is not a reference to the Temple that Herod built. This is a reference to the Temple that will be built in Jerusalem at the start of Jesus Christ’s millennial rule, a Temple that will not be destroyed as long as this planet earth will continue to exist.

This vision concludes with a reference to the start of the millennium. Let’s put the whole picture together once more.

Jerusalem is destroyed and Israel is in the great tribulation. In the process the powers who defeated the nations of Israel, treated Israel more harshly than God had intended. The rest of the world is getting used to the new conditions, and there is an uneasy peace around the world. But things are building up to the next major end-time event, which will be the 5th Trumpet or 1st Woe. And God will use this Woe to punish certain nations.

It is the Book of Revelation that shows us more details regarding the 1st Woe. Those details in Revelation don’t feature in these 8 visions.

Let’s move on.

## **VISION 2**

This vision is recorded in Zechariah 1:18-21.

where “the LORD” is a reference to Jesus Christ. Satan is also standing there, before Jesus Christ’s angel. And Satan is finding fault with Joshua.

Satan standing at Joshua’s right hand is a major clue! What this scene is showing us is that this is the time when the man **Joshua**, who has lived in the world, **is coming to his true repentance**.

And the LORD said unto Satan, **The LORD rebuke you, O Satan**; even the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you: *is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?* Now Joshua was **clothed with filthy garments**, and stood before the angel. (Zechariah 3:2-3)

The expression “a brand plucked out of the fire” is a reference to Joshua. The Hebrew translated as “plucked out of the fire” literally means “**rescued from the fire**”.

The only “fire” in biblical terms that someone can be rescued from is the lake of fire, which amounts to the 2nd death. So Joshua has been rescued from going into the lake of fire. “**Filthy garments**” refer to **being unrepentant**. The filthy garments would have required Joshua to go into the lake of fire. But “standing before the angel” means that Joshua has come to a real repentance.



And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, **I have caused your iniquity to pass from you**, and I will clothe you with change of raiment. (Zechariah 3:4)

This tells us that **Joshua has repented**, and that God has accepted his repentance as genuine. So his guilty past is being removed, and the accuser Satan is rebuked.

Now who is this talking about? And what about those “filthy garments”? In the next verses we see that Joshua is offered a rulership position by God.

Thus says 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 you places to walk among these that stand by. (Zechariah 3:7)

So here, after he has come to repentance, Joshua receives **a conditional offer of rulership** in God's house. What does that mean? Well, since all those who will be in the 1st resurrection will be given positions of rulership (i.e. they'll be kings and priests), this conditional promise really means: if you obey Me and are faithful, then you will be in the 1st resurrection.

To start with: who is this speaking about? Answer: **I have no idea**, not even remotely, regarding the identity of who will be “Joshua” in the time of the end. It seems very likely to me that this is speaking about some Church of God leader in the time leading up to Christ's second coming, rather than about someone who has already died. We have just talked about the beginning of the millennium, and the people of Israel returning out of slavery. The next verse provides some additional context.

Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, you, and your fellows that sit before you: for they *are* men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth **My servant the BRANCH**. (Zechariah 3:8)

“My servant the BRANCH” is a reference to Jesus Christ. So it implies that this “Joshua” is alive at Christ's second coming, when Jesus Christ is “brought forth”. So that excludes anyone who has already died from having been “Joshua”.

The Hebrew translated as “your fellows” basically means “your friends” in a very general sense.

So here is the picture as I see it:

“Joshua” refers to **a minister** in the Church of God at the end-time, who preaches to the congregations. “His fellows” are **all of God's people at that time**. They “**sit**” in church services when this man preaches his sermons. The entire membership of God's true Church is “**wondered at**” by the world. That will certainly be true when God's people have to flee to the place of safety, the time when “the woman flees into the wilderness” (see Revelation 12:6).

I don't know that this will be the case, but perhaps "Joshua" will be the leading minister at the place of safety?

Notice the next verse.

