

Harvest

Evangelical Free Church

SERIES: Confidence in a Broken World • Lesson 6
For Adult Bible Fellowships and Small Groups April 18–24, 2010

Join us in being on mission with God!

OUR VISION

To continually mature and grow as a united body of Jesus-imitators who live out God's greatest commandment to "Love" by exalting God and serving one another, and His greatest commission to "Go" by reaching into and shaping our local, regional, and global communities.

“The Branch that Builds an Empire ”

Zechariah Chapter 6:9-15

Getting Started

After an introductory time, discuss the following questions in your group or class.

We are drawn to people who bring other people or resources together to create something big that did not exist before. Other people may have the role of mangers or maintainers, but builders seem to stand out for special attention.

Look at the names in the list and indicate the kind of movement, industry, or group they created or led. Don't worry if you don't recognize all the names in the list.

Napoleon _____

Charles Henry Holt _____

Sam Walton _____

Henry Ford _____

Andrew Carnegie _____

John Wesley _____

Innocent III _____

Ray Croc _____

Alexander the Great

Thomas Watson _____

Peter the Great _____

William Wilberforce _____

Robert E. Lee _____

Cornelius Vanderbilt _____

Susan B. Anthony _____

Q: What characteristics do you think most people who build something great (an industry, an army, a movement, or a nation) have in common?

The Jews who returned to settle in the ruins of Jerusalem desperately wanted the nation to once again have a capital city, a stable government, a thriving economy, and an independence from the nearby world powers. God makes a surprising promise about the one who will be key to this rebuilding.

He offers hope to the refugees in Zechariah 6:9-15. The deliverance involves the high priest, who is Joshua, but it also points to someone beyond him who is called "The Branch."



Zechariah 6:9-15

⁹ The word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁰ “Take *silver and gold* from the exiles Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah, who have arrived from Babylon. Go the same day to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah. ¹¹ Take the silver and gold and make a crown, and set it on the head of the high priest, Joshua son of Jehozadak. ¹² Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD. ¹³ It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.' ¹⁴ The crown will be given to Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen son of Zephaniah as a memorial in the temple of the LORD. ¹⁵ Those who are far away will come and help to build the temple of the LORD, and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. This will happen if you diligently obey the LORD your God.”

When we look at chapter 4, we see that Joshua is identified as the high priest and Zerubbabel is the secular ruler or the king. These are the two branches that come out of the vision of the olive trees in chapter 4.

In verse 9 we are finished with the visions. This takes place down here in the real world.

1. Who came into the city of Jerusalem, and what was Zechariah ordered to do with the three visitors?

2. Where does Zechariah head to next? (See verse 11.)

3. What does Zechariah do with the gold and silver that is given to him? What is unexpected about this action?

4. Who is the branch who will build the temple? Compare Zechariah 4:9 with Zechariah 6:12.

5. What play on words do you see in verse 12?

6. What kind of relationship will this leader bring between the role of priest and of king in verse 13? How is this different than anything the Jews in Zechariah’s audience were used to?

7. What happens to the crown that is used in this ceremony, according to verse 14? Why is it significant that the ceremonial crown is not worn by Joshua, the high priest, after the ceremony?

8. The oracle ends with a prediction about the ongoing construction of the temple, which is the backdrop to the entire book of Zechariah. What will happen to enhance the building efforts in verse 15a?

The Branch that Builds an Empire

Zechariah 3:8 –10

“Listen, O high priest Joshua and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch.⁹ See, the stone I have set in front of Joshua! There are seven eyes on that one stone, and I will engrave an inscription on it,’ says the LORD Almighty, ‘and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day.¹⁰ “In that day each of you will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and fig tree,’ declares the LORD Almighty.”

9. The promise in verse 15 is conditional. What is the condition at the end of verse 15? How does it tie into the purpose of the entire book?

The mention of the “Branch” in this oracle points beyond the rebuilding of the temple in Zechariah’s day to something much bigger. If we back up to chapter 3:8-10 [printed in the left sidebar of this page] we discover more about the “Branch”

10. In Zechariah 3:8, what does the angel tell Zechariah that both Joshua and the other leaders near him are symbolic of?

11. What does the sending of the ‘Branch’ in 3:8b and the inscription on the stone (3:9) remind you of?

12. What does Isaiah 11:1 add to the understanding of this ‘Branch’?

13. What picture does 3:10 convey to the listeners? See 1 Kings 4:25 and 2 Kings 18:31. What will be the result of the rule of the Branch?

14. How is the fusion of the role of king and priest together different from anything that happened in the land of Israel before this time?

15. What do you think it meant to the refugees that in this city that they were now building God would one day send someone who was both king and priest?

16. How is Jesus’ dual role important to the Christian today?

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