# Zechariah 4 - Lord Jesus is building His Church

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Preacher: Aubrey Sequeira

[0:00] Good morning, church. Please turn with me to Zechariah chapter 4 verses 1 to 14. So that's on page 951.

! Zechariah chapter 4 verses 1 to 14.! The angel of the Lord who talked with me returned and woke me up like someone awakened from sleep.
He asked me, what do you see? I answered, I see a solid gold lampstand with a bowl at the top and seven lamps on it with seven channels to the lamps. Also, there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left. I asked the angel who talked with me, what are these, my lord? He answered, do you not know what these are? No, my lord, I replied.
So he said to me, this is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel. Not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord Almighty. What are you, mighty mountain? Before Zerubbabel, you will become level ground. Then he will bring out the capstone to shouts of, God bless it, God bless it. Then the word of the Lord came to me. The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundations of this temple. His hands will also complete it. Then you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you. Who dares despise the day of small things? Since the seven eyes of the Lord that ranged throughout the earth will rejoice when they see the chosen capstone in the hands of Zerubbabel.
Then I asked the angel, what are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lampstand? Again, I asked him, what are these two olive branches beside the two gold pipes that pour out golden oil?
[2:02] He replied, do you not know what these are? No, my lord, I said. So he said, these are the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth. This is the word of the Lord.

Will you join me in prayer one more time? Heavenly Father, our gracious God, we thank you for your word.
We come to you hungry, needy, weary, even desperate. And we pray, Lord God, that through the preaching of your word, you would show us your son, our Lord Jesus Christ, in all his glory. Empower me, O Lord, to preach in the power of your spirit. Cause the eyes of our hearts to be enlightened, to behold Jesus. And as we behold him, to become like him. Fill our hearts with hope this morning.
Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight. O Lord, our rock and our redeemer. In Jesus' name. Amen.
[3:19] So one of the things we have really enjoyed in the UK, especially in London, is seeing all these sites and places that we've read about and heard about and maybe seen pictures on the internet, but now we're actually seeing them in person.

And one of those that really thrilled my heart was the spire of St. Paul's Cathedral. And I'm going to tell you why. So one of the most famous pictures of World War II was taken on December 29th, 1940.
and it's a picture of St. Paul's Cathedral, the spire. I'm a huge World War II fan. We loved the Churchill War Rooms. And I love this particular picture.
It was called by many the war's greatest picture. Of course, it was in the middle of the Blitz. There were airplanes flying overhead every night, bombs dropping all over London.
and on this date in December, several bombs were dropped in the square mile. 28 bombs hit St. Paul's Cathedral.
[4:30] And thanks to firefighters and brave citizens, the cathedral was protected with minimum damage. But a photographer snapped this photo and he called the photo St. Paul's Survives.

You can Google and look at it later. And in this photo, the city of London is engulfed in smoke and flames. There's all of this smoke. But the cathedral's tower and spire is standing tall, shining in the

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midst of the chaos.
One newspaper described this image saying, and I quote, the shining cross, dome, and towers stood out like a symbol in the inferno, a national symbol of survival and resistance.
And one person, one citizen said this. She said, I felt, when she saw the picture, I felt while St. Paul's survived, so would we.
This picture gave Britain hope and confidence in the midst of a very difficult time. And brothers and sisters, this morning's text, that feeling of hope and of confidence, of survival and resistance, is kind of the feeling that the prophet Zechariah had and what he wanted to bring to God's people.
[5:51] Because he saw a shining symbol, a symbol of survival, of resilience, a symbol of hope and confidence. And my goal for us this morning is that we would be filled, that you would be filled with confident hope as you engage in the mission of the church.

