

<CHAPTER 5>

6. *The flying scroll 5:1 - 4*
(*Evil meets retribution*)

¹ I looked up again and saw a flying scroll. ¹ ² The messenger (*or, angel*) said to me:
"What do you see?"
I answered: "I see a flying scroll.
It's length is approximately thirty feet and its width fifteen feet."²
³ Then the messenger (*or, angel*) said to me,
"That is the curse³ that goes out over the entire land;⁴
from now on every one who has stolen will be cut off⁵
(*or, who has been unpunished thus far*)
in accordance with the wording on one of its (*i.e. the scroll*) sides,
and whoever has sworn falsely⁶ will be cut off
(*or, who has been unpunished thus far*)
in accordance with the wording on the other side (*of the scroll*)."
⁴ The Lord of hosts declares: "I will sent it out,
and it will enter the house of the thief,
and the house of those who have perjured themselves, using my name;
and it will lodge inside those houses
and entirely annihilate theft
(*or, and even the wood and stone of that house will deteriorate*)."

7. *The woman in the ephah measure 5:5 - 11*
(*Jerusalem's purification*)

⁵ Then the messenger (*or, angel*) who talked with me came forward and said to me:
"Look up! Look! What is the object that is approaching?"
I replied, "What is it?"
He said, "This is an ephah⁷ that approaches."
He continued, "This is the guilt⁸ that is throughout the land."
⁷ Suddenly⁹ the disk (*or, cover*) of lead was raised
revealing a woman sitting in the ephah.¹⁰
⁸ The messenger (*or, angel*) declared,

1 Suggesting quickness of the coming judgment.

2 Literally: "twenty cubits long and ten cubits (wide). A cubit was the distance from the elbow to the finger tip, or about 18 inches.

3 The usual Hebrew word for "curse" is not used here, which is *arr* but *alh* is used, often translated as an oath or a covenant curse.

4 The Hebrew word *harts* "the entire land" can also mean "the earth." The primary meaning here could be "the land of the people of the covenant."

5 The Hebrew word *nqh* could mean "purged, cleansed,"

6 The word "falsely" is not in the MT. Traditionally "falsely by my name" was inserted when the line was read. Cf. the next lines also.

7 The Hebrew word *aiph* is a designation of a dry measure amounting to from 9 to 10.25 gallons. Because of its size it would seem more suitable to translate "It looks like an ephah" since an actual ephah would be too small to hold a woman. The Hebrew does not hint at that, however.

8 So: LXX. η ἀδικία αὐτῶν. Reading *aiwnt* for *aiint*. The Syriac is similar. Hebrew: "eye."

9 *hgh* is what is read by the LXX: $\tau\delta\omicron\upsilon$. "Behold."

10 Literally: "and this is a woman, one sitting in the midst of the ephah."

"That woman represents wickedness."¹¹
 He then forced her back into the ephah,¹²
 and pushed down the lead weight into its opening.
 9 Then I looked up and I saw that two women were coming.
 The wind was ruffling their wings;
 (for they had wings like those of a stork.)¹³
 They lifted up the ephah, carrying it off between earth and sky.
 10 Then I said to the messenger (*or, angel*) who had spoken with me,
 "Where are they taking the ephah?"
 11 He told me,
 "To build a home (*or, shrine*) for it in the land of Shinar,¹⁴
 and when a pedestal (*or, plinth*) is prepared¹⁵
 they will place the ephah there."

<CHAPTER 6>

8 *The four chariots 6:1 - 8*
 (*God's patrols compass the earth*)

1 "I looked up again and saw
 four chariots coming from between two mountains;¹⁶
 and the mountains were like bronze (*or, copper*).¹⁷
 2 The first chariot had bay horses,
 the second had black horses;
 3 The third had white horses
 and the fourth chariot had dapple-gray¹⁸ horses.
 4 I asked the messenger (*or, angel*) who talked with me,
 'What are these, my lord?'
 5 The messenger (*or, angel*) replied;
 'These are the four winds (*or, spirits*)
 going out to present themselves
 before the Lord of all the earth.'
 6 [*The chariot with the bay horses goes east.*]¹⁹
 The chariot with the black²⁰ horses goes to the northern regions,
 The white ones go toward the western regions.²¹
 and the dappled ones to the southern regions."

