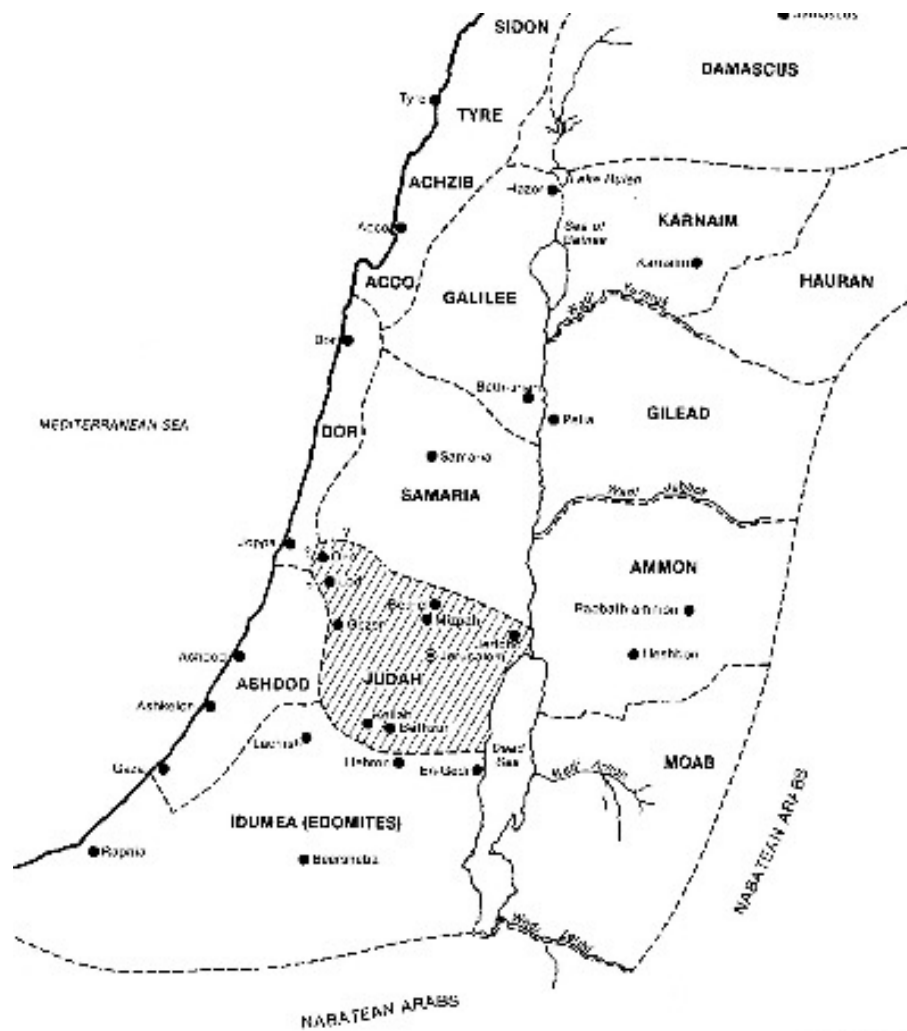
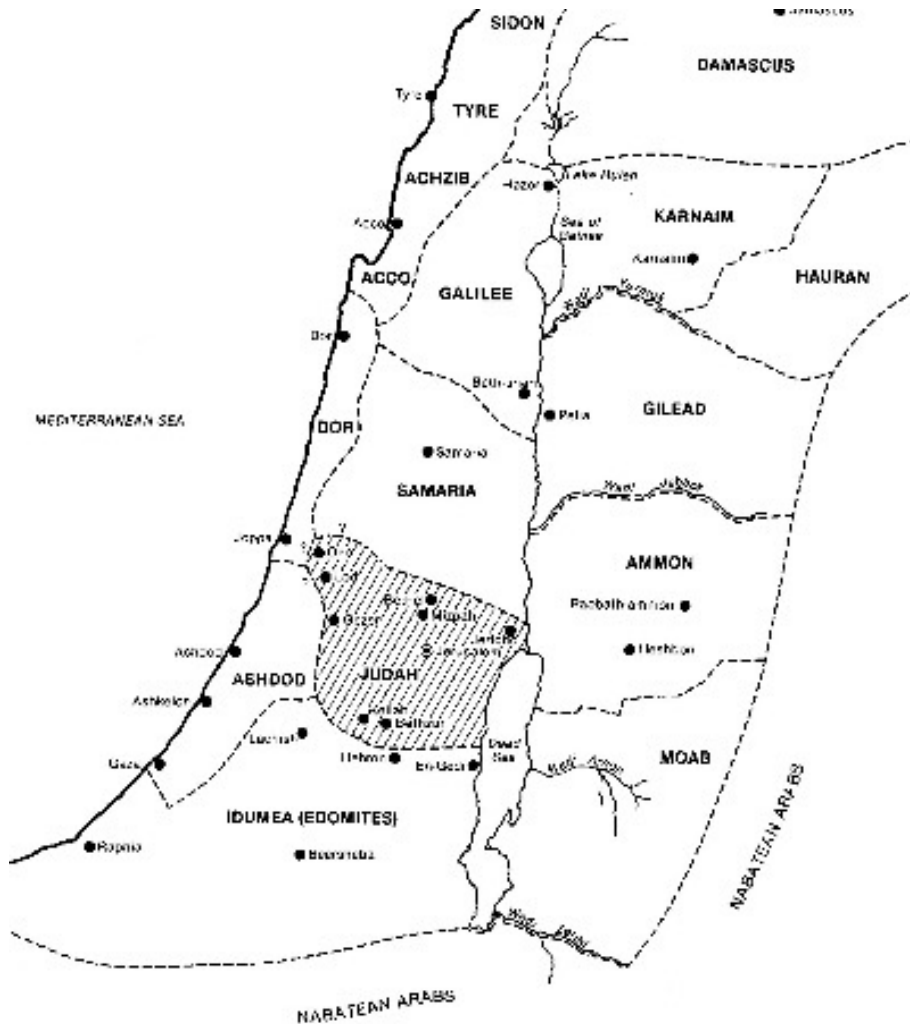


