

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH

Lesson 10, Chapters 5 and 6

We ended our previous lesson at Zechariah chapter 5, verse 7, and we were left with a couple of questions to answer. They were: what has a lead lid over the ephah basket to do with anything, and why would there be a woman inside that basket? Before we address those matters, keep in mind that chapters 5 and 6 are said by most Bible commentators to be all about the topic of God's judgment. My only disagreement is that I dislike the use of the term "judgment" because as it is thought of in modern times in the Western world (especially in the religious sphere), judgment always means a negative decision or outcome. Judgment is taken to mean the dealing out of punishment for transgressions. A better term that more exemplifies what is happening is "justice". Justice is a more neutral term, which Westerners understand means to consider facts and then render a proper and fair verdict. The outcome can be negative or positive depending upon the decision of the judge based on the evidence before him.

So, in chapters 5 and 6, God is rendering justice first upon the Israelites as individuals. Next it is upon them as a nation of people (a corporate justice). And finally, justice upon the gentile nations (that is, everyone else except Israel). In each instance, a case is presented, and a verdict is rendered. Interestingly, while God is the presiding judge, it is as the Chief Justice of His Heavenly Council; the Council of divine beings called ***elohim*** that are the administrators of Heaven. They are to carry out God's will in Heaven, just as humans are to carry out God's will on earth. All of this is expressed in ultra-complex and mysterious symbolism, some of which can rather clearly be figured out, but the remainder is much tougher, and we can't be too rigid on what we think it might be getting to until the prophecy finally plays out. Part of the reason for this complexity and its several uncertainties is that it deals with both Zechariah's present and also his far future; some things even future to us (though nearer than ever), like the End Times.

In so much of the Bible...the vast majority of it... we can read a few paragraphs and come to some reasonable conclusions about the point or points being made. Zechariah is radically different. Going through Zechariah is like working

our way through a well-constructed murder mystery novel, in which clues are dropped chapter by chapter, but the reader can't make full sense of it all until the end because that's how the author intends it. We are still fairly early on in the dropping of clues in Zechariah; but if we don't carefully examine each clue (each symbol) then we'll not be able to properly put the pieces together even at the end. Or we'll come to a wrong conclusion. So, hang in there.

Since chapter 5 is short (11 verses), for the sake of context, we'll re-read it all.

RE-READ ZECHARIAH CHAPTER 5 all

I'll mention again that when we examine each symbolic element, we must do so in light of the knowledge that we must take each element as but part of a whole, and we must do that as it would be understood in the minds of the ancient Israelites in the 6th century B.C. in a Hebrew culture... as best we can.

In this present symbolism, the woman in the basket represents wickedness. This same theme gets carried out in much later times (End Times) as the Harlot of Babylon; a woman again representing wickedness. In the case of the ephah, it is a Hebrew cultural object, so the ephah represents Israel's corporate sins. Here's the greater point of the combined symbols: as applies to Zechariah's day, it is individual grains that are collected together to fill the ephah basket and so in like kind are individual sinful Israelites brought together into one basket to be brought to justice before God. As it applies to future times, the individual grains are likened to individual sinners from every nation on earth, and they, too, will be collected into one basket to be brought to justice before God.

The lead lid on top of the ephah held captive the sinners until God was ready to mete out His justice. In fact, the lead lid seemed to somewhat hide from Israel the truth of their own sin until God was ready to deal with it. I dare say, only very few people ever see themselves as wicked no matter how disobedient to God that they might be. God worshippers, especially, have a penchant for thinking that if they merely "believe" in God, then they must be good. And the Constantinian Church has gone a long way towards convincing

their congregants that once saved by believing in Christ, then your sinning is of no further consequence and in a sense, is no longer sin. Simply believing in Jesus is sufficient for The Father to see you and all your actions as righteous. This is a dangerously erroneous doctrine. What was happening in Israel in Bible times...what we are seeing via symbolism in Zechariah... is Israel believing the same way the Church does today. Oh, yes (they think)... there are wicked people. It just can't be us. Those who think that way are those grains in the ephah, and the lead lid prevents them from escaping and from seeing their own sin as wickedness, despite them having God's Word that gives us all His commands and rules. Divine justice is coming in the future for those who think that way, just as it did for the Israelites who thought similarly.

