

Of Chariots and Crowns
Zechariah 6:1-15 Jed N. Snyder

To show the work of God as He watched over Israel and provided for them so that the Lord's people can recognize and appreciate more fully that God is caring for them in the midst of their uncertain lives.

Introduction:

A terrorist nuclear attack on a U.S. seaport could cause local devastation and affect the global economy. Terrorists might obtain a bomb in several ways, though each poses difficulties. Ability to detect a bomb appears limited. The United States is using technology, intelligence, international cooperation, etc., to try to thwart an attack. Issues for Congress include safeguarding foreign nuclear material, mitigating economic effects of an attack, and allocating funds between ports and other potential targets. This report will be updated as needed.

Terrorist Nuclear Attacks on Seaports: Threat and Response

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Whereas humans can deliver terror in the pursuit of evil, we are once again reminded in this passage that God's justice will come. God has no difficulty repaying justice for evil. We can trust God and move forward even when we do not immediately see exactly what is happening. Our assurance is based upon the truth of the Word of God.

I. The Final Vision to Zechariah Concerns Horses and Chariots Zechariah 6:1-8
 The four colored horses and chariots and their mission

A. Mountains of bronze

Zechariah 6:1 (NIV) ¹I looked up again—and there before me were four chariots coming out from between two mountains—mountains of bronze!

These may be figuratively the Mount of Olives and Mount Zion but more likely they represent the certainty, strength and severity of God's punishment upon those who reject Him and harm His people (His interests in this world.) Bronze likely refers to God's strength, severity and judgment. There are a significant number of references to strength in the OT. There are also places where bronze seems to relate to the severity of God and especially severe with regard His judgment. A good concordance will help you follow this should you be interested.

B. Angelic (messenger) explanations

Zechariah 6:2 - 8 (NIV) ²The first chariot had red horses, the second black, ³the

third white, and the fourth dappled—all of them powerful. ⁴I asked the angel who was speaking to me, “What are these, my lord?” ⁵The angel answered me, “These are the four spirits of heaven, going out from standing in the presence of the Lord of the whole world. ⁶The one with the black horses is going toward the north country, the one with the white horses toward the west, and the one with the dappled horses toward the south.” ⁷When the powerful horses went out, they were straining to go throughout the earth. And he said, “Go throughout the earth!” So they went throughout the earth. ⁸Then he called to me, “Look, those going toward the north country have given my Spirit rest in the land of the north.”

Since the chariots do not seem to have drivers, it appears that the sending of the message by way of the Lord Himself and the sending forth of spirits to the distant parts of the world is the focus of these horses and chariots. Angelic messengers are not uncommon in the Scriptures. The purpose of their movement is seen as being to bring “rest for God’s Spirit”, at least this was the case in the north land which is where Babylon and later Medo-Persia and Greece are located. It would perhaps signal to Zechariah and those of his companions that God had brought a certain amount of resolution (punishment?) to these lands of the north. While it is not possible for us to be assured of the exact interpretation, we can know that the power and justice of the Lord is wrapped up in the activities reported by these messengers with their powerful horses.

While we cannot spend a whole lot of time on the matter of God’s vengeance as it relates to the punishment of evil, I can again suggest you do your own research in the Bible and see the extent to which this is an important part of the justice and love of God for His people and for those who oppose Him. It is truly helpful for us to remember that the Lord’s person and character can not be taken lightly in these matters. Look with me momentarily at Deuteronomy 32.

Deuteronomy 32:36 - 41 (NIV) ³⁶The LORD will judge his people and have compassion on his servants when he sees their strength is gone and no one is left, slave or free. ³⁷ He will say: “Now where are their gods, the rock they took refuge in, ³⁸the gods who ate the fat of their sacrifices and drank the wine of their drink offerings? Let them rise up to help you! Let them give you shelter! ³⁹“See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand. ⁴⁰I lift my hand to heaven and declare: As surely as I live forever, ⁴¹when I sharpen my flashing sword and my hand grasps it in judgment, I will take vengeance on my adversaries and repay those who hate me.

C. The title “Lord of all the earth” seems to link the vision to the millennial kingdom

Zechariah 6:5 (NIV) ⁵The angel answered me, “These are the four spirits of heaven, going out from standing in the presence of the Lord of the whole world.

It appears that Zechariah is pushing his readers to look ahead not only to the time that Israel is self-governed but more importantly to the time when the Lord Himself will rule in justice and righteousness in the great millennial kingdom still ahead of us.

- II. The Crowns for Joshua the High Priest Who Is Named “The Branch” Zechariah 6:9-15
 - A. The crown/s were made for Joshua, the local “Branch”

The precious metals from Babylon were brought as a part of offerings for the Lord, Jehovah. Clearly they were to understand that such offerings of precious metals for the Lord were anticipated and would be useful to the service of the Lord.

In that context Joshua, the high priest, was the Branch.

“God told Zechariah to convey to Joshua that he would represent or typify **the Branch** who will rebuild the millennial temple. The crowning had a typical significance pointing forward to the Messiah as King-Priest, like Melchizedek centuries earlier ([Gen. 14:18-20](#); [Ps. 110:4](#); cf. [Heb. 7:11-21](#)). The title “Branch” is a messianic title, as already indicated ([Zech. 3:8](#)). Since the promise to rebuild the postexilic temple in Zechariah’s day was given to Zerubbabel ([4:9](#)), any role Joshua himself had was apparently minor. So the promise that the Branch will **build the temple of the LORD** is probably limited to Messiah’s role in establishing the millennial temple (cf. [Isa. 2:2-4](#); [56:6-7](#); [Ezek. 40-46](#); [Micah 4:1-2](#)).”

--The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament.

- B. The promise of harmony for the coming “Branch”

Zechariah 6:12 - 13 (NIV) ¹²Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD. ¹³It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.

Isaiah 11:1 - 10 (NIV) ¹A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. ²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD—³and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; ⁴but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. ⁵Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. ⁶The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard

will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling^f together; and a little child will lead them. ⁷The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. ⁸The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. ⁹They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. ¹⁰In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner

C. Promises will be fulfilled, obedience will be rewarded

Zechariah 6:14 - 15 (NIV) ¹⁴The crown will be given to Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen son of Zephaniah as a memorial in the temple of the LORD. ¹⁵Those who are far away will come and help to build the temple of the LORD, and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. This will happen if you diligently obey the LORD your God.”

We can always depend upon the promises of the Lord. The specific establishment of a memorial to remind the people of the joining together in the Messiah of the office of High Priest and that of King is a great thing of which we are rarely reminded. The Lord was good at establishing memories for His people Israel. While we in the dispensation of the church cannot expect the same physical memorials, we can and do believe that God has given us reminders that we need to keep precious. One of those reminders is the celebration of the resurrection on each first day of the week. Another is baptism by immersion before all who will observe and the other is the Lord's Supper. If we neglect these we do so at our own spiritual peril. Just as the crown was placed on display in the temple to remind the people of High Priestly and Kingly standing of our Lord Jesus, we have memorials of the death, resurrection and fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Conclusion:

Do you personally know this God?

If not, receive Him by faith now.

Do you live obediently in awe of His justice, severity and power?

If so, are you helping others to so live?