II. Zechariah 5:20-5:18



Back in Judah

- Judah was part of the Trans-Euphrates satrapy ['protectorate'].



- 538 : Edict of Cyrus permitting return of exiles to Jerusalem with the financial support to rebuild their temple (see Ezra 1:2-4; 6:2-5)

- 537 : Small initial group under Sheshbazzar (Ezra 1:5-11; 5:13-15; 1Chronicles 3:18). Temple foundations laid, but the work not continued .
(Ezra 5:14ff).

Judah before the exile

Judah (Yehud) after the exile

**JUDAH AFTER THE FALL OF ISRAEL
722-640 B.C.E.**



**JUDAH AS A PROVINCE OF THE PERSIAN EMPIRE
445-333 B.C.E.**



530 **Cyrus** was killed in battle in 530 and was succeeded by his son, Cambyses

522 **Cambyses** died rather mysteriously on his way back from a successful campaign in Egypt.

‘With the death of Cyrus’s successor Cambyses, a major uprising shook the Persian Empire. As part of an effort to pacify the empire, **Darius** decided to launch a more serious drive to recolonize Judah as a strategic military and political salient on the frontier with troublesome Egypt’(Gottwald).



The Persian Empire remained stable for a century:

Darius I (522-486), Xerxes I (486-465) and Artaxerxes I (465-424).

This dashed hopes of a restoration of a Davidic king.