If you want to get a good mental illustration of a certain oft quoted passage of Revelation, to see how it applies directly to God worshippers of every ilk, then picture Zechariah's ephah basket as the End Times container and gathering place of the wicked as I read it to you yet again:

CJB Revelation 18:4-5 ***⁴ Then I heard another voice out of heaven say: "My people, come out of her! so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not be infected by her plagues, ⁵ for her sins are a sticky mass piled up to heaven, and God has remembered her crimes.***

The only way any of us come out of the ephah basket that is destined for justice is FIRST to recognize and confess our wicked condition and our error-filled doctrinal beliefs. Then SECOND, we have to consciously heed God's call to "come out of her", leaving all that sin and heresy behind us regardless of the personal cost.

Moving to verse 9, we read:

CJB Zechariah 5:9 ***⁹ I raised my eyes and saw two women coming with the wind in their wings; for they had wings like those of a stork. They lifted the eifah up between the earth and the sky.***

Next we read that the basket was flown away to Shinar by these female winged creatures, where a shrine or a temple would be built to it. Why are these winged creatures specifically female? There is nothing definite to indicate why that is. Human-like winged creatures are usual fare in the Bible. Cherubim are perhaps the closest mental picture to these 2 female creatures. However, the winged Cherubim are decidedly depicted as male in the Bible. So, these 2 creatures cannot be Cherubs. I lean towards them not being any more real than the woman in the basket but are only invented figures for use as symbols. If they are real, they are certainly Heavenly creatures sent by God, but we can know no more. Some commentators want to draw a connection between the figure in the basket as being a woman and the winged creatures as female. Perhaps there is a connection but none I can discern.

Let's return for a few moments to the woman in the basket, again remembering the effect this symbol would have had on 6th century B.C. Israelite minds. There was still a world full of gods, goddesses, shrines, priests and prophets of all kinds, and a world full of people (including most Israelites) who still worshipped those many gods and goddesses... it is only that Israel had but one God whose name was Yehoveh. Stay with me, because while technical it serves to explain more about what is being depicted and how we are to understand it.

In Hebrew, the word used for wickedness is **harishah**. It means The Wickedness (or The Evil), and NOT simply wickedness. In other words, The Wickedness is the name of the woman. It characterizes her and is the opposite of righteousness. Importantly, of the 13 times it is used in Scripture, it always has some connection to idolatry. So, a good way to think of the meaning of **harishah** is wickedness associated with idolatry. And, to God, idolatry is the supreme wickedness.

Because the figure in the ephah is a woman, then in the pagan god systems, she represents a goddess. Chief among all the goddesses is Ishtar, the fertility goddess that is married to Ba'al. She is also known in the Bible (such as in Jeremiah) as the Queen of Heaven, a direct link to the cult of Ishtar. Jeremiah was very concerned about this cult having gained a foothold in Judah during the time of the Kings. Therefore, in verse 10 when the Interpreting Angel is

asked by Zechariah where it was that the ephah with the woman in it was being flown to, the response was "to build a shrine" in the Land of Shinar. Shrines (or temples) were for gods and goddesses, so indeed the woman in the basket must have been symbolic of a goddess.

Thus (again symbolically) wickedness in the form of idolatry is being returned to the place it comes from: Shinar. Or, in later Bible Times and on through the End Times, it is called Babylon. Babylon, throughout the Old and New Testaments, stands for the chaos and confusion that idolatry brings with it. With this knowledge, let's have Scripture make another connection for us.

CJB Genesis 10:8-10 ***⁸ Kush fathered Nimrod, who was the first powerful ruler on earth. ⁹ He was a mighty hunter before ADONAI - this is why people say, "Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before ADONAI."***

¹⁰ His kingdom began with Bavel (Babylon), Erekh, Akkad and Kalneh, in the land of Shin'ar.

Here we see that the infamous Nimrod, an adversary of God and idolator on a grand scale, is the founder of the Land of Shinar and is also historically credited as a forefather of the pagan god systems of Mesopotamia. Shinar was eventually called Babylon. And, here in Zechariah, the goddess of fertility that represents wicked idolatry is being taken back to her place of origin, to a shrine erected for her in Babylon. That is where she belongs; she does NOT belong in Israel. Interestingly, in the Torah, the Scapegoat ritual observed on Yom Kippur does the same thing. One of the two scapegoats is loaded up with the sin and iniquity for all Israel and sent out to a desert demon called Azazel... symbolizing sin being packaged up and returned to its demonic source.

