

The prophecy of Zechariah, the longest of the Minor Prophets, flows like a movie, one scene after another, each scene contributing to the message of the whole film.

For many, the visions Zechariah records leave readers asking the same question Zechariah repeats frequently, "What are these, my lord?" The visions are often prophetic in nature, where tangible symbols like horses and candlesticks represent a spiritual reality that must be explained to prophet and reader alike. The imagery is fascinating, but the message is clear.

Zechariah's audience are Jews returned from exile in Babylon. To these returnees God sends this word: It is not enough that you have simply returned to the land and to the city, you must return to me, return with your hearts, your devotion, your commitment to covenant faithfulness. The people are falling into the bad spiritual habits of their predecessors and God warns them they must be a different people than they were before He sent them into exile.

*Return to me, says the LORD of hosts, and I will return to you, says the LORD of hosts."*

Throughout the rest of the prophecy, God reveals His plan for His people, for their future, and the future of those whom God sent to punish Israel but who overstepped His intention, causing Israel more grief than God intended.

God encourages His people to be strong, to be faithful, to receive the grace He extends and thrive in His blessing. But along with promises for Israel's immediate benefit, God includes renewed promises for the coming Messiah, who would be for the benefit of Israel and all the nations:

*On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleans them from sin and uncleanness.*

That day is the day when they “look on him whom they have pierced,” and “mourn for him.” That day is the day Israel and the world see Jesus for who He really is. On that day, declares the Lord,

*And the LORD will be king over all the earth. On that day the LORD will be one and his name one.*

The many visions of Zechariah offer a united message: The LORD God who rules in the immediate and future history of His covenant people is the One who will rule all the nations of the world, and the means to prosper now and in His coming kingdom, is through a life lived in a vital relationship of faith in Him and obedience to His word.

“Return to me,” God says, “and I will return to you.” Wherever you are, whatever you are doing with your life, this is God’s invitation to you: return to Him through faith in Jesus Christ and He will return to you and prepare you for the day His kingdom comes.

Until next time, there’s something to think about.