MACEDONIA

BLACK SEA

BOSPORUS

Thermopylae
Delphi
Marathon
Salamis

IONIA

Sardis

PHRYGIA

LYDIA

Mycale

Nemrud Dagh

CHILICIA

Issus

Gaugamela

Dura

EUROPOS

ASSYRIA

Babylon

PHOENICIA-

SYRIA

Jerusalem

Memphis

Darius Canal

EGYPT

Elephantine

KUSH

0 500
Miles

RED SEA

ARABIA

CASPIAN SEA

TIBARENE

ALARODIA

ARMENIA

LAKE VAN

LAKE URMIA

CASPIA

Hasanlu

Ziwiye

Godin

Ecbatana

Nush-i Jan

Behistun

MEDIA

LURISTAN

Susa

IRANIAN PLATEAU

SAGARTIA-SARANGIA

SUSIANA

Tang-i Sarvak

Pasargadae

Naqsh-i Rostam

Persepolis

PERSIA

PERSIAN GULF

ARAL SEA

river Oxus

SCYTHIANS

Oxus Treasure

BACTRIA

ELBURZ MOUNTAINS

PARTHIA

INDIA

SATTAGYDIA-

GANDARA

PARIKANIA

ARABIAN SEA

river Indus

The most obvious characteristic of the Zechariah scroll is its visions. Zechariah has three visions that reveal the transformation that YHWH is intent on bringing about for the whole earth. In the first vision (1:8-17), Zechariah sees horses and riders patrolling the earth: YHWH is returning to Jerusalem. This is followed by a second vision of four horns and four blacksmiths (1:18-21), and a third in which Jerusalem is wondrously expanded and is attracting foreign nations (2:1-5).

There are two visions in which Zechariah sees the restoration brought about by the divine presence: one focuses on the high priest Joshua (3:1-10); the other on the governor Zerubbabel (4:1-14).

Finally there is another set of three visions (5:1 - 6:8). In the last vision (6:1-8), the prophet once again sees horses and chariots patrolling the earth.

Zechariah 1:1-6

In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius (520BC) the word of YHWH came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berekiah son of Iddo, saying: YHWH was very angry with your ancestors. Therefore say to them, Thus says YHWH of hosts: **Return to me**, says YHWH of hosts, and I will return to you, says YHWH of hosts.

Do not be like your ancestors, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, “Thus says YHWH of hosts, Return from your evil ways and from your evil deeds.” But they did not hear or heed me, says YHWH. Your ancestors, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not overtake your ancestors?

So they repented and said, “YHWH of hosts has dealt with us according to our ways and deeds, just as he planned to do.”

Zechariah 1:8-13 (Vision 1)

In the night I saw a man riding on a red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in the Deep; and behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses. Then I said, “What are these, my lord?”

The angel who talked with me said to me, “I will show you what they are.” So the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered, “They are those whom YHWH has sent to patrol the earth.”

Then they spoke to the angel of YHWH who was standing among the myrtle trees, “We have patrolled the earth, and lo, the whole earth remains at peace.” Then the angel of YHWH said, “YHWH of hosts, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which you have been angry these seventy years?” (588-519)

Then YHWH replied with gracious and comforting words to the angel who talked with me.

Jeremiah 25:11-12

This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon **seventy years**. Then after **seventy years** are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, says YHWH, making the land an everlasting waste.

Jeremiah 29:10

For thus says YHWH: Only when Babylon's **seventy years** are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place.

Zechariah 1:14-17

So the angel who talked with me said to me, Proclaim this message: Thus says YHWH of hosts; I am very zealous for Jerusalem and for Zion. And I am extremely angry with the nations that are at ease (verse 11); for while I was only a little angry, they made the disaster worse. Therefore, thus says YHWH, I have returned to Jerusalem with compassion; **my house** shall be built in it, says YHWH of hosts, and the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem.

Proclaim further: Thus says YHWH of hosts: My cities will again overflow with prosperity; YHWH will again comfort Zion and again choose Jerusalem.

Zechariah 1:18-21 (Vision 2)

And I looked up and saw **four horns**.

I asked the **angel** who talked with me, “What are these?”

And he answered me, “These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.”

Then YHWH showed me four blacksmiths.

And I asked, “What are they coming to do?” He answered,

“These are the horns that scattered Judah, so that no head could be raised but these have come to terrify them, to strike down the horns of the nations that lifted up their horns against the land of Judah to scatter its people.”