That we would go from here with confidence that Jesus Christ will build his church and that God's kingdom will advance no matter what setbacks come our way.
And I want you to see this hope in Zechariah's vision of a lampstand in Zechariah 4. In the book of Zechariah the prophet receives a series of visions and this vision is right in the center.
It's the fifth vision and it focuses in on the heart of Jerusalem on this lampstand which was supposed to be in the temple. So let's pick it up in Zechariah 4 verses 1 to 3.
Look at verses 1 to 3 again with me. The angel who talked with me returned and woke me up like someone awakened from sleep. He asked me what do you see? I answered I see a solid gold lampstand with a bowl at the top and seven lamps on it with seven channels to the lamps and there are two olive trees by it one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left and by this time if you've been listening carefully you're probably wondering well what's all this about?
[7:24] And what does this have to do with West Kilburn Baptist Church and all of us here today in the northwest corner of London? Well friends whenever we're in the Old Testament and especially in a book that you feel unfamiliar with most of us let's confess feel pretty unfamiliar with Zechariah one time I was in America preaching and I said open your Bibles to Zechariah and I heard this older lady in the congregation say Zech-a-what?

It's helpful to know when you come to a portion of the Bible that you may not be familiar with it's helpful to know where we are in the story the storyline of scripture you see less than a century earlier the people of Israel had experienced an unimaginable catastrophe their city was destroyed their temple was burned to the ground everything was reduced to ashes and dust and they were carried off as exiles into Babylon all as a result of their sin God brought judgment upon them just like you've been going through the book of Isaiah everything that Isaiah prophesied about God's judgment coming came upon this people but then Isaiah prophesied other things as well doesn't he?
prophesied restoration a return from exile and after 70 years in exile after 70 years of God's judgment for their sin the people of Israel had come back from Babylon back to their homeland to rebuild and to replant with a commission from the king to rebuild the temple so they were on a temple building mission and that sounds hopeful doesn't it?
but you see when they returned they soon found themselves bogged down struggling with discouragement overwhelmed with poverty they didn't have the money for this project with setbacks and above all hindered by their own sin their rebuilding came to a complete standstill they faced deep discouragement all hope seems lost does that sound familiar?
and then one day in the middle of the night the prophet Zachariah sees a lampstand burning bright and this is no ordinary lampstand no this was a lampstand that stood at the heart of the temple in Jerusalem this lampstand was a national symbol and it symbolized the light of God's presence with his people reminding as Zachariah sees this vision he's reminded God's people will survive their mission will continue and will come to completion the lampstand is supernatural in Zachariah's vision it's got two olive trees on each side and they're constantly pouring oil through golden pipes into it it's like a perpetual motion machine constantly kept ablaze the lampstand is ablaze without human intervention and the seven lamps has seven wicks so there's 49 lights on this lampstand it's like a million watt lampstand and it's a promise it's a promise to God's people meant to motivate them to encourage them to rouse them to labor in hope and confidence and keep building the temple because the
[10:58] Lord himself will bring it to completion so what does that have to do with us you see friends just like the people of Israel were on a mission to build a temple we too are on a temple

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building mission we build God's temple in the church of Jesus Christ we are his temple his spiritual temple the church of Jesus is built of people from all nations through what Christ has done but just like the people of Israel were longing for God in a time of deep discouragement they were languishing in a day of small things we too struggle in what feels like a day of small things that's what church and our lives can often feel like I mean you're here in the UK in a post-Christian society

Christians are increasingly marginalized and despised and ridiculed for the things that we believe in and not just with pressures from the outside we often face the struggles on the inside we're hindered by our own weakness our own sin struggling often with the challenges that seem so overwhelming but in God's word beloved we too receive hope Zachariah shows us that we can labor in confidence to build up the body of Christ because ultimately this text is not just about a lamp stand and a temple 2500 years ago no this text is about us it's about you and me we who are God's temple in Christ and this text gives us three reasons why we can labor with confident hope in the mission of the church in the building of God's temple so we're going to look at three reasons from Zachariah 4 that we can have hope and confidence in the building of God's temple first reason why we labor with hope and confidence in the building of God's temple we rely on the sovereign spirit of

God you must rely we must rely on the sovereign spirit of God look at verses 4 to 7 so Zachariah has seen the vision he doesn't know what this means so he asked the angel I asked the angel who talked with me what are these my lord and he answered do you not know what these are come on Zachariah you're the prophet don't you know no my lord I replied so he said to me this is the word of the lord to Zerubbabel not by might nor by power but by my spirit says the lord almighty so in verses 1 to 3 we see what Zachariah saw and then in verse 4 Zachariah is perplexed and he's asking the angel what are these my lord and the angel says you should know he says I don't know and then we get this all of a sudden this word from the lord now as we're looking at the interpretation of this vision what we've got to understand anytime you're reading the prophets is that

Hebrew literature Hebrew prophets especially they work a little bit like instant replays so I am not a football guy but I am here in England and I take it many of you are football people last Saturday not yesterday but the week before with some friends in London we watched Saturday afternoon football and each time a goal was scored what do they do right after the goal is scored instant replay and then instant replay again from another angle and then instant replay again from a third angle and instant replay again from yet another angle and you see this happening from multiple perspectives that's how the Hebrew prophets work they don't tell you one thing after another they show you something from one angle then rewind instant replay from another angle instant replay from yet another angle if you were watching the game and you had no idea what this was all about you think there were seven goals just scored but it's actually the same goal just from a different perspective that's what they're doing and so as we see the interpretation here here we're getting the first replay as the angel begins to explain to Zechariah and to us the word of the Lord he says in verse 6 is to Zerubbabel so who is this guy Zerubbabel if you read the book of Ezra especially chapters 3 to 5 you see that Zerubbabel was the governor of Israel at this time he was their leader he was the one in charge of this temple building mission and in verses 6 to 7 here's what the Lord says about how this temple will be built how this mission will be accomplished verse 6 not by might nor by power but by my spirit says the Lord God's temple is built by God's spirit not by human power nor by might not by wealth nor by human wisdom not by money nor by manpower not by giftedness nor by gimmicks not by personality nor by programs by my spirit says the Lord and these people the people to whom Zachariah was speaking they were struggling with discouragement they were struggling with their own inadequacy with their insufficiency they didn't have the money they didn't have the manpower they didn't have the capacity needed to do God's work do you feel that way at times overwhelmed by the task before you in this great city struggling with your own inadequacy the lack of resources the lack of capacity sometimes we get so overwhelmed we just get busy giving ourselves to other things and forget what the mission is all about but the

[17:21] Lord reminds them and he reminds us that the building of his temple doesn't ultimately depend on us it doesn't depend on what we have or on our strength no it depends on his sovereign spirit my beloved brothers and sisters if they needed to be reminded of this how much more do we need to be reminded that in our work for the Lord that in our mission to build his temple we must rely on his sovereign spirit the great baptist preacher Charles Spurgeon who preached at the metropolitan tabernacle in the 19th century who contributed to build this church building many of

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you know of Spurgeon and his great preaching maybe what you don't know is that as he ascended the stairs of his pulpit each week to preach often battling deep depression gout all kinds of afflictions sometimes physically sick and throwing up as he ascended each step he would pray to himself

I believe in the Holy Spirit I believe in the Holy Spirit each step I believe in the Holy Spirit brothers and sisters West Kilburn Baptist Church do you believe in the Holy Spirit he's not just reserved for the Pentecostals you know he works where Christ and his word are preached do you believe that the sovereign spirit of God is in charge of his work he's the same spirit of God who was in the beginning hovering over the face of the darkness and God said let there be light and the spirit of God moved and there was light he's the same spirit of God who was with the Israelites and with Moses on the banks of the Red Sea and the spirit of God moved and the Red Sea parted he's the same spirit of God who filled Mary's womb and who emptied Jesus' tomb and he's the spirit of God who came down in fire on Pentecost and filled his church and the church has been advancing for 2000 years unstoppable he's the same spirit of God who was there when you were in darkness dead in your trespasses and sins and someone shared the gospel message with you and the spirit of
God moved and the lights came on as he brought you from darkness to light and from idols to serve the living God do you believe in the Holy Spirit the Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest of He is the head of the church and as his people He has poured out his spirit upon us to do his work He empowers his church through the Holy Spirit the Spirit indwells us and He graciously gives us gifts every single one of us to do his work He is with us as a people all of us empowering us to build his temple He's not just with the pastor not just with Pastor Steve He's in you beloved Christian and He empowers us to fight our sin to live for Christ and His glory and to declare His gospel as He gives us opportunity are you here this morning and you feel weak do you feel weak do you feel weary weighed!
down by my Spirit says the Lord maybe you feel inadequate to be a part of God's mission you think to yourself how can I be used of God I'm a mess I don't have it all together by my Spirit says the Lord or maybe you just feel discouraged as you look at the state of this nation so secular Islam growing quickly the churches feel small and weak the task before us in the UK seems so immense by my Spirit says the Lord oh Pastor Aubrey we're a small church here in the northwest corner of London we just merged together with another church are we really going to reach this nation for Christ by my Spirit says the Lord friends we can depend on the sovereign Spirit of God and that means we fall on our knees before God in prayer we are a people committed to prayer a church devoted to prayer let the Spirit of God move you in your individual life and as a church to cry upon the
Lord who can do exceedingly and abundantly more than we can ask or even think did you see verse 7 what are you mighty mountain before Zerubbabel you will become level ground it so the sovereign the sovereign spirit every mountain before Christ our greater Zerubbabel and he goes before us trailblazing away for us to follow as he builds his temple what is the mountain that is hindering the building of God's temple here in West Kilburn it will be level ground it will be crushed by my spirit says the Lord Christ our Lord has overcome every mountain that stands in his way and his mission advances through you beloved do you have any other fears what about our flaws what about our sin what about our failures will our flaws and sin and weaknesses get in the way of [23:19] God's temple building mission brothers and sisters be assured that they will not because as we engage in the building of God's temple not only do we have the sovereign spirit but we labor and hope and confidence because we trust in our sufficient leader that's the second reason we have hope and confidence in the building of God's temple we rely on the sovereign spirit of God and secondly we trust in our sufficient leader so we've seen instant replay number one and now shifting the angle same message different perspective instant replay number two look at verses 8!

that the hands that laid the foundation of the temple his hands would also bring it to completion would finish off the work I told you Zerubbabel was the governor and leader of Israel at this time he was the one in charge of the whole thing but Zerubbabel is only in the story to give us a preview a picture a pointer he points to someone greater he's a preview of a greater governor a greater temple builder to come if you want confirmation of that just read the gospel of Matthew chapter 1 and you'll see there a genealogy that features Zerubbabel Zerubbabel was a descendant of King David and although Israel was under foreign rule if Israel were to have a king Zerubbabel would