11 The Hebrew word is feminine: *rshaih*. An antithesis of righteousness. The prophet personifies wickedness as a woman.

12 Wickedness attempts to escape and the angel with superior strength is able to confine her in the ephah.

13 In Hebrew there almost seems to be a play on words.

14 A name for the region around Babylon.

15 So: LXX. *καὶ ἐτοιμασά* "to make ready."

16 Apparently signifying the gateway to heaven. Babylonian mythology depicted the sun god rising between two mountains.

17 Possibly a description of the mountains with the rising sun giving the color of bronze (*or, copper*).

18 Hebrew uncertain. The Hebrew word *amaiwm* usually means "strong." LXX & Targums have a color. Omitted by Syriac.

19 This line is not found in most manuscripts. It would read: *harmis itsais al arts hqrs wi* There is some confusion in the manuscripts as to which horse and chariot goes north / east.

20 The Hebrew word for "black" seems to have fallen from some of the manuscripts.

21 Hebrew uncertain. So emended to be like the LXX. The Hebrew emendation would read: *arts hcis* or *achri chis* in place of the MT reading: *achr ihs*.

7 When the steeds came out
they were impatient²² to go to patrol²³ the earth,
and he gave the command:
'Go! Patrol the earth.'²⁴
So they patrolled the earth.
8 Then he alerted me, saying:
'Be attentive! Those who go toward the northern region
have appeased my wrath (*or, quieted my spirit*)²⁵ in the northern region.'

III. Symbolic crowning of a king-messiah 6:9 - 15

9 The word of the Lord came to me:
10 "Take²⁶ (*or, receive*) from the exiles,
Heldia,²⁷ Tobijah²⁸ and Jedaiah,²⁹
who have arrived from Babylon;
and on the same day
go to the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah.³⁰
11 Take silver and gold [*from them*]³¹ and make crowns,³²
and set one on the head of the High Priest Joshua,
the son of Jehozadak.
12 Say to him:
'This is what the Lord declares!'
Take notice! Here is a man
whose name is 'The Branch,'
for he will³³ branch out (*or, flourish*) in this place,
and he will build³⁴ the temple of the Lord.
13 It is he who will build the temple of the Lord
and will acquire royal majesty (*or, insignia*),³⁵
and will take upon himself the throne and rule³⁶
and at his right hand will be a priest.
Harmonious cooperation (*or, peaceful consultation*)

22 Literally: "sought to go."

23 Literally: "walked about through."

24 Who gave the command? Presumably the messenger (*or, angel*). Literally: "walked about through."

25 Literally: "caused my spirit to rest in." Emended it might read: "done the Lord's pleasure." Some scholars feel verse 15 should be inserted here as an appropriate ending to this section.

26 An imperative in Hebrew. Most translators add "a gift" based on verse 11.

27 Many recent translators treat this as a proper name. LXX: τῶν ἀρχόντων "the chief men." The Hebrew word might mean "mole."

28 The name means: "the Lord is good."

29 Jedaiah means "The Lord has been kind."

30 Hebrew uncertain. Literally: "go on that day yourself and go the house of the high priest."

31 Hebrew uncertain. Take from whom?

32 Hebrew: "crowns." LXX. singular. Crowns in the Middle East were circlets, thus two circlets because two metals are mentioned. It was not common to make items using a combination of metals. In those days bronze was the sole exception.

