

Gleanings of Grace

Zechariah 4

Lesson 43

The prophets Haggai and Zechariah were contemporaries. They both were part of the remnant of Jews who returned to Jerusalem. Like Haggai, Zechariah's message is one of encouragement. But he was aware that not all the returned remnant were fully sincere in their desire to serve God, and he therefore counseled them to repent of sin and return to God with all their hearts and minds. Zechariah 4 contains the crucial reminder to those attempting to do God's work in rebuilding the temple, that God's work cannot be done by man's *might or power*, but only by *the power of the Holy Spirit*.

OBSERVATION: Read Zechariah 4

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to the *LORD*, the *Spirit*, the *angel*, and *Zerubbabel*.

Key Words: *LORD*, *Spirit*, *angel*, and *Zerubbabel*

Underline all descriptions of the *lampstand*.
3. The contrasting word *but* is used in verse 6. Mark the word and record what is being contrasted.

Background:

1. What does Nehemiah 12:1,12,16 reveal about Zechariah?

2. The prophets Zechariah and Haggai were contemporaries with similar messages. Review the background of the homework for Haggai. What was happening regarding the rebuilding of the temple?
3. The timing of Zechariah's prophecy sets it two months after Haggai's first prophecy and within a month after another prophecy of Haggai. According to Zechariah 1:1, when did *the word of the LORD* come to Zechariah?
4. The LORD's first words to Zechariah were a call to repentance. What was Zechariah to say to the people? Zechariah 1:3
 - a. What are some steps we are called to make as examples of *returning to the LORD*?
 - b. The LORD never leaves us. What do you think He means when He promises to *return*?
5. Before God called the people to action in Zechariah 4, He cleansed them. Joshua, the High Priest, was a representative of the people. In Zechariah's vision, Joshua was clothed with *filthy garments*, depicting the sins of the people. What did the LORD say in the second sentence of Zechariah 3:4?
 - a. Celebrate with:

David as He proclaims the blessedness of forgiven sin in Psalm 32:1,2.

Isaiah as He rejoices in what the LORD has done in Isaiah 61:10.
 - b. Why do you think God must cleanse us before He uses us?

Read Zechariah 4:1-3 What Do You See?

1. The angel who had previously shown visions to Zechariah *came back*. Using verse 1, how did Zechariah describe himself?
 - a. What are you like when you have been *wakened out of sleep*?
2. What question did the *angel* ask Zechariah?
 - a. Why is this an important question to allow the LORD to ask us?
 - b. Consider the words of Jeremiah 1:11,12. What difference do you think it makes that you *see* what God wants to show you, before He *performs His work*?
3. Using Zechariah 4:2,3, describe (or draw) what Zechariah *saw*.
 - a. Using Exodus 25:31-38, describe the lampstand that was to be in the tabernacle.
 - 1.) What differences do you see between the lampstand of Zechariah and the lampstand of Exodus?
4. Revelation 4 records John's vision of the throne of God and its surroundings. What did John say that he saw in verse 5?
 - a. John, in relaying the message to the *seven churches in Asia*, identified the source of the message. Who did he say the "seven lamps of fire" were?
 - b. The Holy Spirit is represented by the seven burning lamps. In what other ways is He represented? Matthew 3:16, Acts 2:3

5. Use a few phrases to describe some of the work of the Holy Spirit. Challenge: Use Scripture References

Read Zechariah 4:4-6 What Are These?

1. Zechariah described what he saw, but he could not identify what he saw. What did he ask the angel?
2. The angel answered him, *This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel*. Zerubbabel was one of the leaders who returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. When the adversaries of Judah heard about the building of the temple, what did they say *to Zerubbabel and the heads of the fathers' houses*? Ezra 4:2

a. What was Zerubbabel and Jeshua's (Joshua's) response? Ezra 4:3

b. How did the *people of the land* react? Ezra 4:4,5

- 1.) What do these interactions say to you about opposition, even when you are doing the work of the LORD?

3. According to Zechariah 4:6, what was the *word of the LORD to Zerubbabel*?

a. Might focuses on collective strength, the resources of a group or army. Power focuses on individual strength. God says, "not by the resources of many or one, but by My Spirit." Consider the time Assyria was threatening Judah. What did King Hezekiah say to the people? 2 Chronicles 32:7,8

- 1.) Paul was a strong, zealous man. Yet, according to 1 Corinthians 2:4, what had he learned?

- b. What have you learned about depending on your own strength or looking around for resources of the flesh?

Read Zechariah 4: 7-10 Who Has Despised the Day of Small Things?

1. The work of rebuilding the temple seemed like a *great mountain* to the people. What did God see it as?
 - a. Consider a time you saw something in your life as a *great mountain*. What did you learn?

2. What did the LORD promise Zechariah would happen? verse 9
 - a. What would he *know*?
 - 1.) When the temple was finished, *when the capstone is brought forth*, what will the *people shout*?
 - 2.) Record a time in your life, that you shouted, *Grace, grace to it!*

3. *For who has despised the day of small things?* (verse10). What happens when we disparage small, slow, or seemingly insignificant days?
 - a. What do you think the LORD's challenge was in this question?

4. Although the Holy Spirit would be the power behind the work, Zerubbabel and the people still had their part. When they did their part, *the LORD rejoiced*. What does this say to you?

Read Zechariah 4:11-14 What Are These?

1. Zechariah had two more questions to ask. What were they?
2. Using verse 14, answer the questions.
 - a. Zechariah understood the message of encouragement to Zerubbabel, but he didn't exactly understand how it connected to the vision of the olive trees and the lampstand. Joshua and Zerubbabel must first be anointed by the Holy Spirit before they began their work. Notice that *oil dripped* from the *olive branches*. How does this speak to you about the work of the Holy Spirit?

Challenge: Read Revelation 11:3-13 and record a few things about the two witnesses who were identified as *the two olive trees and the two lampstands*.

REVIEW: Read Zechariah 4

1. Considering the monumental task of rebuilding the temple and the opposition that the Jews faced, what is the lesson we can learn from Zechariah 4?

*and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen,
and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are,
that no flesh should glory in His presence.*

- 1 Corinthians 1:28-29

Observation Worksheet

Zechariah 4

¹ Now the angel who talked with me came back and wakened me, as a man who is wakened out of his sleep. ² And he said to me, "What do you see?" So I said, "I am looking, and there is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it, and on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps. ³ Two olive trees are by it, one at the right of the bowl and the other at its left." ⁴ So I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, "What are these, my lord?" ⁵ Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." ⁶ So he answered and 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 of hosts. ⁷ 'Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" ' " ⁸ Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ⁹ "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands shall also finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. ¹⁰ For who has despised the day of small things? For these seven rejoice to see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. They are the eyes of the LORD, which scan to and fro throughout the whole earth." ¹¹ Then I answered and said to him, "What are these two olive trees--at the right of the lampstand and at its left?" ¹² And I further answered and said to him, "What are these two olive branches that drip into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden oil drains?" ¹³ Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." ¹⁴ So he said, "These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth."