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ZECHARIAH 6: 1 Again I lifted up my eyes, and saw, and behold, four chariots came out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass.

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The vision of the four chariots drawn by several sorts of horses, Zac 6:1-8. The other vision in this chapter may refer in its primary sense to the establishment of the civil and religious polity of the Jews under Joshua and Zerubbabel; but relates in a fuller sense, to the Messiah, and to that spiritual kingdom of which he was to be both king and high priest. In him all these types and figures were verified; on him all the promises are yea and amen, Zac 6:9-15.

Verse 1

There came four chariots - Four monarchies or empires. This is supposed to mean the same with the vision of the four horns, in chap. 1.

Mountains of brass - The strong barriers of God's purposes, which restrained those powers within the times and limits appointed by Jehovah.

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ZECHARIAH 6: 2 In the first chariot were red horses; in the second chariot black horses;

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Verse 2

In the first chariot were red horses - The empire of the Chaldeans, which overthrew the empire of the Assyrians.

The second chariot black horses - The empire of the Persians founded by Cyrus, which destroyed the empire of the Chaldeans.

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ZECHARIAH 6: 3 in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot dappled horses, all of them powerful.

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Verse 3

The third chariot white horses - The empire of the Greeks, founded by Alexander the Great, which destroyed the empire of the Persians.

The fourth chariot grisled and bay horses - That is party-coloured horses, or with horses, some grisled and some bay. The empire of the Romans or of the Greeks. The Greeks divided after the death of Alexander; one part pointing out the Lagidae, who attacked and subdued Egypt; and the other, the seleucidae, who subdued Syria under Seleucus.

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ZECHARIAH 6: 4 Then I asked the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?"

ZECHARIAH 6: 5 The angel answered me, "These are the four winds of the sky, which go out from standing before the Lord of all the earth.

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Verse 5

The four spirits of the heavens - Ministers of God's wrath against the sinful nations of the world.

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ZECHARIAH 6: 6 The one with the black horses goes out toward the north country; and the white went out after them; and the dappled went out toward the south country."

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Verse 6

The black horses - This refers to the second chariot; of the first the angel makes no mention, because the empire designed by it had ceased to exist. This had red horses, to show the cruelty of the Chaldeans towards the Jews, and the carnage they committed in the land of Judea.

The black - Cyrus, at the head of the Persians and Medes, bringing devastation and death among the Chaldeans, called the north in many parts of Scripture.

The white - Alexander, who was splendid in his victories, and mild towards all that he conquered.

The grisled - The Lagidae or Ptolemies, who founded an empire in Egypt; of these some were good, some bad, some despotic, some moderate, some cruel, and some mild, represented by the party-coloured horses.

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ZECHARIAH 6: 7 The strong went out, and sought to go that they might walk back and forth through the earth: and he said, "Go around and through the earth!" So they walked back and forth through the earth.

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Verse 7

And the bay went forth - The Seleucidae, who conquered Syria and the upper provinces, and who wished to extend their conquests, and "sought to go, that they might walk to and fro throughout the earth," were of unbounded ambition, and sought universal empire; such as Antiochus the Great. "So they walked to and fro," did extend their conquests; and harassed many countries by their vexatious and almost continual wars. Some think the Romans are meant, who carried their conquests hither and thither, just as the Divine providence permitted them.

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ZECHARIAH 6: 8 Then he called to me, and spoke to me, saying, "Behold, those who go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country."

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Verse 8

Have quieted my spirit in the north country - They have fulfilled my judgments on Assyria and Chaldea. Nabopolassar and Cyrus first, against the Assyrians and Chaldeans; and Alexander next, against the Persians. On this vision Abp. Newcome remarks: -

The black horses seem to denote the Persian empire; which, by subduing the Chaldeans, and being about to inflict a second heavy chastisement on Babylon, quieted God's spirit with respect to Chaldea; a country always spoken of as lying to the north of the Jews.

The white horses seem to be the Macedonian empire; which, like the Persian, overcame Chaldea.

The spotted bay horses seem to be the Roman empire. This description suits it because it was governed by kings, consuls, dictators, and emperors. It penetrated southward to Egypt and Africa. The Roman empire is mentioned twice, Zac 6:6, Zac 6:7, under each epithet given it, Zac 6:3.

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ZECHARIAH 6: 9 the LORD's word came to me, saying,

ZECHARIAH 6: 10 "Take of them of the captivity, even of Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah; and come the same day, and go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, where they have come from Babylon.

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Verse 10

Take of them of the captivity - The names that follow were probably those to whom the silver and golden vessels of the temple were intrusted; and who might have had bullion of silver and gold, for particular purposes, about the ornaments of the temple.

The house of Josiah - Probably an artificer in silver, gold, etc.

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ZECHARIAH 6: 11 Yes, take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them on the head of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest;

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Verse 11

Make crowns - עטרות ataroth; but seven MSS. of Kennicott's and De Rossi's, and one ancient of my own, with the Syriac and Chaldee, have עטרות atereth, a crown, or tiara. And as Joshua the high priest is alone concerned here, I think one crown only is intended.

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ZECHARIAH 6: 12 and speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of Armies, "Behold, the man whose name is the Branch: and he shall grow up out of his place; and he shall build the LORD's temple;

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Verse 12

Behold the man whose name is The Branch! - I cannot think that Zerubbabel is here intended; indeed, he is not so much as mentioned in Zac 3:8. Joshua and his companions are called אנשי מופת anshey mopheth, figurative or typical men; the crowning therefore of Joshua in this place, and

calling him the Branch, was most probably in reference to that glorious person, the Messiah, of whom he was the type or figure. The Chaldee has, "whose name is my Messiah," or Christ.

And he shall grow up out of his place - That is, out of David's root, tribe, and family.

And he shall build the temple of the Lord - This cannot refer to the building of the temple then in hand, for Zerubbabel was its builder: but to that temple, the Christian Church, that was typified by it; for Zerubbabel is not named here, and only Joshua or Jesus (the name is the same) is the person who is to be crowned and to build this spiritual temple.

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ZECHARIAH 6: 13 even he shall build the LORD's temple; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule on his throne; and he shall be a priest on his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

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Verse 13

Even he shall build the temple - Joshua, not Zerubbabel.

He shall bear the glory - Have all the honor of it; for none can do this but himself. The Messiah is still intended.

And shall sit and rule upon his throne - For the government of the Church shall be upon his shoulder.

And he shall be a priest upon his throne - He shall, as the great high priest, offer the only available offering and atonement; and so he shall be both king and priest, a royal king and a royal priest; for even the priest is here stated to sit upon his throne.

And the counsel of peace shall be between them both - Whom? Zerubbabel and Joshua? Certainly not Zerubbabel, for he is not mentioned in all this prediction; but, as the Messiah is intended, the counsel of peace - the purpose to establish peace between heaven and earth, must be between the Father and the Son.

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ZECHARIAH 6: 14 The crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the LORD's temple.

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Verse 14

And the crowns shall be - One of my MSS. has אַתְרוֹת ataroth, crowns, corrected into אֶתְרֵת atereth, crown; and so the Septuagint, Syriac, and Arabic. The Chaldee has, "And praise shall be," etc. The meaning appears to be this, that the crown made for Joshua should be delivered to the persons mentioned here and in Zac 6:10, to be laid up in the temple of the Lord, as a memorial of this typical transaction.

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ZECHARIAH 6: 15 Those who are far off shall come and build in the LORD's temple; and you shall know that the LORD of Armies has sent me to you. This will happen, if you will diligently obey the LORD your God's voice.'''

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Verse 15

And they that are far off shall come - The Gentiles shall come to the Savior of the world; and build - become a part of this new temple; for they, as living stones, shall become a holy temple, a habitation of God through the Spirit.

Ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me - These predictions, relative to the regal and sacerdotal offices of the Messiah, shall be so circumstantially fulfilled, that ye, Jews, shall be obliged to acknowledge that the Lord of hosts hath sent me with this message.

And this shall come to pass - Your own temple shall be rebuilt, and God shall dwell among you now, if ye will diligently obey the voice of Jehovah your God.