Zechariah 4:1-14

**Digging Deeper in the Word**

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***Zechariah 4:1–14*** (ESV)  
**1** And the angel who talked with me came again and woke me, like a man who is awakened out of his sleep. **2** And he said to me, “What do you see?” I said, “I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold, with a bowl on the top of it, and seven lamps on it, with seven lips on each of the lamps that are on the top of it. **3** And there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left.” **4** And I said to the angel who talked with me, “What are these, my lord?” **5** Then the angel who talked with me answered and said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.” **6** Then 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. **7** Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of ‘Grace, grace to it!’ ” **8** Then the word of YHWH came to me, saying, **9** “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. **10** 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.” **11** Then I said to him, “What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand?” **12** And a second time I answered and said to him, “What are these two branches of the olive trees, which are beside the two golden pipes from which the golden oil is poured out?” **13** He said to me, “Do you not know what these are?” I said, “No, my lord.” **14** Then he said, “These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.”

1. Chapter four presents the FIFTH vision of Zechariah. Review again the main points of the previous vision:  
   a) Introduction, Zech 1:-1-6  
   b) First Vision, “Man & horses in the myrtle trees”: Zech 1:7-17   
   c) Second Vision, “Four horns and craftsmen”: Zech 1:18-21 .   
   d) Third Vision & Oracle, “ Man with measuring line”: Zech 2  
   e) Fourth Vision, “Satan accuses the High Priest”: Zech 3

a) Introduction, Zech 1:-1-6  
Repent! Don’t be like your ancestors! Return to me and I will return to you.

b) First Vision, “Man & horses in the myrtle trees”: Zech 1:7-17   
Be encouraged – YHWH will rebuild His city and His land, and with dwell with His people again, bringing prosperity to them.

c) Second Vision, “Four horns and craftsmen”: Zech 1:18-21 .   
YHWH knows His people have been suffering under the hands of others nations, and is going to punish those nations. The abuses will be paid for. Take heart, be encouraged, for I am your God.

d) Third Vision & Oracle, “ Man with measuring line”: Zech 2  
YHWH will be rebuild the city like never before. It will be filled with people so walls cannot contain it. It will be prosperous and powerful… they will plunder the nations that have plundered them. And they will have the protection and presence of YHWH. Judgment day is coming!

e) Fourth Vision, “Satan accuses the High Priest”: Zech 3  
Yeshua (Joshua the high priest) is a sign of Yeshua the Messiah to come; “my servant the Branch”. Satan accuses Yeshua before God as unclean and unfit for duties as High Priest; but then he is made clean and pure. Likewise, the sins of the nation will be removed in a single day.

1. See if you can picture this lampstand that Zechariah saw. Sketch out how you think it may have looked.

It would have had a base (stand) on which was mounted golden bowl. Picture a gold stand about 4’ high on top of which is mounted a large round golden bowl,about 24” high with a mouth about 24” in diameter. Around the rim of the golden bowl are 7 dishes to hold the olive oil, with each dish having 7 “lips” for holding the wicks. So in total, there are 49 wicks on the lamp.

1. Why would olive trees be next to a lampstand? What is the connection between olives and lamps?

Olive oil is used as the fuel for the lamps.

1. Who is Zerubbabel? Read Haggai 1 (note verses Hag 1:1, 12, 14). What does the name Zerubbabel mean?

Zerubbabel “seed / offspring of Babylon”, was the son of the governor of Judah. Zerubbabel, together with Yeshua the high priest, were the 2 men God would use to rebuild the temple.

1. When did Zerubbabel and Yeshua begin work rebuilding the temple? When are these visions of Zechariah taking place? (Compare Hag 1:14-15 and Zech 1:7.

Zechariah’s visions are taking place EXACTLY 5 months after work on the temple began. On the 24th day of month 11, in the 2nd year of Darius (519 BC). (The temple work began on day 24 of month 6.)

1. In verse 9, what will be the proof to the people that Zechariah’s message is from YHWH? There is a “near term” prophesy that the people will see happen, which should cause them to have faith that the “long term” prophesy will also come to take place, even though they will likely not be around to see it happen with their own eyes. What is that near-term prophesy in this case?

The near term prophesy is that Zerubbabel himself will complete the temple rebuilding that he started.

1. By what power will the temple be completed?

From Zech 4:6 - By the Spirit (Ruach) of YHWH tseva’ot. Not by the power or might of Zerubbabel or the people!

1. What is the significance of Zerubbabel bringing the “top stone” amid shouts of “Grace to it”?

The top stone or a cap stone would be the final stone placed upon the temple, completing the work, while the people shout praises. When the temple is done, the presence of YHWH returns to dwell among His people.

1. How can the top stone can also be seen symbolically as representing the Messiah? Note, however, the difference between a “top stone” and a “cornerstone” (as referred to in Ps 118:22 and Isaiah 28:16).

***Psalm 118:22*** (ESV)  
**22** The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.

***Isaiah 28:16*** (ESV)  
**16** therefore thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion, a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation: ‘Whoever believes will not be in haste.’

He is the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end, the cornerstone and the cap stone.

1. What, if any, connection can we make between the top stone of Zech 4:8 and the stone of Zech 3:9?

Perhaps it is the very same stone, representing the Messiah in both cases.

1. In Zech 4:10 “these seven” are the eyes of YHWH which range through the whole earth. What seven is being referring to here? Seven what?? See also Prov 15:3 and 2 Chron 16:9.

***Proverbs 15:3*** (ESV)  
**3** The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.

***2 Chronicles 16:9*** (ESV)  
**9** For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to give strong support to those whose heart is blameless toward him. You have done foolishly in this, for from now on you will have wars.”