For behold **the stone** that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone *shall be* **seven eyes**: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, says the LORD of hosts, and **I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day**. (Zechariah 3:9)

Revelation 5:6 tells us that Jesus Christ has "seven eyes", which are "the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth". In other words, the seven eyes represent that God the Father and Jesus Christ **see everything on earth**, and are aware of everything that is going on anywhere on earth.

Now the Hebrew verb translated as "I will engrave" means more commonly "**I will open**". So this verse tells us that God will **open understanding** of certain things to Joshua at a specific point in time.

The reference to "removing the iniquity of that land in one day" is a reference to Jesus Christ removing all iniquity from Israel on the day that Jesus Christ begins to bring the Israelites back to their land. That is at the beginning of the millennium. Personally I suspect that that day will be counted as "**Day 1**" of the **millennial rule of Jesus Christ**.

Now what about the "filthy garments"?

I do not believe that this is a reference to some specific sin or sins committed by "Joshua". Rather, I believe that this is intended to tell us that "**Joshua**" **was unconverted for a part of his adult life**. Then Joshua comes to repentance, and his guilty past is forgiven (the filthy garments are taken away from him). Once Joshua has been converted, God then offers him the opportunity to fulfill a certain leadership responsibility in God's Church at the time of the end. If he fulfills that responsibility faithfully, then God will reward him with some position in Jesus Christ's government during the millennium.

I don't believe that the "filthy garments" refer to specific sins like killing, stealing, adultery, etc. that this man might have committed, which sins are then supposedly forgiven, so that he can function as the spiritual leader of God's people at the time of the end.

Let's understand that at the time when we ourselves came to repentance, **every single one of us** stood before God "**in filthy garments**". And when we then really did repent and change our way of thinking and using our minds, then those "filthy garments" were also taken away from us. And we were rescued from the lake of fire, which is the ultimate destiny of all those people who never repent.

We know Isaiah 64:6, right?

But **we are all as an unclean thing**, and **all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags**; and we all do

fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. (Isaiah 64:6)

(Comment: The same Hebrew word is translated as “rags” in Isaiah 64:6 and as “garments” in Zechariah 3:3-4.)

Isaiah 64:6 describes you and me just as much as it does “Joshua”. So I believe that the “filthy garments” are mentioned to show us that “Joshua” is only selected by God for the job after he has come to repentance. In other words, “**Joshua**” **was not “predestined” for the job**, like some of God’s Old Testament servants.

Think of Jeremiah. God told Jeremiah:

**Before I formed you in the belly I knew you;** and before you came forth out of the womb **I sanctified you**, *and* I ordained you a prophet unto the nations. (Jeremiah 1:5)

God selected Jeremiah before Jeremiah was even born. But **that’s not how God will select “Joshua”** at the time of the end. And that’s not how God selected you and me. God selected us by means of a calling, to which we of our own free minds responded. And once we responded, then God also selected us. That’s how God works with us human beings in this present age. And “Joshua” will be someone from “this present age”, and so God will also deal that way with “Joshua”.

The end-time “Joshua” is only selected by God after the man has of his own free will come to a genuine repentance. This “Joshua” is offered a leadership position in God’s Kingdom, even as Jesus Christ offered all of His 12 apostles very specific leadership positions in the Kingdom of God, for faithfully doing the jobs they had been called to do.

The concluding verse of this vision is a clear reference to the millennium.

**In that day**, says the LORD of hosts, shall you call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree. (Zechariah 3:10)

Again, this shows that “Joshua” must be alive at the time of Christ’s 2nd coming.

Now let’s look at the next vision.

## **VISION 5**

This vision is recorded in Zechariah 4:1-14. It starts with Zechariah describing what he sees.

And (the angel) said to me, What do you see? And I said, I have looked, and behold **a candlestick all of gold**, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his **seven lamps** thereon, and **seven pipes** to the seven lamps, which *are* upon the top thereof: And **two olive trees** by it, one upon the right *side* of the bowl, and the other upon the left *side* thereof. (Zechariah 4:2-3)

Where the previous vision was about Joshua, we'll see that this vision is addressed to Zerubbabel. Historically Joshua and Zerubbabel were contemporaneous, both living at the same time as Zechariah himself. With the group of Jews that had returned from the Babylonian captivity, Joshua and Zerubbabel basically worked as a team, supporting one another.