33 Literally: "from under him."

34 The Hebrew word implies the completion of the work.

35 NEB: "assume royal dignity."

36 Reading *mim niw* for *ailisaw*. So: LXX: ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ.

will exist between them."
 14 The crowns ³⁷ will be in the temple of the Lord as a memorial
 to Heldai, ³⁸ Tobijah, Jedaiah and Josiah, ³⁹ the son of Zephaniah
 15 "Those who are distant will arrive and help build ⁴⁰
 the temple (*or, sanctuary*) of the Lord.
 Then you will know that I have been sent
 by the Lord of Hosts,
 and it will take place.
 If you will diligently obey
 the voice of the Lord your God....." ⁴¹

<CHAPTER 7>

IV A deputation from Bethel asking questions about fasting 7:1 - 8:23

A The inquiry 7:1 - 3

1 In the fourth year of king Darius reign, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah, in the fourth day of the ninth month (namely Chislev). ⁴² 2 Now the people of Bethel ⁴³ had sent Sharezer ⁴⁴ and their men to entreat ⁴⁵ the favor of the Lord, 3 and to seek his favor through the priests and prophets of the Lord of Hosts: "Should I weep (*or, mourn*) and fast ⁴⁶ in the fifth month, as I have done for so many years? ⁴⁷

B Zechariah's reply 7:4 - 8:29

1 The first sermon 7:4 - 14

4 Then the word of the Lord of hosts came to me:
 5 "Say to the laity of the land,
 and to the priests,
 'While you fasted and lamented
 in the fifth and seventh months

37 Cf. Footnote 32.

38 Hebrew uncertain. Cf. V. 10. Syriac spells the name the same as in v. 10. Hebrew: *hlm* "Helm" which perhaps means "strength." The Hebrew word might be a man's name. It could also mean: "strike, beat, there, thus far."

39 The translation could be, in place of the name "Josiah," "and the gracious one, the son..."

40 Literally: "build in."

41 Verse 15 appears to be left unfinished. Cf. the note following verse 8. Other scholars feel this verse should follow 4:10. Are there examples of "progressive parallelism" as understood by William Hendriksen in *More Than Conquerors* pp. 34 - 36? Certainly the multiple use of horses prompts consideration of Hendricksen's understanding of Apocalyptic literature.

42 The month is November / December of the sacred year. It would be December 7th if the year was 518 BCE.

43 The name means "house of God."

44 Hebrew uncertain. The first portion of the verse has apparently been in a bad state of preservation over the centuries. The name Sharezer means "protect the king." LXX has Bethel as a place and Sharezer as a name, as does the Syriac and the Targums. Some scholars feel the name should be Bethelshaezer as a place name, implying that it was a town about 12 miles north of Jerusalem. "Then Bethelshaezer, the representative of the king." Other scholars would translate: "Now Bethel sent Elshaezer, the chief officer of the king." Several alternative, but yet probable suggestions for translation are: 1. "Now Bethel sent (El)sharezer the chief officer of the king and his men...." or, "then Bethelshaezer the representative of the king..."

45 Literally: "to stroke (or, soften) the face of the Lord."

46 Literally: "to separate oneself" i. e. "abstain." *nzr* The root word is the word Nazarite. (Cf. Numbers 6)

47 The fast marked the destruction of the temple. 587 or 586 BCE. The day had been hallowed by observance through weeping and fasting for more than 60 years.

for this entire seventy year period,
did you really fast for my benefit? ⁴⁸
6 When you were eating and drinking,
was it not to please (*or, satisfy*) yourselves?
7 When Jerusalem was inhabited and prosperous
with all its towns around it
and the Negeb ⁴⁹ and the Shephelah (*or, the foothills*),
were not these the words which the Lord proclaimed
by the earlier prophets? "

8 The Word of the Lord came to Zechariah, saying:
9 "This is what the Lord of Hosts declares!
Execute absolute justice;
practice kindness and compassion toward each other,
(*or, Judge with justice and truth
and act with loyalty and compassion,
each one toward his brother / sister.*)
10 and do not defraud the widows or orphans,
the immigrants (*or, temporary residents*) or the poor.
Do not contrive evil plots against one another."