The bottom line is this: this symbolic scene has the idolatrous being separated from the righteous of God's people, and then being gathered up in order to be sent away to the kingdom of the ungodly to be lorded over by the fertility goddess, Ishtar. I have spoken to you since the first Torah Class teaching in the Book of Genesis that a most basic God-principle is that Yehoveh deals with people and nations by means of division, election, and separation. That is what

is happening here. Yeshua came to do the same, only from a different perspective. As much as we all cringe at what we see happening within the Church, within our nations, and within our politics, the polarization of our societies into distinct pro-God versus anti-God factions leads the way. This process has made highly visible the God-principle of division, election, and separation. The righteous and the wicked are being gathered into two groups and then the two groups are being separated further apart at a slow pace until Yeshua returns to administer divine justice as warranted to each group.

Let's move on to chapter 6.

READ CHAPTER 6 all

The vision of the 4 chariots is the 7th one. All of Zechariah's vision/oracles have (so far) occurred in one night. Biblically, 4 represents universality. That is, like the 4 compass directions it represents the entirety and the extent of the earth. Chariots are by nature used for war. They are not used for scouting out and reporting information. They are sent out for the purpose of taking action. Most scholars wish to equate these 4 chariots with the 4 horses of named colors in the first vision. I am troubled by this line of thinking because only 3 of those 4 horses were sent out to roam the earth. So, while there are similarities, it is simply not scripturally accurate to tightly connect the first and the seventh visions merely because they both employed horses. At least it certainly is not accurate from the standpoint of the number of horses sent out by God to do something.

If we hope to find some kind of connection between the first and seventh visions, it is probably this: each has God doing something to demonstrate His universal interest and sovereignty. He is Lord over ALL the earth... not parts of it. The many pagan god systems, each associated to a certain nation, more or less claim territorial authority only over certain parts of the globe, but not all, because each god system recognizes the validity and sovereignty of the others. Empire builders, of course, aspire to expanding that influence and authority. The Israelite God's claim to be inherently sovereign over the entire planet was itself a call for confrontation as far as other nations were concerned. I suspect that this will be the foundational cause of the many

nations of the world coming to battle Israel at Armageddon. It's not that these nations will all join in a strategic alliance and fellowship with one another. Rather it is that they will gather at a common place, against a common enemy, mostly in their separate interests to establish and demonstrate their individual national independence and authority on earth by confronting a God that says otherwise. Just as Nimrod openly challenged God's authority over him, so will the nations do the same in the war to end all wars.

In the first vision, God sent out 3 horsemen, at night, to stealthily scout out the earth like a divine CIA. In the seventh vision of chapter 6, God sends out 4 chariots to take action on the earth like an unstoppable imperial army. These 2 events symbolically send the message of Yehoveh's total knowledge and control over the affairs of humanity, but also that despite the nations' governments believing that they were each independent and in control of their own destiny, in fact they existed and operated only by God's permission. And, when they have gone too far, He will destroy them.

The meaning of the different colors of the horses pulling the 4 chariots has been much debated, and some quite creative explanations have been put forth, but nothing convincing. Just as with the horses of the first vision, I also can find no significant meaning behind the horse colors listed in this seventh vision other than it is merely to help identify them one from the other. There are also a number of commentators who question the meaning of the number of chariots by saying that they each represents God dealing with one or the other of the series of 4 world empires in history. Again, unconvincing, since there have been more than 4 so-called world empires to come and go (depending on how one wants to define it), and in truth, none of them even incorporated but a part of the entire world, even of the extent of the **known** world as it was in the 6th century B.C. let alone the entire world, most of which was unknown to them in that era.

Still in verse 1, we read that these 4 chariots come from between 2 mountains. The important thing to see here is that there is a definite place and a direction from which the 4 chariots are sent out. And, what we learn in the next several verses is that the chariots are sent out from where Yehoveh resides on earth (explained in vs. 5) to the far-away northlands and also the

