

him shall be the obedience of the people” (Gen. 49:10).

#### **Let his hands be sufficient for him**

Jacob said of Judah, “your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies” (Gen. 49:8). A major fulfilment of these words was in the wars of King David (Ps. 18:37-43), but David’s victories merely foreshadowed those of Jesus, who will bring all enemies into subjection, including death itself: “For he must reign, till He hath put all enemies

under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (1 Cor. 15:25,26, AV). However, it must be recognised that it is through the mighty power of God that Jesus will “possess the gate of his enemies” (Gen. 22:17, AV). It is God, the Father of Jesus Christ, who will “put all things under his feet” (1 Cor. 15:27; Ps. 8:6). It is God’s hand that makes Christ’s hands “sufficient for him”. In this way will be fulfilled the prayer, “may You be a help against his enemies”.  
(To be continued)

## **An overview of the last six chapters of Zechariah**

Geoff Walker

**L**OOKING AT THE prophecy of Zechariah as a whole, it is clear that there is a marked difference between the first eight chapters and the last six (9–14). There is a distinct change in style and approach.

Chapters 1–8 are dated. The dates are given in 1:1,7 and 7:1. All three dates relate to the reign of Darius the Persian. Comparison with Ezra 4:24 and 5:1 pinpoints the time as the time of the building of the temple under the guidance of Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest. The temple took four years to build, between the second and sixth years of Darius’s reign, and all three dates have reference to that period.

The date given in 1:7 (in the second year of Darius) was the day on which all the visions seen by Zechariah, and recorded in chapters 1–6, were revealed (the visions follow naturally one after another, suggesting that they were all revealed together). Chapters 7 and 8, given in the fourth year of Darius, are linked together, the questions asked of the priests at that time, as recorded in the beginning of the seventh chapter, being answered at the close of the eighth (v. 19). Thus chapters 1–8 have a definite historical setting. There is nothing to compare with this historical background in chapters 9–14. This is one clear difference between the two halves of the prophecy.

#### **Judah and Ephraim**

There is a further difference. The first eight chapters are concerned with happenings in Judah and Jerusalem and the building of the temple in

Jerusalem (see 1:12,19; 2:2,4,12; 3:2; 4:9; 6:12,13; 7:2; 8:3,4,9,19). There is but one reference to the “house of Israel” (8:13), which has to do with the future, and is an indication that Israel as well as Judah would share in the future blessings that would accrue when the Lord dwelt in the newly built temple. There is no reference in these chapters to any specific activity by the northern tribes, nor any indication of their standing before God, nor of their relationship with Judah in the days of the return from exile.

Chapters 9–14 are different, bringing in the ten tribes in conjunction with Judah. Chapter 9 speaks of the cutting off of “the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem” (v. 10), and deals with a time “when I have bent Judah for Me, [and] filled the bow with Ephraim” (v. 13). Chapter 10 has, “I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph” (v. 6), and “they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man” (v. 7). In fact, the rest of this tenth chapter appears to have reference to the fortunes of the ten tribes. Ephraim and Judah together thus feature prominently in these two chapters, which is in marked contrast to the picture presented in the first eight chapters.

There is a definite change of format and thought in chapter 11, and yet the relationship between Judah and Israel is prominent in it. The ‘cutting asunder’ of the prophet’s staff “Bands” portrayed the breaking of “the brotherhood between Judah and Israel” (v. 14). There is clear reference to the history of the two nations here, as there is in chapters 9 and 10.

Chapters 12–14, which form a complete section of the prophecy in themselves, begin with the words: “The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel”. Although the emphasis in each of these three chapters is on Judah and Jerusalem, their heading thus concerns Israel, and, throughout the prophecy, ‘Israel’ has reference to the northern tribes. Is there significance in this?

The closing verses of chapter 12 suggest an answer. The mourning as for an only son, “as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn”, and “as the mourning . . . in the valley of Megiddon”, and the references to “the house of David”, “the house of Nathan”, “the house of Levi” and “the family of Shimei” (vv. 10–13) all recall the times of King David, and, in particular, the rebellion of Absalom. At that time there was a sharp division between the tribe of Judah and the ten tribes, as is evident from the account of the battle in which Absalom was slain: “the people [David’s forces] went out into the field against Israel” (2 Sam. 18:6).

#### All the tribes of Israel

Thus in all these last six chapters there is indication that both kingdoms play some part. But does this mean that these chapters stand quite separate from the first eight chapters? Those early chapters certainly seem to hold together as one whole, as we have indicated; but can the last six chapters also be seen as linked together with one overall theme, and also closely linked with the first section? In other words, is the whole of the prophecy of Zechariah to be read as a continuously developing purpose (like, for example, the book of Revelation), or is it a series of separate aspects—with no particular chronological or related sequence—of one all-important theme?

The latter alternative seems to be the generally accepted view, with the Kingdom of God as the central theme, and with reference being made to other verses in Scripture, often without an appreciation of the background context. We believe the former to be the case, and that there is a prophecy here of the way in which the Kingdom of God will, stage by stage, be established through the earth, eventuating in the Lord being King over all the earth (14:9).

