

When Cyrus the Persian king conquered Babylon, he allowed the exiles from Jerusalem to return to the city and rebuild the temple. The prophets Isaiah (Isaiah 44:28) and Jeremiah (Jeremiah 25:12-14; 29:10; 33:7-13) both prophesied regarding this event. Isaiah did so about 150 years before it happened. So after 70 years of Babylonian captivity, approximately 50,000 returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple with support and supplies from Cyrus.

Upon returning they immediately set up the altar of sacrifice and the foundation of the temple. After they completed the foundation, several obstructions arose that slowed and finally halted the construction (Ezra 4). After the work had been suspended for 14 years, God raised up two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, to encourage the people to complete the rebuilding of the temple. Zechariah received eight night visions which he was to communicate to the people to provide great encouragement.

Through Zechariah, God assured them of their success because of His help and provided much information about the coming Messiah and the Kingdom of God. Under the leadership of Joshua, the high priest, and Zerubbabel, the governor (a descendent of David), the people responded and eventually finished the temple.

Zechariah's fourth vision (Zechariah 3:1-10) provided specific encouragement and instruction for Joshua, the high priest. Satan was revealed as Joshua's true adversary; and Yahweh, Almighty God, rebuked Satan on Joshua's behalf (Zechariah 3:1 and 2). In the vision, Joshua was clothed in filthy garments and stood before the Lord. Just as God did with Aaron, the first high priest, He washed and clothed Joshua. He said, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Part of the attire provided was the head dress called the mitre. The mitre has great significance which can be traced in Exodus 28:4, 36-39; 29:6; 39:27-31; Leviticus

8:9. Part of the head dress was a crown made of pure gold with the engraving *HOLINESS TO THE LORD*. The crown was placed over the cloth to hold it in place and sat upon the forehead.

The vision ends with the proclamation regarding the Messiah. "My servant the Branch" is referring to the Messiah. See Zechariah 6:12; Isaiah 4:2; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15.

Zechariah 3:8-10

Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they *are* men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH.

For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone *shall be* seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.

The fifth vision (Zechariah 4:1-14) was regarding Zerubbabel. "Zerubbabel" means sown in Babylon. He was the grandson of king Jehoachin and, as such, was a descendant of the royal line of David (Matthew 1:12). A similar message of encouragement was given, "not by [your] might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Because of God's grace, Zerubbabel could overcome mountainous obstacles and reduce them to level ground. Whatever was hindering the rebuilding of the temple was nothing compared with the power of God in operation. Zerubbabel had laid the foundation of the temple, God now assured him that he would also finish the building, which indeed he did.

At the conclusion of the vision, reference was made to "two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." Throughout Israel's history, only two have been anointed — the priest and the king. Joshua, the high priest, and Zerubbabel, the civilian ruler, were the two anointed ones. These two anointed ones are a type for the Messiah who will fill both offices. (Revelation 11 talks about the two olive trees at the end of the age. They are the witnesses and prophets.)

The eighth and final night vision shows that God is going to have "the four spirits of the heavens" destroy the enemies of the Lord and prepare the way for the Messiah to reign as Priest-King in Jerusalem. Following the visions, Zechariah is told to take specific actions in the company of four witnesses. He was to place crowns upon the head of Joshua the high priest.

Zechariah 6:11

Then take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set *them* upon the head of Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest;

The one crown was a part of the high priest's apparel and another crown signified the king. This historical event brought together the office of the priest and king into one and served as a type for the Messiah.

Zechariah 6:12 and 13

And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name *is* The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD: Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

Two temples are spoken of at the end of the age. The first will be built by man before Christ returns. In this temple, the abomination of desolation will be set up (Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11; Matthew 24:15) and shortly thereafter will be destroyed. The second, which is referenced here in Zechariah, will be after Christ returns. He will build it, and no man will ever destroy it. From this location, Christ will reign as Priest and King.

Chapters 6:9-15 linked the messages of the fourth and fifth vision to the Messianic King-Priest. In the fourth vision, Joshua was God's anointed priest. In 6:13, the Branch was to officiate as high priest. In the fifth vision, Zerubbabel was God's anointed civil official (from the Davidic line). In 6:13, the Branch was to rule the government. In 4:9, Zerubbabel was to complete the rebuilding of the temple. In 6:12, the Branch would rebuild the temple. In 4:14, Zerubbabel and Joshua represented two separate offices. In 6:13, it says the Branch will hold both offices. That which happened, recorded in Zechariah, is a type of the true restored Israel when the glorious reign of the Messianic King-Priest will occur.

The only other man to be both high priest and king was Melchizedek in Genesis 14:17-24. He also was a type for Christ (Psalms 110:4; Hebrews 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:1-28).

Joshua, the son of Nun, led Israel into the promised land and, as such, is a type for Jesus the Christ. Joshua, the son of Josedech, is a type for Jesus the Christ as high priest and king. The name "Joshua" from the Hebrew text is the same as "Jesus" from the Greek text. Both mean "Yahweh is salvation."