

# ZECHARIAH: RETURN

## THE MESSAGE TO ZERUBBABEL

ZECHARIAH 4 (Quotes from NIV)

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- I. Introduction:
  - A. The Jews return to build the temple
  - B. Their enemies stop them
  - C. They abandon the building for 16 years
  - D. God sent Haggai and Zechariah to stir up his people
  
- II. God's Television 1:7 Series of 8 Visions - Our first TV.
  - A. 1st and 8th are about God's army of horses and chariots (The scouts and the army)
  - B. 2nd and 3rd are about the nations and the nation (Jerusalem)
  - C. 4th and 5th are about, and to, the 2 leaders Joshua and Zerubbabel (The governor and the high priest)
  - D. 6th and 7th are about judgement on sins and sin
  
- III. The 5th vision in Ch. 4 is for Zerubbabel, to encourage him as he led the work of rebuilding. There are encouragements here for all of us.
  - A. The symbolism of the candlesticks or lamps comes right out of the temple itself. This piece of furniture was in the holy place. First of all it represents the Lord, and secondly, the testimony of his people. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world, he that follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life." He also said, "You are the light of the world."
  - B. God was the light of his people and as they followed him they became a light to others. Zerubbabel was to be a light to his people. Joshua is included indirectly.
  - C. In the parable that the youngest son of Gideon told on Mount Ebal we find that Israel goes, under the image of trees, to find a king. The first they go to is the olive tree. Here the olive trees also seem to represent the two leaders.
  
- IV. What was the message to Zerubbabel?
  - A. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit," says the Lord Almighty."
    1. Israel had no standing army. They had to depend on protection from a far off emperor. If not they had to depend on the Lord. Later Nehemiah faced this. They had to keep their swords near them as they worked on the wall, lest their enemies attacked them.
    2. This is also an encouragement to pray. God does things in the world of the invisible that we cannot do! Prayer for the city of Burgos.

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- B. “What are you, oh great mountain, before Zerubbabel? You will become level ground. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of ‘God bless it! God bless it!’ “
1. God was going to bring down the opposition from their enemies and from the emperor and help them raise up the temple. The mountain of opposition (The opposition of their enemies around them, and the authority of the Persian kings behind those enemies) would come down and the building go up!
  2. The capstone goes on the building last to finish it.
- C. “The hands of Zerubbabel laid the foundation and his hands will also complete it.”
1. Zerubbabel would actually lead the people in completing the work. God completes the things he purposes to do through us. In the Letter to the Philippians Paul says that he who began a good work in us will also complete it! (Phil. 1:6) He will not leave things half done!
  2. It must have been embarrassing to have the temple only partially finished for 16 years! God sent his prophets to challenge the people to start again. Are there any things you have started for the Lord and left half done? Is it time you returned to that particular work? Did you start praying for someone and then give up? Did you start studying a book of the Bible and then give up? Did you start memorising and give up? Did you try helping your parents around the house and then give up? Did you start helping in the church and then give up? Did you launch into a particular project or ministry and then give up? Did you plan to go on a short term mission and then get side tracked? Did you plan to give gifts to the Lord's work and get discouraged?
  3. I have failed in all these areas but I continue to return to them. Don't give up. Keep coming back to them. In reality I've seen both failure and victory. I started memorising Scripture and gave up. I started reading through the whole Bible each year or two and have not given up. (Reading through the Bible within a year starting at 5 different points: Genesis, I Samuel, Psalms, Isaiah and Matthew; and reading 5 chapters daily.)
- D. “Who despises the day of small things! Men will rejoice when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel!”
1. They say the pen is mightier than the sword. The pen certainly is smaller than the sword. The plumb line is a small object as well. The day Israel saw Zerubbabel go to his garden shed and retrieve his plumb line they knew it was the day, after 16 years, to return to the temple and build.
  2. Although the plumb line was small it was extremely significant - and as big as the temple itself in significance. Zerubbabel used it as he

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walked around the temple sight, to check that the walls were going up straight.

3. Oh yes, things had to be straight, not crooked. He as the leader was the measure of what God was doing. People built or did not build according to his example. He was the example and in a real way was the light. Furthermore, if you are a leader your life is a plumb line for those you lead. What they build will either be straight or crooked as you direct them.

- V. While this message is directed at the leader of the Jews, it has its application to the life of most believers. Unless we are the newest and youngest of all the believers we will have someone for whom we can set the example. People look to us.
  - A. Even the youngest believer will have unbelieving friends and family for whom he can be a light.
  - B. What is in your hand brother, sister? Is it a small plumb line? Don't despise what God has given to you. You can be a light. Someone said, "There are no small people in his kingdom." He will use you. He desires to use you. Will you let him?
  - C. What has God put in your hand? A Bible from which to preach? A tract with which to evangelise? A video or DVD for home and group evangelism? A pen or computer with which to write? Training and gifts for management? Money with which to be generous? A will with which to pioneer new ministries? A burden for which to pray? A sense of mercy with which to show kindness and help the helpless? A calculator for accounting? Ajax liquid for cleaning? An overhead or LCD projector, or a chalkboard with which to teach?

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