11 But: they refused to listen ⁵⁰
and they turned their rebellious backs
and refused to listen ⁵¹ so that they would not hear.
12 They hardened their hearts to be like a hard stone, ⁵²
so that they would not hear the instruction
(*or, and turn a deaf ear to the Law*)
which the Lord of Hosts had sent
through his spirit by means of the earlier prophets.
Therefore great wrath comes from the Lord of Hosts.

13 "When I kept on calling,
they would not listen
In like manner, when they call
I will not listen" declares the Lord of Hosts.

14 "I scattered (*or, dispersed*) ⁵³ them with a whirlwind ⁵⁴
throughout all the nations which were unknown to them.

48 Literally: "fasting did you fast for me."

49 Or, "the south."

50 The Hebrew word implies more than just hearing for it also calls for a response through action.

51 Literally: "made their ears heavy." I. e. "stopped their ears."

52 Literally: "adamant" which in ancient times was used to describe a stone or metal that was presumed to be unbreakable.

Some translate "flint" or "corundum." One modern speech translator uses "diamond."

53 Hebrew unclear. Literally: "I will blow them away."

54 Literally: "stormed them away upon all."

The land they left behind was made desolate
so that no one traversed it.⁵⁵
They caused what had been a delightful land
to become desolate."⁵⁶

<CHAPTER 8>

V. Five relevant sayings 8:1 - 8

- 1 Then the word of the Lord of Hosts came to me, saying:
1st. saying 2 The Lord of Hosts declares:
"I feel very jealous (*or, indignant*) for Zion,
I feel fiercely jealous (*or, indignant*).
My jealous indignation for her
fills me with jealous wrath."⁵⁷
- 2nd saying* 3 The Lord declares thus:
"I have returned to Zion,
and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem,
and Jerusalem will be called
'the city of faithfulness,'
and the mountain of the Lord of Hosts,
will be called 'the mountain of holiness.'"⁵⁸
- 3rd saying* 4 The Lord of Hosts declares:
"Men and women who have attained great age
rest in the plazas⁵⁹ of Jerusalem,
each having a staff in hand,
because of their advanced age."⁶⁰
5 The plazas of the city will be crowded
with boys and girls
playing (*or, laughing*)⁶¹ in the plazas."
- 4th saying* 6 The Lord of Hosts declares:
"Even if it is a marvel⁶²
in the sight of the survivors (*or, remnant*) of the people,
[*in those days*]⁶³
will it be marvelous for me?"

55 Literally: "from passing and from returning."

56 The tragedy is twofold. 1. The population is scattered. 2. The pleasant land has been devastated and is empty.

57 This saying recalls 1:14. In Hebrew the word order forms a chiasmus. "I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy;
with great ardor am I jealous for her."

58 This saying recalls 1:14b-16; 2:10.

59 The Hebrew word *bbrhbit* should be translated as "squares" or "plazas" not "streets" as is often done by translators.

60 Possibly the older people are recalling the disasters of 787 BCE. Cf. Lamentations 2:21.

61 The Hebrew root word can mean "to laugh, play, entertain, joke, be happy or hold a tournament."

62 Hebrew: *pla* "wonder, astonishment, miracle."

63 Generally considered to be a gloss and is often omitted by translators.

declares the Lord of Hosts.
(*or, "Even though it may seem impossible
to the remnant of the people,
should that make it impossible to me?"
declares the Lord of Hosts.
or, "...it will also seem wonderful to me.)"*)

5th saying

7 The Lord of Hosts declares:
"Behold! I am about to rescue⁶⁴ my people
from the region of the east,
and from the region of the west,⁶⁵
8 I will cause them to come (*or, I will bring them*)
and they will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem.
They will be my people,
and I will be their God,
in truth and righteousness."