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have been the rightful king but from Zerubbabel's line in the future comes a greater more perfect king one whose body would be a temple in which
God's presence dwelled and one who would build a temple that would last forever Zerubbabel points us to one who would come 500 years after him Jesus Christ the greater Zerubbabel and what was the purpose of a temple anyways why did the temple exist the purpose of the temple was to deal with people's sin so that they could have fellowship with the holy God so that he would dwell in their midst the temple taught the people that blood sacrifice was necessary for sinful people to have fellowship with the holy God throughout the book of Zechariah much like the book of Isaiah we'll see this promise again and again that God would purify his people cleanse his people from their sin and return to dwell with them again and brothers and sisters Jesus Christ our Lord has inaugurated the fulfillment of these promises he will bring these promises to their full completion his hands will finish off the work we may live in what seems like a day of small things facing setbacks stumbling each day but Jesus
Christ is building his church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it see the day of small things is a day of big promises our Lord Jesus Christ the greatest Zerubbabel his hands laid the foundation of our temple when he was nailed to a cross and poured out his blood for our sin giving up himself as a sacrifice perfectly absorbing the righteous judgment and wrath of God that we deserve his hands laid the foundation of our temple when they were nailed to a cross for your sins to be forgiven for you to be made right with God those same hands are at work even now working in us building us up conforming us to his image and those same hands will one day welcome you dear brother and sister as he says well done my good and faithful servant and calls us into his heavenly kingdom his temple that will reign forever and we can be certain that he will bring his mission to completion one of the great missionaries that this nation has produced was the baptist missionary William Carey who went to my country the nation of India and labored there to preach Christ and him crucified amidst great trials and tribulations and he once said this listen to Carey's words though I were deserted by all and persecuted by all yet my faith fixed on that sure word would overcome every trial God's cause will triumph the work to which God has set his hands will infallibly prosper the work to which God is calling us is not one in which we work with uncertainty we are not afraid of the result Christ must reign until Satan has not one inch of territory God will give us the victory that's what Carrie believed is that what you believe beloved do you believe that our sufficient savior will finish off the work that he started god maybe you're here this morning and you're not a [29:48] Christian maybe you happen to show up here this Sunday morning or maybe you claim to be a Christian you say that you're a Christian but you don't really truly know this savior Jesus your hope and your confidence are not in this Christ your confidence is in yourself maybe you've set your hope on deceitful things if that's you I want you to know you don't have anything to look forward to verse 10 here speaks of the eyes of God which range through the whole earth that is speaking of his absolute sovereignty his eyes see all things he knows all things even the depths of our hearts he watches over the world and he will ensure that all things will exist for his purposes dear unbelieving friend I want to speak to you I want you to know that one day Jesus Christ will finish off his work not only in salvation but also in judgment he will gather his people to himself his temple will fill all the earth and

God and his people will dwell forever in glory but Jesus also knows the hearts of all men and on that day he will bring judgment on his enemies those who have rebelled against him those whose hearts have been hardened against him and they will face his righteous judgment and punishment for all their sins for all your sins if you don't know Christ but now today is the day of salvation and he still calls people to come to him so I want to say to you dear unbelieving friend if you're here today and you don't know him if he's not your Lord I want to call you and invite you to hear the voice of the Son of God speaking to you from the scriptures beckoning you to come to him turn away from your sins and trust in him put who will finish off his work and you can talk to anyone here after this service about what it means to trust
Jesus and follow after him we'd be glad that members of the church would be glad to talk with you about that beloved friends this may seem like a day of small things but it is a day of big promises! Jesus will finish his work his promises! are sure and steadfast so what do we do in this sort of in between we're waiting in hope and confidence we're waiting for him to finish off his work how do we engage in this temple building mission how does the mission of the church advance well the answer is an instant replay number three first we rely on God's sovereign spirit second we trust in the

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sufficient savior and then third we labor in hope and in confidence by proclaiming God's invincible word we must proclaim God's invincible word so finally getting the last instant replay we're now seeing
Zachariah's message from every angle every side getting a full blown picture of what the prophet is saying and we see this in verses 11 to 14 look with me again at verses 11 to 14 then I asked the angel what are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lamp stand again I asked him what are these two olive branches beside the two gold pipes that pour out!
[33:50] the oil! he! So the prophet is like you and I he's puzzled about these two olive trees pouring oil into the lamp stand to keep it lit and then he asked the angel so what's this now what are these olive trees and then the angel replies very helpfully that the two olive trees are the two who are anointed and if you have a footnote there it says the two who bring oil and serve the lord of all the earth and you hear that and if you're like me you say oh what a helpful answer I don't know what that means what does he mean and of course there are numerous debates about who these two anointed ones or ones who bring the oil or you can call them the oily ones like who are these guys all sorts of debates!

