

Zechariah 5-6:8

1-2 The sixth vision begins with no introduction, just the Hebrew word *waasub*, translated "again". The giant flying scroll was 40 times bigger than any ancient scroll discovered. The size and fact that it was unrolled and flying indicate that this is a supernatural word from the Lord for all to read and take heed.

3-4 Swearing falsely is from the third commandment (Exodus 20:7,16), the half that speaks of our relationship with the Lord, specifically here using the Lord's name to swear falsely. Theft is the eighth, or from the last half of the commandments that are about our relationships with our fellow man. (Exodus 20:15) Baldwin summarizes, "*Every one who steals* is a pithy way of saying 'every one who wrongs his neighbour,' and *every one who swears falsely* (invoking the divine name) sums up blatant disregard for God's holiness."—New American Commentary- Considering James 2:10, this means the pronouncement is for everyone, thus "the whole land" in verse 3. (Malachi 3:5; Proverbs 3:33)

We are reminded again of Isaiah 55:11, the word is going out and accomplishing what it was sent to do. In this case, it's to purge the land. House stands for the people, not merely the building. If God is going to again be in their midst, there needed to be a cleansing before His holiness could settle. Would it enter your house to destroy it? One person's sin can affect the entire group. God is faithful to confront sin. An interesting aside is that the Hebrew word for "curse" is pronounced "alah".

5-8 Vision 7: A basket the size of an ephah or a modern bushel, about 7.5 gallons. It would be hard to put a real woman in a basket that small. It may have been an idol of goddess (perhaps Asherah, goddess of fertility) that Zechariah saw. (Deut 28:17-18) That would fit in the basket. The lead lid must symbolize the importance of keeping sin of idolatry contained within. We saw in the previous chapter that Joshua was cleansed, and then in this chapter the liars and thieves, and now sin is stored and ready to be taken away.

The fact that the vision of the menorah showed abundance when sins were removed (obedience to the covenant) may be contrasted with this empty basket. It may picture the abundance of blessing from obedience and the lack of when sin dominates (breach of the covenant). (Revelation 17:3-5)

9-11 If these are angels, they are the only two women angels in Scripture. The fact that Divine assistance is needed to remove sins is evident. "Wind" in their wings may be translated "spirit" – another emphasis of the removal of sins as a work of God. God had graciously cleansed the priest Joshua, now He is graciously removing the sins of the people.

The people had returned from exile in Babylon but brought some of Babylon with them. Now God is graciously sending the sin back without them. We need these

women with stork wings filled with the Spirit to come to our nation. Has sin been removed from your life, not just positionally through the cross, but a daily reality?

6:1-5 The eighth vision: Similar to the first and perhaps an inclusio. It differs in that the riders were prominent in the first and the eighth they are pulling chariots from between mountains of brass. The chariot was the ultimate military weapon, a symbol of power. (Isaiah 66:15-16; Psalm 68:17) Four often represents the four winds or four directions. This would then emphasize God's sovereign power over all the earth.

The two mountains have been suggested to be Zion and Olives, or the entrance to the heavenly world, or Zaphon (north) and Teman (south) re-emphasizing the whole earth. There may be a connection of the horses with Revelation 6:1-8. Remember that winds can be translated "spirits". (Psalm 104:4)

6-8 NIV adds west when the Hebrew text actually says, "after them". To the north was Babylon, and to the south was Egypt. Those are the two ancient enemies of Israel. (Isaiah 13:19; Psalm 7:11) God is not at rest until sin is dealt with. He dealt with our sins on the cross. He deals with us daily to overcome sin in our lives.

The immediate fulfillment of this passage was the protection and favor of God upon Israel as they began cleaning up their act and finished the Temple and the walls. Before long though (a few hundred years), enemies from the North would come again and attempt to get them to compromise. The intermediate fulfillment is Jesus giving our souls rest and dealing with our great enemy. The ultimate fulfillment is Jesus reigning over the new heaven and earth.