It would seem to refer to the 7 lamps, and perhaps also the 7 lips (for wicks) on each lamp). The light from these 7 sources, symbolizes the “seeing power” of YHWH to see **completely** (seven) over the whole earth.

It may also refer to the 7 eyes of the stone, if in fact the stone of Zech 4:8 is the same as the stone with 7 eyes of Zech 3:9.

1. Look at Rev 5:6. What does that add to your understanding the “seven eyes” on the stone and/or the seven lamps on the lampstand?

***Revelation 5:6*** (ESV)  
**6** And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

It clearly refers to the Messiah and His sight or awareness of all that happens throughout the world, through his infinite Spirit.

1. From Zech 4:12, apparently the branches of the two olive trees are “connected” to the lampstand by two pipes or channels, by which the olive oil will flow from the trees to the lamp. The Hebrew actually says “from which gold is poured” not “from which golden oil is poured”. Why do you think the word “gold” is used instead of “oil”? See also Lev 24:1-4.

***Leviticus 24:2–4*** (ESV) *Here “gold” is only implied in the Text.*  
**2** “Command the people of Israel to bring you **pure oil** from beaten olives for the lamp, that a light may be kept burning regularly. **3** Outside the veil of the testimony, in the tent of meeting, Aaron shall arrange it from evening to morning before the Lord regularly. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations. **4** He shall arrange the lamps on the lampstand of **pure [gold]** before the Lord regularly.

***Exodus 25:31*** (ESV) *Here “gold” is literally included in the Text*  
**31** “You shall make a lampstand of **pure gold**. The lampstand shall be made of hammered work: its base, its stem, its cups, its calyxes, and its flowers shall be of one piece with it.

First of all, olive oil is sort of a golden color. So given that the lampstand is made of ALL gold, it would be fitting to describe the golden oil as “gold” as well. Also, using the word gold implies ultimate purity. The oil for the temple lampstand had to use pure oil. This is a vision, and the imagery is to evoke a picture – a picture of pure oil like gold – flowing gold from the two olive trees, down the golden channels, and into the gold lampstand.

1. What does the lampstand symbolize? Consider what it represented to Zerubbabel during Zechariah’s time, and also what it represents in the bigger (eternal) picture. Note Lev 24:1-4, John 8:12, and Rev 22:5, as well as the discussion above regarding the meaning of the “seven lamps” and “seven eyes” above.

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***John 8:12*** (ESV)  
**12** Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

***Revelation 22:5*** (ESV)  
**5** And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

From Zerubbabel’s perspective, the golden lampstand was located in the holy place of the temple, so it represented the menorah of the completed temple.

From an eternal perspective, the lampstand represents the light of YHWH, shining through Yeshua the Messiah, piercing the darkest corners of the earth, bringing the light of YHWH to all creation.

1. Who do you think the two olive trees represent in the time of Zechariah?

Probably Zerubbabel and Yeshua. They would be the ones to complete the rebuilding of the temple, and therefore enable the lampstand to be lighted once again. They were “anointed ones”, chosen by YHWH to lead the rebuilding of His house. Since anointing was done with olive oil, it is natural for the anointed ones to be represented symbolically by olive trees.

1. Recalling from Zech 3:8 that Yeshua and Zerubbabel were “men who are a sign”, and YHWH says he will bring his servant “the Branch”. The Branch seems to refer to the Messiah in the long-term fulfillment, but in the near-term fulfillment, it may refer to Zerubbabel. In what ways would Zerubbabel be seen as symbolic of the Messiah? What is the connection with the meaning of the Zerubbabel’s name and “the Branch”?

The “seed” or “offspring” of Babylon – the one growing out of Babylon – could be symbolically seen as a Branch. Clearly the two main leaders of the day were Yeshua and Zerubbabel. Showing them as olive trees (anointed ones), they would both be symbolic of Yeshua. Yeshua as the high priest, and Zerubbabel as completing the temple restoration. Yeshua the Messiah will do both these things.

1. In Zech 4:14, the olive trees are said to stand for the “two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth”. In the near-term fulfillment, these two seem to be Yeshua the high priest and Zerubbabel. In the far-term fulfillment, they both seem to be symbolic of Yeshua the Messiah. Perhaps there is yet another level of symbolism in these “two olive trees”. Considering that Zechariah often seems to have the final day of YHWH in mind, look at the end-time prophesy of Rev 11:4 (and the rest of Rev 11). From this context, how are Yeshua and Zerubbabel “men who a sign” of things to come?

***Revelation 11:3–4*** (ESV)  
**3** And I will grant authority to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth.” **4** These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth.

They are the same two olive trees seen in Revelation, which are the “two witnesses” or “two prophets” in the final days, proclaiming the truth (the light of YHWH) to the world of darkness. They are anointed with the power of YHWH for 3.5 years, and then are killed by the Beast, but are raised again after 3.5 days and taken up into the presence of YHWH.

1. How would this vision have been received by the people of Zechariah’s time? Why would it have been an encouragement to them?

The vision promises that the Zerubbabel will see the temple reconstruction completed. Therefore the people should follow his leadership. He will lead them successfully. Furthermore, he and Yeshua are anointed ones of YHWH, standing beside Him as chosen ones for this task.

Also, the people will actually live to see the prophesy of Zerubbabel completing the temple fulfilled. And this will give encouragement to them to believe, in faith, the rest of what Zechariah is prophetically communicating.

1. How does this prophetic vision encourage us today?

We too can see how the near-term prophesy was indeed fulfilled, and therefore be encouraged to know that the rest of the as-yet unfulfilled prophesy will also be fulfilled. It should have the same effect on us as it did to the people then. Stay focused on the task we have been given!