When Zechariah asks the angel what all these things in verses 2-3 mean, the angel replies:

Then 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**, says the LORD of hosts. Who *are* you, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel *you shall become* a plain: and **he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with** shoutings, *crying*, Grace, grace unto it. (Zechariah 4:6-7)

So first we have some symbolism presented, and then without any prior announcement Zerubbabel is brought into the story. "The headstone" is a reference to Jesus Christ at His second coming.

The expression "by My spirit" means that **the work of God** at the time of Christ's return is not accomplished by human might or power or great wealth; it will be accomplished by **the power of God's spirit**. So the work of God will not need money to preach God's message.

Next, "a mountain" in biblical symbolism refers to a government. So the statement "who are you o great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain" basically means "**who are you, big powerful government? Zerubbabel will flatten you**". So Zerubbabel is shown as someone who will make great use of the power of God's spirit. It means that Zerubbabel is in some way involved in announcing the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ, i.e. **in bringing forth the headstone**.

Let's look at some of the other symbolism in this vision.

"**The candlestick**" is a reference to the candlestick that Moses was to make for the Holy of Holies. In Exodus 25:31-37 we have a description. It was to be **one candlestick** of pure gold (verse 31), and it was to have **7 lamps** on it (verse 37).

Exodus 25 and Zechariah 4 present the same imagery ... one candlestick with 7 lamps on it. In Revelation 1 Jesus Christ is pictured as standing in the midst of **7 candlesticks** (Revelation 1:12-13). There the 7 candlesticks are used to represent the **7 eras** of God's New Testament Church (Revelation 1:20).

And then in Revelation 11 the **2 witnesses** are identified as **2 olive trees** and as **2 candlesticks** (Revelation 11:3-4).

So now let's put all this together.

Lamps give light. And light shows us the way we have to go. So the candlestick with 7 lamps in the Holy of Holies represented God's leadership, providing the light to show Israel how to live. In Revelation 1 the 7 candlesticks represent the 7 eras of God's Church, with Jesus Christ in full control. And in Revelation 11 it is the two witnesses "who give light" to the world; i.e. they deliver God's messages to the world. And so they are also referred to as 2 candlesticks.

In our vision in Zechariah 4 we have **7 lamps** and also **2 olive trees**. So this vision is about the 2 witnesses (i.e. 2 olive trees) and the whole Church of God (i.e. 7 lamps, or 7 candlesticks in Revelation 1:20).

This vision is addressed to Zerubbabel, who was not the spiritual leader (that was the high priest), but who was the Governor, the one who was the leader of the government of the Jews at that time.

The Church of God at the end-time is not a physical nation, and it does not have a secular government. The Church of God only has spiritual leaders, but no governors.

The following may not be correct at all, but here is what this all could possibly mean. Consider this as my personal speculation.

The 2 witnesses will preach for 42 months before the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ. **Maybe** Joshua and Zerubbabel represent or typify the 2 witnesses? At that point in time the members of God's Church will be at the place of safety. **Or maybe** Joshua and Zerubbabel will be the leaders at the place of safety, while the 2 witnesses will be in the area of Jerusalem "smiting the earth with all plagues as often as they will" (Revelation 11:6)? So these are two possible options.

Whether there will be 4 individuals (i.e. 2 witnesses + Joshua + Zerubbabel), or whether there will only be 2 individuals (i.e. the 2 witnesses, doubling up as Joshua and Zerubbabel) isn't clear to me. And we haven't even added "Elijah" (Malachi 4:5-6) into this mix.

The one thing that is clear is that **this vision is about the Church of God** just before the return of Jesus Christ.

Let's continue with the discussion of this vision. Here are some more details that apply to Zerubbabel.