VI The second sermon 8:9 - 17

a. Part 1 The immediate past 8:9 - 13

9 The Lord of Hosts declares:
"Take courage! Be strong!
During these days you have been hearing words
spoken by the prophets.
Since the day when the foundation
of the temple of the Lord of Hosts was laid,
[*that it might be reconstructed.*]⁶⁶
10 Prior to those days⁶⁷
neither people nor animals were hired for money,
nor was it safe because of enemies;⁶⁸
for whoever went out (*or, traveled about*), ---⁶⁹
since I had turned individuals against everyone else.
11 But now ----
I will not treat the survivors (*or, remnant*)
as they were treated in the past,"
declares the Lord of Hosts.
12 "In fact, the seeds of peace⁷⁰ and prosperity
will grow for they have already been sown.
The grape vines will be productive,

64 The Hebrew word *ishai* can mean "save, rescue, deliver from captivity."

65 Literally: "rising" and "setting sun."

66 Some scholars feel this is a later insertion.

67 I.e. prior to the days when the temple work was begun in earnest.

68 Possibly a reference to the Samaritans. Cf. Ezra 4:1 - 5. The Hebrew word *tsrr* "adversary" applies to foreign nations hostile to Israel: those who profaned and destroyed the temple.

69 A Hebrew idiom having military significance.

70 The Hebrew word is *shlm* Shalom. Literally: "seeds of peace." There is no verb in the clause in Hebrew.

the earth will yield its produce
and the sky will provide moisture (*or, dew*).
I will bestow all these things as an inheritance
for the survivors (*or, remnant*) for the people to possess.
13 Just as you have been the subject of curses among the nations,
O house of Judah and house of Israel,
in the same manner I will deliver you,
and you will be vindicated (*or, be blessed*).
Have no fear! Take courage!"

b. Part two 8:14 - 17

(What God undertakes and what God expects)

14 The Lord of Hosts declares:
"I devised afflicting you with disaster
at the time your fathers provoked me to wrath,
and I did not relent,"
declares the Lord of Hosts,
15 "but now I have resolved, in these days,
to do good to Jerusalem,
and also to the house of Judah.
Have no fear!
16 These are the things you will do:
Speak truthfully⁷¹ to one another
administer justice in your gates,⁷²
make judgments that are true and make for peace.
17 Do not plot evilly in your hearts against each other,
and do not commit perjury (*or, lie*),
because I hate all these things!"⁷³
declares the Lord.

VII The answer 8:18 - 19

18 The word of the Lord of Hosts came to me, saying:
19 "The Lord of Hosts declares:
The fast of the fourth month,
and the fast of the fifth,
and the fast of the seventh month,
and the fast of the tenth month,⁷⁴
will become occasions for joy and gladness,
cheerfulness and festivals for the house of Judah.

71 The Hebrew word *tma* characterizes both Jerusalem as well as God's dealings with her.

72 The gate of the city was the location of the court of law.

73 These verses, 16 & 17 are a brief code of laws. Cf. 7:9, 10.

74 Some scholars feel the basis of the fasts is the recalling of events, as follows: 4th month: the fall of Jerusalem II Kings 25; 5th month: the burning of the temple II Kings 25; 7th month: murder of Gedaliah Jeremiah 41; 10th month: final siege of Jerusalem II Kings 25.

Therefore you must love truth and peace!"

*VIII The sermon's conclusion 8:20 - 23
(Universal longing for God)*

20 The Lord of Hosts declares:

"People ⁷⁵ will come again, even city dwellers.

21 The inhabitants of one city will go to another,
saying, 'Let us most certainly go to seek help
from the Lord
and find the Lord of Hosts.'

'Let me go as well!'

22 Many people will come,
strong nations will come,
to seek the Lord of Hosts in Jerusalem,
and to seek help (*or, entreat*) the Lord."

23 Thus the Lord declares:

"In those days
ten men from the nations,
speaking a variety of languages,
will seize hold of the corner of a robe,
of a Judean person, saying,
'Let us go with you (*or, share your destiny*),
because we have heard that God is with you.'"

75 I. e. those of other races and nationalities.