Zechariah 2:1-5 (Vision 3)

I looked up and saw a man with a measuring line in his hand.

Then I asked, “Where are you going?” He answered me,

“To measure Jerusalem (to build a defensive wall),
to see what is its width and what is its length.”

Then the **angel** who talked with me came forward,

and **another angel** came forward to meet him, and said to him,

“Run, say to that young man: Jerusalem shall be inhabited like villages
without walls, because of the multitude of people and animals in it.

**For I will be a wall of fire all around it, says YHWH,
and I will be the glory within it.”**

Zechariah 2:10-13

Sing and rejoice, O daughter Zion! For lo,

I will come and dwell in your midst, says YHWH.

Many nations will join themselves to YHWH on that day,
and will be my people; and I will dwell in your midst.

And you shall know that YHWH of hosts has sent me to you.
YHWH will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land,
and will again choose Jerusalem.

Be silent, all people, before YHWH;

for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.

Zechariah 3:1-5 (Vision 4)

Then he showed me the high priest Joshua standing before the angel of YHWH, and the Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. And YHWH said to the Satan, “YHWH rebuke you, O Satan! YHWH who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is not this man a brand plucked from the fire?”

Now Joshua was dressed with filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. The angel said to those who were standing before him, “Take off his filthy clothes.” And to him he said, “See, I have taken your guilt away from you, and I will clothe you with festal apparel.” And I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with the apparel; and the angel of YHWH was standing by.

Zechariah 3:6-7

Then the angel of YHWH assured Joshua, saying

“Thus says YHWH of hosts:

If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements,
then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts,
and I will give you the right of access
among those who are standing here.

(expanded role of high priest after the exile)

Zechariah 3:8-10

Now listen, Joshua, high priest, you and your colleagues who sit before you! For they are an omen of things to come:

I am going to bring my servant the Branch

Jeremiah 23:5

The days are surely coming, says YHWH, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.

For on the stone that I have set before Joshua (He is to crown the Messiah) on a single stone with seven facets, I will engrave its inscription, says YHWH of hosts, and I will remove the guilt of this land in a single day.

On that day, says YHWH of hosts, you shall invite each other to come under your vine and fig tree.”

Zechariah 4:1-6 (Vision 5)

The angel who talked with me came again, and wakened me, as one is wakened from sleep. He said to me, “What do you see?”

And I said, “I see a lamp stand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it; there are seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. And by it there are **two olive trees**, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.”

I said to the angel who talked with me, “What are these, my lord?”

Then the angel who talked with me answered me,

“Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.”

He said to me, “This is the word of YHWH to **Zerubbabel**:

Not by might, nor by power, but **by my spirit**, says YHWH of hosts.

Zechariah 4:7-14

What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain; and he shall bring out the capstone amid shouts of ‘Grace, grace to it!’” Moreover the word of YHWH came to me, saying, “The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it. Then you will know that YHWH of hosts has sent me to you. For whoever has despised the day of small things shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel.

“These seven are the eyes of YHWH, which range through the whole earth.” Then I said to him, “What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?” And a second time I said to him, “What are these two branches of the olive trees, which pour out the oil through the two golden pipes?” He said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.” Then he said, “These are the two anointed sons who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.” (Zerubbabel & Joshua?)

Again I looked up and saw a **flying scroll**. And he said to me, “What do you see?” I answered, “I see a flying scroll; its length is twenty cubits, and its width ten cubits.”

Then he said to me, “This is the **curse** that goes out over the face of the whole land; for everyone who steals shall be acquitted according to the writing on one side, and everyone who swears falsely shall be acquitted according to the writing on the other side.

I have sent it out, says YHWH of hosts, and it shall enter the house of the thief, and the house of anyone who swears falsely by my name; and it shall abide in that house and consume it, both timber and stones.”