I think two figures who bring oil represent God's prophets that is the men who proclaim God's word as prophets to the community how do we know that?
well first of all notice that there's this phrase that they serve the lord of all the earth that phrase those who stand before the lord of the whole earth those who serve the lord of all the earth it's used frequently in the old testament to refer to prophets those who held the prophetic office holy men who spoke as God's representatives but second another way to understand who these are is if we look in Ezra the book of Ezra which tells the history of God's people at this time when Zechariah was prophesying the book of Ezra in chapter 6 and verse 14 tells us this it the of the Jews built and prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah son of Edo so what did they build they built the temple how did they do that they did it through the prophetic word through the prophets who spoke
God's word and friends God spoke to them partially through prophets at many times and in many ways but he has spoken to us in greater measure he has spoken to us fully completely in his son in this book we don't have prophets anymore proclaiming the word of God but we have something more sure something more complete God's completed revelation his prophetic word in the scriptures we have been given God's written word his sufficient word which advances the mission of the church and which always accomplishes his purposes all of the prophets look forward to Christ he has fulfilled the prophetic office and this book is the culmination of his word which he gives to us this is how we engage in God's mission by loving and reading and hearing and speaking and proclaiming this word and this word is invincible it is unshakable you think about the early church in acts where the early
Christians were facing persecution and hostility from every side and Luke records the word of God was not hindered or you think about the protestant reformation the protestant reformation where people were living in darkness for years and years with no gospel no word of God being preached to them and then a man sitting in Germany opened his bible and the gospel spread like wildfire across Europe came into this country took over this nation and Martin Luther with whom it began he said this he said he ate and he drank Wittenberg beer with his friends I can say that because I'm in England and he went to bed and he says the word of God did it all the word of God did it all beloved brothers and sisters
[38:34] West Kilburn Baptist Church do you have confidence in this word when you come here each week on Sunday morning and you hear the word of God preached from this pulpit either by Pastor Steve or by anyone else do you come here ready for God Almighty himself to speak to you through his preaching to equip you and empower you to live on mission for him beloved friends we don't need big church programs we don't need some kind of special fancy ministries we don't need just the right connections or the most winsome strategy or any other gimmicks all we need is confidence that this word is sufficient to save lost sinners to build God's church to bring reformation and renewal and even revival to this nation so in the life of your church dear friends commit yourselves to this resolve to hear this word to honor this word to treasure this word to trust this word to speak this word to worship according to this word to live this word and to proclaim this word though trials may come though things may get really hard though our hearts may be often cold though the whole world may stand against us we proclaim this word knowing that as

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Carrie famously said God will give us the victory Zerubbabel and the people built their temple God was faithful to his promises to them but that temple eventually failed and faltered and fell because you see all of this was about a greater temple and a greater temple builder who had to come Jesus Christ the righteous one in whom we are now God's living temple and as you keep reading the Bible and you come towards the end of the Bible you will see that another man in scripture also saw lampstands the apostle John and he saw the one with eyes of flames of fire walking in the midst of those lampstands and the
Lord also showed the apostle John a picture of our completed temple would you believe that in Revelation chapter 7 we see a picture of the finished work of our completed mission look at Revelation chapter 7 here's what it says in verses 9 and following after this I looked says John and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count from every nation tribe and people and language standing before the throne and before the lamb they were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands and they cried out in a loud voice salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to!
do you see yourself there? Do you see the saints of West Kilburn Baptist Church there? Do you see people from the many different nations who live in London there?
Build God's temple we have the sovereign spirit we have an invincible word and we have a savior who will finish off his work don't give up brothers and sisters take heart God will give us the victory let's pray heavenly father we thank you for your great and precious promises for your sovereign spirit who lives in us who indwells this church we thank you that our Lord Jesus Christ is building his church and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it and we pray Lord God that we would labor on even in our weakness knowing that your power is perfected in weakness may you build your temple here in this city in this nation and to the ends of the earth for your glory and for our great joy in
[43:23] Jesus name Amen to ■■■ ■■■ to to the of the can to the other to the

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