

## 30 AMAZING BIBLE STORIES YOU MAY NOT KNOW

### #25 | Zechariah's Visions

#### WHO IS ZECHARIAH?

- In 586 BC, after almost 25 years of struggle, the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and took the last of its inhabitants' captive. They were in captivity for 70 years. See 2 Chronicles 36:1-21.
  - Daniel lived and prophesied during this time, mostly prophecies that relate to the "times of the Gentiles."
  - The book of Lamentations was written about the fall of Jerusalem.
- After 70 years (and a regime change), King Cyrus the Persian allowed the people to return to Jerusalem. See 2 Chronicles 36:22-23.
  - During this time, Ezra and Nehemiah worked to rebuild the Temple, along with the Prophet Haggai.
  - The Temple and Jerusalem were rebuilt, but restored Israel was always under the thumb of another empire, except for a little over 100 years under the rule of the Hasmonaeans (Maccabees).
- After the Temple was rebuilt, several prophets served the Lord in restored Israel, before the close of 39 books of the Old Testament.
  - Malachi spoke of the sad state of religious affairs during this time.
  - Zechariah announced the Lord's prophecies about the future during this time.
    - While some will say that Zechariah's prophecies refer to Babylon and the exile, all that was history by the time Zechariah prophesied of the future.
    - Therefore, Zechariah is in the realm of "apocalyptic" literature, unveiling the future for Israel.
- We should note that Israel's prophecies do not pertain to the Body of Christ, the church. They are future, post-rapture events.

#### ZECHARIAH'S PROPHECIES OF CHAPTER

- The Prophecy of the Flying Roll – Zechariah 5:1-4
  - Verse 1 - The **flying roll** was a scroll. Our English word *volume* comes from the Latin (by way of the French) *volumen*, which means "a roll."
  - Verse 2 – The roll was 20 x 10 cubits. The cubit is a sacred unit of measurement. The specific size was the size of the doorways of the rebuilt Temple (as per the Mishnah, Midot 2). Thus signifying, "This is a message from the Lord."

- Verse 3 – the scroll, written on both sides, contained a curse for those who steal and those who swear (use the Lord's name in vain).
- Verse 4 – The curse of the scroll would enter into the house of these and the curse would literally use the house to destroy the inhabitants.
- The Prophecy of the Flying Women – Zechariah 5:5-11
  - Verse 5 – Another vision, also likely coming from the Temple.
  - Verse 6 – An **ephah** was a measurement of grain. The word is Hebrew. The Ephah was **their resemblance**. This is a figure of speech, saying that "this vision" is meant for those of vv. 1-4.
  - Verse 7 – A lead lid was lifted from the ephah, and a woman sat in the basket. This is simply part of the vision, with no explanation, yet.
  - Verse 8 – Now the explanation: the woman is **wickedness**. That is, the personification of evil. Wickedness is possibly a representative of the Antichrist, as seen in 2 Thessalonians 2:8-10.
  - Verse 9 – Now two women come and, with **wings like a stork**, carry the ephah away.
  - Verses 10-11 – whomever the women are or represent, they carry *wickedness personified* to **the land of Shinar** (that is, the place where Babylon stood). When this happens, **it shall be established** (i.e.: **the land of Shinar**).

#### WHAT WE CAN LEARN

- Biblical history and prophecy can be very interesting!
- Prophecy should be studied with the following principles:
  - Get out of it what you can get out of it, and don't worry about understanding that which isn't revealed.
  - When there is no interpretation, any we give would only be speculation.
  - It is always dangerous to create speculative interpretations without recognizing them as pure conjecture.
- Prophecy can give insight into the human condition.
  - There is a present evil, and it sometimes "gets away with murder."
  - There is a coming judgment, and God will have the last word.
- Prophecy is essential to the development of our worldview.
  - Babylon doesn't exist today, but it will!