Zechariah 5:5-11 (Vision 7)

Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me, “Look up and see what this is that is coming out.” I said, “What is it?” He said, “This is a basket coming out.” And he said, “This is their iniquity in all the land.” Then a leaden cover was lifted, and there was a woman sitting in the basket! And he said, “This is Wickedness.” So he thrust her back into the basket, and pressed the leaden weight down on its mouth.

Then I looked up and saw two women coming forward. The wind was in their wings; they had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and sky.

Then I said to the angel who talked with me, “Where are they taking the basket?” He said to me, “To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it; and when this is prepared, they will set the basket down there on its base.”

Zechariah 5:5-11 (Vision 7)

To attempt to destroy foreign idols as Josiah did would have caused problems for the powerless and subject state of Judah. They were forced to respect these 'gods'. The angels close the basket containing a figurine of Asherah). Mysterious heavenly women figures take the image of the goddess (along with the taxes?) and fly it away to Babylon, where they respectfully construct a shrine for it and set it on its base.

Let the Babylonians worship it, but it has no place in the restored Judah, who are not to have their eyes looking for prosperity to Asherah. Their concern must be 'the eyes of YHWH, which range through the whole earth'(4:10). They are, after all, 'the apple of his eye'(2:8).

Zechariah 6:1-8 (Vision 8) - see Vision 1

And again I looked up and saw four chariots coming out from between two mountains – mountains of bronze (coming from the east). The first chariot had red horses, the second chariot black horses, the third chariot white horses, and the fourth chariot dappled gray horses.

Then I said to the angel who talked with me, “What are these, my lord?” The angel answered me, “These are the four winds of heaven going out, after presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth. The chariot with the black horses goes toward the north country, the white ones go toward the west country, and the dappled ones go toward the south country.”

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. Then he cried out to me, “See, those who go toward the north country have set my spirit at rest in the north country.”

Zechariah 6:12-13

Thus says YHWH of hosts: Here is a man whose name is Branch: for he shall branch out in his place, and he will build the temple of YHWH. It is he that shall build the temple of YHWH; he shall bear royal honour, and shall sit and rule on his throne. There shall be a priest by his throne, with peaceful understanding between the two of them.

Zerubbabel not named. He simply disappears from the historical record.

We can only surmise that things did not work out as expected, and so the Messianic figure who would in fact complete the temple is left undetermined in the text.

While they are awaiting this promised leader, it is the high priest who is to keep the crown in the temple.

Zechariah 7:8-12

The word of YHWH came to Zechariah, saying: Thus says YHWH of hosts: Render true judgments, show kindness and mercy to one another; do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another.

But they refused to listen, and turned a stubborn shoulder, and stopped their ears in order not to hear.

They made their hearts adamant in order not to hear the law and the words that YHWH of hosts had sent by his spirit through the former prophets. Therefore great wrath came from YHWH of hosts.

If the behaviour of their ancestors in refusing to hear and heed God's words brought about the change from prosperity to adversity, so Zechariah's contemporaries, if they heed and follow God's word coming to them through him (YHWH's prophet), will see a change from adversity to prosperity.

Zechariah 8:7-8

Thus says YHWH of hosts: I will save my people from the east country and from the west country; and I will bring them to live in Jerusalem. They will be my people and I will be their God, in faithfulness and in righteousness.

Zechariah 8:14-15

For thus says YHWH of hosts: Just as I purposed to bring disaster upon you, when your ancestors provoked me to wrath, and I did not relent, says YHWH of hosts, so again I have purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; do not be afraid.

Zechariah 8:16-19

These are the things that you shall do:

Speak the truth to one another,

render in your gates judgments that are true and make for peace,

do not devise evil in your hearts against one another,

and love no false oath; for all these are things that I hate, says YHWH ...

love truth and peace.

Zechariah 8:20-23

Thus says YHWH of hosts: Peoples shall yet come, the inhabitants of many cities; the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, “Come, let us go to entreat the favour of YHWH, and to seek YHWH of hosts; I myself am going.”

Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek YHWH of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favour of YHWH. Thus says YHWH of hosts: In those days ten men from nations of every language shall take hold of a Jew, grasping his garment and saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.”