southlands. These mountains made of brass are yet another symbolic element for which there are a few different interpretations. Some commentators find these mountains as not stemming from anything real, but rather are just more invented symbolic elements. For instance, mountains in the ancient Near and Far East typically represented political entities... governments and kings. They also represented the abode of the gods and goddesses that were always on the highest geographical places. Therefore, other scholars believe that these 2 mountains are based on eastern mythology, and probably more specifically Sun-god mythology. On the other hand, some academics think these 2 mountains are identifiable as actual places... and I agree with that. But in no way can they be part of any former or current mythological god-system because it is clear from chapter 6 that it from the Hebrew God's earthly abode... which is Jerusalem... that the chariots are being sent. So, which 2 mountains are these, exactly? In my way of thinking they can only be Mt. Moriah and the Mt. of Olives, which sit opposite one another and are separated by the Valley of Jehoshaphat in the city of God's presence, Jerusalem. Jehoshaphat means Yehoveh judges or perhaps Yehoveh is Judge. And indeed, it will be from here that God sends forth His judgments (His justice as symbolized by the 4 chariots) upon the nations. Therefore, it only makes sense that the chariots are being sent from between Mt. Moriah and the Mt. of Olives...meaning from the Valley of Jehoshaphat, the place of judging.

But, why mountains of bronze? Because in that era bronze represented something firm and indestructible. Never would God's abode get moved to someplace else by the will of humans. Jerusalem is the capital of His earthly kingdom, and it will always be so. To my friends in the traditional Church who are listening and watching, I pray that neither you nor your congregational leadership nor your denomination is one that supports dividing Jerusalem into independent Muslim and Jewish sides, thereby making it the capital of 2 religions for what is seen as the sake of fairness and even-handedness. The Bible tells us over and over...including in the New Testament... that Jerusalem is Israel's forever capital and God's forever earthy dwelling place. For anyone to determine to split God's holy city and give part of it to a false god named Allah is the height of self-destructive folly. It is rebellion and it is idolatry. To think that 2 Temples to 2 different gods erected upon the Temple Mount in Yehoveh's designated Holy City are going to be acceptable to Him is only

possible if one has no real Bible knowledge, or one simply doesn't believe that the Bible is our source of divine truth, and therefore need not be our guide for our choices and behaviors. So, beware. Ancient Israel attempted such things and were thrown out of their land, punished severely, and came not far from extinction on more than one occasion. And, in this, Yeshua will not be rescuing you should you join in with such blasphemies.

In verse 4, Zechariah reveals his lack of understanding of what it is he is seeing. So, he asks the Interpreting Angel "What are these, my lord?". As a reminder, although many Bibles capitalize the word Lord (meaning to imply that this Angel is actually Jesus), that is simply incorrect. Rather, the word is **adon** and it is a generic and broadly used Hebrew word of respect that means something like "sir". Unlike in earlier visions when Zechariah asks this same question, this time the Angel doesn't respond with "don't you know what these are?". Instead, he straightaway gives Zechariah the answer. He says that "these are the 4 winds of the sky that go out". While that is what the CJB and a few other versions say, other versions say, "these are the 4 winds of heaven". In context, I think "heaven" is more correct.

In the ancients' way of thinking, there was a fuzzy line between sky and heaven. Above their heads was "heaven" where the clouds moved by, the stars hung, and at the top of heaven is where God lived. There were minor variations of that understanding but this well expresses how they thought of it. Further, notice that the Hebrew word **ruchot** (which is the plural of **ruach**, and what is used here for winds) also means spirits. So, this helps us to see the mindset of these ancients about the invisible but powerful qualities of wind and spirit being connected in some mysterious way. Thus, when the Angel says, "these chariots are the 4 winds of heaven", this could be equally as well translated as the 4 **spirits** of heaven. Armed with this understanding, we get a great example of how this thinking works in a Psalm of David.

CJB Psalm 104:1-4 ***Bless Yehoveh my soul! Yehoveh my God, you are very great; you are clothed with glory and majesty, ² wrapped in light as with a robe. You spread out the heavens like a curtain, ³ you laid the beams of your palace on the water. You make the clouds your***

chariots, you ride on the wings of the wind. ⁴ You make winds your messengers, fiery flames your servants.

While this *is* poetry, don't think that these words are not reflections of how David and those before and after him thought about the operation of heaven, clouds, winds, etc. Thus, the idea is that the 4 chariots are as invisible as wind and spirit, they're powerful, they are heavenly in source, and they have free, fast, and easy range over the entire earth...heaven and earth being Yehoveh's realm and the two operating in some mysterious tandem.