The hands of Zerubbabel have **laid the foundation** of this house; **his hands shall also finish it**; and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me unto you. (Zechariah 4:9)

For who has despised the day of **small things**? for they shall rejoice, and shall see **the plummet** in the

hand of Zerubbabel *with those seven*; they *are the eyes* of the LORD, which run to and fro through the whole earth. (Zechariah 4:10)

“Small things” refers to insignificant things, things which people don't view as important. The Hebrew word translated as “plummet” simply means “stone”. **There is a stone in Zerubbabel's hand**. In the previous vision we saw that God had also laid a stone **before Joshua** (Zechariah 3:9). So God is dealing with Joshua and Zerubbabel in very similar ways.

Now while Mr. Herbert Armstrong was still alive, the Church sometimes tried to tie this verse to the very small start Mr. Armstrong had back around 1931. But in two months Mr. Armstrong will have been dead for 40 years, and so **there is no way this applied to Mr. Armstrong**. His hands are not able to finish this phase of God's Church before Christ's return, since Mr. Armstrong is dead.

where these two angels are taking this bathtub.

And he said unto me, **To build it a house in the land of Shinar**: and it shall be established, and set there **upon her own base**. (Zechariah 5:11)

So this false church system, which is led by the false prophet, is taken to **a new location**. The land of Shinar refers to the area of **Babylon**. That is where it originally came from. That location is **it's original base**.

The church system that is headquartered in Rome today is during the millennium going to be relocated to the area of the original Babylon. That's where this church system originated. And that is also the area where Satan and his demons will be imprisoned in “the bottomless pit” of Revelation 20:3 for 1000 years.

So vision 7 shows the false Babylonian religious system being exposed and relocated to the geographic area of Babylon. During the millennium that area will be a totally barren wasteland. And Satan and his demons will not be able to have any contact with any human beings during that 1000-year period.

That brings us to the final vision for that one specific day in Zechariah's life.

## **VISION 8**

This vision is recorded in Zechariah 6:1-8.

And I turned, and lifted up my eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came **four chariots** out from between **two mountains**; and the mountains *were* mountains **of brass**. (Zechariah 6:1)

This vision is about 4 chariots coming from between 2 mountains of brass. The 4 chariots are pulled by different teams of horses.

In the first chariot *were* **red horses**; and in the second chariot **black horses**; And in the third chariot **white horses**; and in the fourth chariot **grizzled and bay horses**. (Zechariah 6:2-3)

The Hebrew word translated as “**grizzled**” means “**spotted, of different colors**”. Our English word “grizzled” refers to the color gray, although “grizzly bears” are typically brownish yellow. Anyway, this Hebrew word here refers to the color of the horses.

The Hebrew word translated as “**bay**” first and foremost means “**strong**”. It is also used to mean “bay”, a word that refers to a reddish brown color.

However, in the expression “**grizzled and bay horses**” the word translated as “**grizzled**” already refers to the **color** of the horses. Therefore the next word, translated as “**bay**” does not refer to the color of the horses, but to their attribute of being **strong**. As already stated, “strong” is the main meaning of the Hebrew adjective “amots” used here, which comes from the verb “amats”, meaning “to be strong”.

So Zechariah asked the angel about these chariots with different horses in each. The angel then answered Zechariah as follows:

... these *are* **the four spirits of the heavens**, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth. (Zechariah 6:5)

“The Lord (Hebrew “adon”) of all the earth” is Jesus Christ. So these 4 spirits are responsible for carrying out and overseeing Jesus Christ’s instructions for this whole planet earth.

Now let’s notice something.

We are told that **there are 4 teams of horses**: 1st = red, 2nd = black, 3rd = white, 4th = grizzled and bay, or grayish and strong. And they represent 4 powerful spirit beings.

But when we look at the activities of these different horses, then we find that **the red horses are not mentioned** at all. Instead, we find that where the expression “grizzled and bay” (grayish and strong) referred to one group, these two terms “grizzled and bay” are now applied to two different groups, with one group identified as “grizzled” and the other group identified as “bay”. Notice ...