

ZECHARIAH 4: 1 The angel who talked with me came again, and wakened me, as a man who is wakened out of his sleep.

The prophet, overpowered by his last vision, is roused by the angel to behold another, Zac 4:1; intended also to assure the Jews of the success of Joshua and Zerubbabel in building the temple, and surmounting every obstacle in the way; till at length, by the good providence of God, it should be finished, amidst the joyful acclamations of the spectators, Zac 4:2-10. The angel's explanation of the golden candlestick, and of the two olive trees, Zac 4:11-14.

ZECHARIAH 4: 2 He said to me, "What do you see?" I said, "I have seen, and behold, a lamp stand all of gold, with its bowl on the top of it, and its seven lamps on it; there are seven pipes to each of the lamps, which are on the top of it;

Verse 2

A candlestick all of gold - This candlestick is formed in some measure after that of the sanctuary, Exo 25:31, Exo 25:32 : but in that of the sanctuary there was no bowl, nor seven pipes, nor seven lamps, nor the two olive trees. The two olive trees were to supply the bowl with oil; the bowl was to communicate the oil to the seven pipes; and the seven pipes were to supply the seven lamps. In general, the candlestick, its bowl, pipes, lamps, and olive trees, are emblems of the pure service of God, and the grace and salvation to be enjoyed by his true worshippers. The candlestick may, however, represent the whole Jewish state, ecclesiastical and civil; the oil, producing the light, the grace and mercy of God; and the two olive trees, the source of infinite love, whence that grace proceeds. The pipes may signify all means of grace; and the seven lamps, the perfection and abundance of the light and salvation provided. Some may take them in the following way: -

1. The olive trees, the Divine goodness, yield the oil from the olive berry, which is its fruit.
 2. From each comes a pipe to convey the oil to the bowl.
 3. This oil is collected in the bowl, which is supposed to represent Jesus, the great Mediator, through whom alone all grace and mercy descend to man.
 4. The seven pipes, the various means of grace - reading, hearing, prayer, sacraments, etc. - through which Christ dispenses his grace and blessing to his followers.
 5. The seven lamps - the Spirit of God in its plentitude of graces, gifts, and light, dispensed to the Christian Church.
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ZECHARIAH 4: 3 and two olive trees by it, one on the right side of the bowl, and the other on the left side of it."

ZECHARIAH 4: 4 I answered and spoke to the angel who talked with me, saying, "What are these, my lord?"

ZECHARIAH 4: 5 Then the angel who talked with me answered me, "Don't you know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord."

ZECHARIAH 4: 6 Then he answered and spoke to me, saying, "This is the LORD's word to Zerubbabel, saying, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD of Armies.

Verse 6

This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel - This prince was in a trying situation, and he needed especial encouragement from God; and here it is: Not by might, (of thy own), nor by power, (authority from others), but by my Spirit - the providence, authority, power, and energy of the Most High. In this way shall my temple be built; in this way shall my Church be raised and preserved. No secular arm, no human prudence, no earthly policy, no suits at law, shall ever be used for the founding, extension, and preservation of my Church. But the spirit of the world says, "These are all means to which as we must have recourse; otherwise the cause of God may be ruined." Satan, thou liest!

ZECHARIAH 4: 7 Who are you, great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you are a plain; and he will bring out the capstone with shouts of 'Grace, grace, to it!'"

Verse 7

O great mountain? - The hinderances which were thrown in the way; the regal prohibition to discontinue the building of the temple.

Before Zerubbabel - a plain - The sovereign power of God shall remove them. March on, Zerubbabel; all shall be made plain and smooth before thee. I have given thee the work to do, and I will remove all hinderances out of thy way.

He shall bring forth the headstone - As he has laid the foundation stone, so shall he put on the headstone: as he has begun the building, so shall he finish it!

With shoutings - The universal acclamation of the people.

Grace, grace unto it - How beautiful is this structure! May the favor of God ever rest upon it, and be manifested in it!

ZECHARIAH 4: 8 Moreover the LORD's word came to me, saying,

ZECHARIAH 4: 9 "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house. His hands shall also finish it; and you will know that the LORD of Armies has sent me to you.

ZECHARIAH 4: 10 Indeed, who despises the day of small things? For these seven shall rejoice, and shall see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel. These are the eyes of the LORD, which run back and forth through the whole earth."

Verse 10

Who hath despised the day of small things? - The poverty, weakness, and unbefriended state of the Jews. It was said, "What do these feeble Jews?" "Will they build," etc.? No. But God will build by them, and perfect his building too.

And shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel - He is master builder under God, the grand architect.

Those seven - are the eyes of the Lord - Either referring to his particular and especial providence; or to those ministering spirits, whom he has employed in behalf of the Jews, to dispense the blessings of that providence. See 2Chr 16:9 (note); Pro 15:3 (note); Zac 3:9 (note).

ZECHARIAH 4: 11 Then I asked him, "What are these two olive trees on the right side of the lamp stand and on the left side of it?"

Verse 11

What are these two olive trees - See on Zac 4:2 (note).

ZECHARIAH 4: 12 I asked him the second time, "What are these two olive branches, which are beside the two golden spouts, that pour the golden oil out of themselves?"

Verse 12

What be these two olive branches - That is, two boughs laden with branches of olive berries.

ZECHARIAH 4: 13 He answered me, "Don't you know what these are?" I said, "No, my lord."

ZECHARIAH 4: 14 Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

Verse 14

These are the two anointed ones - Joshua, the high priest; and Zerubbabel the governor. These are anointed - appointed by the Lord; and stand by him, the one to minister in the ecclesiastical, the other in the civil state.

Probably we may not be able to comprehend the whole of this hieroglyphical vision; for even the interpreting angel does not choose to answer the questions relative to this, which were put to him by the prophet. See Zac 4:4, Zac 4:11. But though the particulars are hard to be understood; yet the general meaning has, I hope, been given.

Verse 1

The angel - came again, and waked me - Abp. Newcome considers this vision as represented on the same night, Zac 1:8, with the preceding ones. See the latter part of Zac 1:10, compared with Zac 3:9. After some interval the prophet, overpowered with the vision which had been presented to him, was awakened from his prophetic trance as from a sleep.