Back to verse 5. The first half says that the chariots are the 4 winds of heaven, and the last half says that they go out AFTER presenting themselves to the Lord of the land. Since the ONLY earthly abode of the Lord of the land is Jerusalem (and here, as in most places in the Bible, Lord of the land is referring to the Lord of the land of Israel as opposed to Lord of all the Earth), then this is where we have confirmed that the chariots are being sent out from Jerusalem.

Verse 6 says where the chariots are being sent, and it explains it by pointing to the color of the horse pulling each chariot. However, the verse is problematic because only 3 of the 4 are mentioned. We're told that the black horse (or horses) is sent to the northlands, and the dappled to the southlands. The white horse is not given a direction and so some translations word it such that the white horse follows the black horse towards the northlands. This seems mostly unlikely. So, some scholars say that there was a copyist error in the transmission of the ancient text, and it should say that the white horse with its chariot went to the west. Nice attempt, but that is pure speculation backed up by no evidence. Also notice that the 4th horse, the red one, is not mentioned at all. Again, some scholars say this was a copyist error but there is no evidence for such a conclusion other than the scholar assuming that surely all 4 chariots dispersed into the 4 compass directions. That is possible.

So, of the 2 directions that *are* given (the north and the south), who or what might this represent? Once again, we must always unpack this from the mind of a 6th century B.C. Israelite and not from how we view the world today. For Israel, the north was Mesopotamia and Asia. More specifically, this is the land

beyond the Euphrates River that during Israelite history has alternately been governed primarily by Babylon and Assyria. Should Persia be included in this? Only in the sense that Persia conquered Babylon and took over their empire, however they were largely beneficent rulers over Judah and so wasn't so much looked at as an arch enemy. To the south was Egypt where that nation was alternately an enemy and a friend, but primarily an enemy.

Verse 7 throws a curve ball at us, and it has been most difficult to decipher it to any level of confidence. The CJB says it this way:

^{CJB} Zechariah 6:7 *Then the gray ones went out and were seeking to go and wander throughout the whole earth, when he said, "Wander throughout the whole earth"; and they did wander throughout the whole earth.*

The NAS says:

^{NAS} Zechariah 6:7 *"When the strong ones went out, they were eager to go to patrol the earth." And He said, "Go, patrol the earth." So they patrolled the earth.*

The RSV says:

^{RSV} Zechariah 6:7 *When the steeds came out, they were impatient to get off and patrol the earth. And he said, "Go, patrol the earth." So they patrolled the earth.*

The same Hebrew word is being translated to English as gray ones, strong ones, and steeds...quite the variation. Various other Bible versions say something along these lines but with further deviations. A solution was offered by Eric Meyers that I think has merit. The word that is translated variously as dappled, gray and even steeds is in Hebrew ***beruddim***. Not really knowing for certain what color this is, most translators going back at least 1000 years decided it was some mix of colors. Meyers says that perhaps we ought not to think of it as a color but rather as a pattern (like spotted, stripped or plaid speaks in terms of a pattern or a collection of colors rather than a specific

color). Furthermore, the word **amussim** immediately follows **beruddim** and **amussim** means something like "strong ones" or "the mighty". Possibly those 2 words were meant to be used together as an expression that essentially means a collective... a conglomerate of mighty ones. If his proposal is correct, it does make more sense when we read it and dismisses the most popular academic idea that the verse was corrupted at some point in history. To summarize, the idea is that these horses and chariots are collectively referred to as steeds or strong ones, and they are all being sent out. The black is specifically sent north, a conglomerate of them south, and the white toward some other unspecified direction or directions.

The bottom line for us is not to get hung up about which color of horse went where. If we stick with the passages as we have them today, what we can know is that only 2 directions were specifically called out, the north and the south. And that north and south are in geographical relation to Jerusalem's location. North and south are the directions from where Israel's enemies have attacked them over the centuries, and no doubt this will maintain right through the End Times. Let's talk now about another important nuance in this passage.

Verse 7 also characterizes the level of vigor of the chariots and horses going out. The CJB says they were seeking to go out, the NAS says they were eager to go out, and the RSV says they were impatient to go out. There is nothing definitive enough for us to convincingly draw a conclusion about the intensity of the horses' desire to go out. Yet, context always matters. The nature and purpose of war chariots is violence and aggression. In Zechariah's first vision it speaks of the horses being sent out stealthily and quietly to scout out the earth to gain information. So, in that case, characterizing them as "roaming" or "wandering" makes good sense. But war chariots don't "roam". War chariots attack with intensity. So, it seems to me that it is self-evident that these horses with their chariots were indeed eager and impatient to do what they were designed and destined to do, and that is the better way to understand it. They were chomping-at-the-bit (so to speak) to be sent out to make war.

