

- Last week we started looking at the Prophet Zechariah, including an overview of whole book. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=106lfO6Kc0&t=17s>), including the fact that he was the grandson of a priest named Iddo, and one of the first Jews to return home and oversee the rebuilding process when the Babylonians under Cyrus started allowing them back. (Zechariah 1:1-6). (Nehemiah 12:1, 4, 16). (2 Chronicles 36:22-23) Zechariah begins a series of visions which probably come to him all in one night. (Zechariah 1:7) Last week in Jeremiah 1-4 we covered the first five visions. Last week we also reiterated that Christ came in the “fullness of time” (Galatians 4:4-7) meaning that instead of sending Christ immediately after the Old Testament book of Malachi, God waited for empires to make major contributions that would help the Gospel message spread. We talked about how the major Persian contribution was mass communications, and the Greek contribution was language (Koine Greek). We started to discuss the Roman Empire and its great engineering contributions like roads, mostly built with the invention of concrete.
- This week we are going to continue to look at Zechariah’s dreams. Remember they are all happening in one night. Then we will see how Zechariah summarizes the dreams to the people. Finally, we will close by talking about how the Roman Empire rises to strength worldwide.
- Zechariah continues his visions/dreams in chapter 5. Here he has his sixth vision which is of a scroll which flies around the “New Jerusalem.” We remember from our study of the second vision last week about the angel with measuring line, the New Jerusalem is a reference to the Kingdom of Heaven to come. In the fifth vision, the scroll Zechariah sees flies around punishing bad people (Zechariah 5:1-4), showing how those who do not repent of their ways will not receive the Kingdom of Heaven.
- Next, Zechariah’s seventh vision contains a woman in a basket, and the woman is carried away by women with wings. (Zechariah 5:5-10), symbolizing Israel’s past exile being carried away to Babylon.
- In Zechariah’s eighth vision, he once again sees horse riders on patrol much like he did in chapter 1. Once again, the riders assure him all is okay in the world, and this time they especially make sure Zechariah knows God’s wrath has been fulfilled “in the North,” a likely reference to the fact that the Babylonians have been conquered by the Persians who will be friendly to Israel again. (Zechariah 6:1-8)
- In a final vision (which some call a ninth dream, some call a “bonus” vision, some say it isn’t just another dream but a real waking vision) Zechariah is told by God to make a symbolic crown for Joshua who will become a ruling priest when the temple is complete and prepare the way for another ruling priest who will oversee a new temple (Christ). (Zechariah 6:9-15).
- The people ask Zechariah if it is time to start the process of healing from their grief over the loss of Jerusalem and the 70 years in exile. God tells Zechariah to ask the people if they were really grieving for religious reason or they were just sad to be exiled. God says it is

their own fault that they were exiled because He told them to practice justice and they did not because they had “hearts like flint” (hard hearts). ([Zechariah 7](#))

- God says that He will once again be in the midst of Jerusalem and that it will be inhabited again. He says it will be very different this time, since all nations will be joined together in this New Jerusalem. ([Zechariah 8](#)) This is an obvious reference to the fact that Christ would return to Jerusalem and establish a new kingdom which will apply to all nations.
- Let’s turn our attention back to history for a moment. Remember, God is waiting for just right time to send Christ ([Galatians 4:4-7](#)). The Persian empire had created a breakthrough so the world was now used to mass communications coming quickly and easily. The Greek empire had given the world common language which would even be used the New Testament authors.
- Daniel had predicted three empires after the Babylonian one in his famous interpretation of the statue dream of Nebuchadnezzar. ([Daniel 2](#)) The head of Gold was the Babylonians, the Chest and Arms of Silver was the Persians, the Belly and Thighs of Bronze was Greece. Today and next week we are going to learn about the Legs and Feet of the Statue. Both symbolize Rome– the Legs made of Iron are what we are going to mention today, the Feet of Iron and Clay we will talk about next week.
- Rome has already made some engineering feats. They are almost defeated from within by a slave revolt. Because of this near miss, emperor’s reform the Roman system of governance, and create an army-dominated culture. It is this culture that will eventually establish the “Iron” kingdom – so called because of its authoritative rule. This ruthlessness is also what allows its empire to expand and create protection over any lands it conquers. Their armies patrol the roads, making it safe to travel.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Roman_Empire

Questions:

1. What is the New Jerusalem?
2. What does Zechariah see in his sixth vision?
3. What does the punishment of evil people which Zechariah sees represent?
4. What does Zechariah see in his seventh vision and what does it symbolize?
5. What is Zechariah’s last vision and what does it mean?
6. Why does God question the people who say that they were grieving in exile?
7. Why does God say that people were exiled?
8. What is a heart like flint?
9. What does God mean when he tells Zechariah he will return to Jerusalem?
10. How does Daniel’s interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream relate to history?
11. How does the Roman empire grow and why does that make it safe to travel?