There is, to our mind, a significant linking feature between the two very different sections of the book. The last verse of chapter 8 reads: “In those days it shall come to pass, that ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that

is a Jew, saying, We will go with you: for we have heard that God is with you”. This expression of intent comes after those visions concerning the coming of the Lord to dwell in the rebuilt temple, and indeed after the rebuilding was well under way, when temple functions were again operating (7:2).

The fact that there were *ten* men, and that they were from all languages of the nations, and that they took hold of the skirt of a Jew, that is, a man of Judah, is strongly suggestive that these men were representatives of the ten tribes scattered abroad. This conception is confirmed in the very first verse of chapter 9, which says that “the eyes of man, as of *all the tribes of Israel*, shall be toward the LORD”. This connection encourages us to think that there is a link between chapters 8 and 9, and consequently that there is an ongoing theme through the prophecy, an ongoing theme concerning the development of the establishing of the Kingdom of God.

#### A pattern for the future establishment of the Kingdom of God

To look into this concept in detail would not be possible within the scope of one article, but a brief survey might be attempted. These last six chapters may be divided into three quite distinct parts: chapters 9 and 10, chapter 11, and chapters 12–14. And the important point is that each section, in detail, can be related to a particular period in the history of the Kingdom of God from the time of David to the end of the monarchy under Zedekiah. In effect, Zechariah in his prophecy is saying that, if we want to know how the Kingdom of God will develop, we must consider certain parts of the history of the kingdom of David as *patterns* of the future. Chapters 9 and 10 can be associated *in detail* with Hezekiah’s reign, chapter 11 in just as much detail with the reigns of Josiah and his sons, and chapters 12–14 similarly with the reign of David himself and with the reign of Uzziah.

Such a linking up of the prophecy of Zechariah with the past history of the throne of David is in itself a fascinating study, and it is clear that it must lead to an appreciation of the prophecy very different from the one widely held amongst us at present. For example, in our experience, Zechariah chapters 12 and 14 are two of the most widely quoted chapters in our public proclamation of the nearness of the coming of the Lord; in particular: “his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives” (14:4). In our

view, based on the pattern of the history of David, who went barefoot on the mount of Olives when he fled from Absalom (2 Sam. 15:30), this verse in Zechariah would not be associated with the day of the Lord's actual coming. It would instead reflect an event which would occur during the work of the establishment, perhaps taking many years, of the Kingdom. We appreciate that such a view may not be acceptable to many; but we submit that a detailed study of these last six chapters of Zechariah, pointing repeatedly to the pattern of the history of the former kingdom of David, should be carefully considered.

#### New Testament quotations

There is another feature of these chapters which has to be taken into account. There are in fact four quotations in the New Testament taken from these chapters, all of which have reference to the circumstances surrounding the death of Jesus. These concern:

- the entry into Jerusalem (9:9; Mt. 21:4,5; Jno. 12:14,15)
- the selling of Jesus for thirty pieces of silver (11:12,13; Mt. 27:9,10)
- the looking on the pierced one (12:10; Jno. 19:37)

- the smiting of the shepherd and the scattering of the sheep (13:7; Mt. 26:31).

The very fact that they are spread over all these chapters helps to confirm the idea that the chapters present a closely developed theme.

If these chapters in Zechariah are pointing to certain incidents in the history of the Kingdom of God in the past, as we are suggesting, then it is striking that these quotations can each be associated with a death, or near death, occurrence. Without going into detail, the associations are as follows:

- the riding into Jerusalem with the near death and resurrection experience of Hezekiah
- the price of the prophet (thirty pieces of silver) with the drama of Jeremiah being put in the pit by those seeking to be rid of him
- the mourning for the only son with the death of Absalom
- the smiting of the shepherd with the perilous time that David suffered at the hands of Absalom.

Each of these connections obviously needs evidence to support it, which would require more space than is available to us here, but for those who are interested it is an enlightening study.

## Metals in the Bible

### 3. Silver (Part 2)

Peter Hemingray

**I**N PART 1 WE looked at how silver was refined and at Biblical passages where the figure of refining is used. We conclude our look at silver by considering its uses.

#### Money a synonym for silver

The connection between money and silver in the Bible is quite intimate. Most commonly, when we see the term 'money' in our English Bible, the Hebrew or Greek is the same as for silver. We know that gold and silver were used as a medium of exchange well before Abraham; he came back from Egypt rich in cattle, gold and silver (Gen. 13:2). There was no system of coinage then, nor would there be until after the exile, but these metals were cast into convenient forms such as bars or rings for use as exchange.

However, the pieces were not accurate enough to pass for money without weighing, as we see

in the case of the transaction between Abraham and the children of Heth: "And Abraham hearkened unto Ephron; and Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant" (23:16). Notice that Abraham weighed the silver; this transaction indicates the common use of silver as currency, for it was "current money with the merchant". Earlier we have the mention of the use of silver by Abraham as money: "He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money [Heb. silver]" (17:13).

Ornaments of silver and gold were apparently made to the shekel weight, so that they might be used for money in emergency. So Abraham's servant gave a gold ring to Rebekah of half a shekel weight, and gold bracelets of ten shekels' weight (24:22). The bundles of money