I've had so many questions asked of me, and I've wondered internally, why God doesn't find another way to deal with humans than war since He is said to

be a loving God that values peace and life. And, why it seems that in the history of mankind wars and rumors of wars never end except for the briefest of moments. My conclusion is this: God determined from the moment of Creation to use humans to bring about His will on earth, and humans are war-oriented by the nature handed down to us by the fallen Adam and Eve. The sad reality is that all major disagreements among nations and large people groups have, throughout the ages, ultimately been settled by war.

Over a century ago, in 1920, as a result of the horrors of WWI governments of the Western world worked to form what became known as the League of Nations. Ultimately, 63 nations became part of it. The goal was find a different way than catastrophic wars to settle the differences between nations. It was still in operation when the largest war to ever be fought on this planet erupted...WWII. Clearly, even with the best of intentions, they were unable to achieve their goal. At the end of WWII, a new entity named the United Nations was formed in 1945 to try again. The UN and the League of Nations lived side by side, but eventually the League of Nations withered away. Clearly, the United Nations, even with all its clout, has also failed miserably to prevent terrible wars, and today the world has more and worse wars going on everywhere than it has in many decades, perhaps more than ever. The reason for this is frustratingly simple: war is in man's nature, because evil is fundamental to man's nature. As long as evil exists, war will exist, and it will remain as the means to settle differences between nations.

We even read in the Bible of war in the heavenlies. Again, that is because evil (opposition to God's will) exists there as well. Thus, every humanistic effort by man to end wars for good will fail. Ironically, even a war is required to end all wars (Armageddon) must happen, as Yeshua returns to lead that battle, and even then, it is not truly the end to war or evil. As we learn in the Prophets, towards the end of the 1000-year reign of Christ, a rebellion will erupt in God's Kingdom, but it will be put down quickly. And then at that time Satan, the demons, and the human evil inclination will be brought to an end by means of ruthless warlike destruction of all creatures...spiritual or physical...who still harbor evil, and this time it will be once and for all.

Believers, as we continue in Zechariah, and as we have read of God's war chariots being sent out throughout the earth, and as we'll read more about the conflagrations of the End Times, let us understand this all in the perspective that Yeshua told us to have before He departed this earth.

CJB Matthew 24:6-25 ***6 You will hear the noise of wars nearby and the news of wars far off; see to it that you don't become frightened. Such things must happen, but the end is yet to come. 7 For peoples will fight each other, nations will fight each other, and there will be famines and earthquakes in various parts of the world; 8 all this is but the beginning of the 'birth-pains.'** 9 At that time you will be arrested and handed over to be punished and put to death, and all peoples will hate you because of me. 10 At that time many will be trapped into betraying and hating each other,¹¹ many false prophets will appear and fool many people; ¹² and many people's love will grow cold because of increased distance from Torah. ¹³ But whoever holds out till the end will be delivered. ¹⁴ And this Good News about the Kingdom will be announced throughout the whole world as a witness to all the Goyim. It is then that the end will come. ¹⁵ "So, when you see the abomination that causes devastation spoken about through the prophet Dani'el standing in the Holy Place" (let the reader understand the allusion), ¹⁶ "that will be the time for those in Y'udah to escape to the hills. ¹⁷ If someone is on the roof, he must not go down to gather his belongings from his house; ¹⁸ if someone is in the field, he must not turn back to get his coat. ¹⁹ What a terrible time it will be for pregnant women and nursing mothers! ²⁰ Pray that you will not have to escape in winter or on Shabbat. ²¹ For there will be trouble then worse than there has ever been from the beginning of the world until now, and there will be nothing like it again! ²² Indeed, if the length of this time had not been limited, no one would survive; but for the sake of those who have been chosen, its length will be limited. ²³ "At that time, if someone says to you, 'Look! Here's the Messiah!' or, 'There he is!' don't believe him. ²⁴ For there will appear false Messiahs and false prophets performing great miracles- amazing things!- so as to fool even the chosen, if possible. ²⁵ There! I have told you in advance!*

We'll continue in Zechariah chapter 6 next time.