

Locking Horns

¹⁸ And I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, **four horns!**

¹⁹ And I said to the angel who talked with me, "What are these?" And he said to me, "These are **the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.**"

²⁰ Then the LORD showed me **four craftsmen.**

²¹ And I said, "What are these coming to do?" He said, "These are the horns that scattered Judah, so that no one raised his head. And these have come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations who lifted up their horns against the land of Judah to scatter it."

Zechariah 1:18-21

My Favorite Horn

IF I WERE TO ASK YOU what is your favorite horn, how would you answer? Lena (Horne)? She was a great singer and quite beautiful even in her 70s when she appeared on *The Muppet Show*. Perhaps you would say Tom (Horn). He has some very interesting books to be sure. How about that horn on the General Lee? I don't think the odd political

correctness going on in our culture would stop any of you from having that as your answer if it were your favorite horn. What a great song it makes. How about that silver Bach trumpet you were given as a gift to play in the college band? I know, having had one, that it probably sounded and looked amazing. Or maybe you went to CSU and of course your favorite horn is the ram's horn.

This is what can happen when we each have an idea of something that we think is in the mind of someone else when they ask a question like this. We can get answers that are vastly different. Now, what would happen if we were to do this with Zechariah's second vision which begins, "I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, four horns" (Zech 1:18). We would get ourselves into big trouble if we taught something like, "Zechariah saw four General Lee's, one horn for Bo, one for Luke, one for Jesse, and one for Daisy."

Of course, we all know that this would be absurd. But what if, nevertheless, we thought one thing about what the "horn" was, but our conception was perhaps incomplete or maybe even wrong? The results would not be good. How

should we discover exactly what it is that the prophet is seeing? The answer is, we have to get into his context as best we can. In this case, the context isn't just the vision, but the rest of Scripture and even to the way the people of his day in other cultures used the same images in the same ways that the Bible does. This is how, I believe, good interpretation and correct application of God's word begins.

So let's begin by setting the stage and seeing what it is that is described before us in this second night vision. **First**, we know that Zechariah is seeing something. “**I lifted up my eyes and saw**” (vs. 18). **Second**, as shown, he sees a number of horns. The number of horns he sees is “four.” **Third**, he talks to the angel “**who talked with me**” and asked him again, “**What are these?**” (19). Again, though, there is ambiguity about who this angel is.¹ After the explanation, he sees four more things. This time he sees four “**craftsmen**” (21). They are “**coming to do**” something (21). What they are coming to do is to “**cast down the**

¹ Vs. 19 has the angel explaining. Vs. 20 has “the LORD” showing. Vs. 21 has the angel he is talking with explaining again. Probably the most natural way to read this particular vision is that the LORD is the angel who he is talking to. However, this is not necessary.

horns.” That’s the end of the vision in terms of what it is that he sees. It is quite a simple picture of four horns and four craftsmen that come to cast those horns down. Or is it? What in the world does this mean? That’s what we will spend the rest of our time trying to figure out.

Behold, Four Horns

We only have two symbols to try and understand, but each will take a bit of time to think through clearly. The first are the horns. We want to figure out what kind of horns are in mind, both physically and then symbolically. Obviously, he isn’t talking about a car horn or someone with the last name “Horn.” The physical item is easy enough to understand.

It is some kind of an animal horn. Animals like deer, sheep, goats, oxen, elk, rams and so forth all have horns and these horns give the animal a regal look. Anyone who hunts wants the biggest set of horns they can find for a trophy. People in Texas want the same thing for the front of their car. “[God] will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed” (1Sa 2:10).

More practically, they use their horns as **weapons** of both strength and defense. Animals thrust and gore and this is used as a metaphor for wicked people: “**Because you push with side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad**” (**Ezek 34:21**), or “**You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!**” (**Ps 22:21**). They are also weapons of, well, manliness. There can hardly be a grander site in all of nature than to watch two big horn sheep head-butting one another with their horns. One lowers his horns and then strikes. The winner holds his horns high, and may even get the girl. “**I say to the boastful, 'Do not boast,' and to the wicked, 'Do not lift up your horn'**” (**Ps 75:4**). On the other hand, don't even try to go up to a moose and pet him. We were fortunate to see three of them the other day up in the mountains. But we stayed our distance. Those horns would do you in. “**My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him, and in my name shall his horn be exalted**” (**Psa 89:24**) is also translated, “**My faithfulness and grace will be with him; through my name his power will grow**” (Ps

89:25 CJB).² In these ways, a main symbol of the horn becomes **power**.

In the Bible, they used horns for various purposes. Horns could **hold things** like oil. This could then be used for other things like **anointing** (**1 Sam 16:1**). Horns were used as instruments, most particularly, the trumpet, which in turn was often the instrument used in battle (**Josh 6:5**). Both ideas signify power. We could go on. So what is Zechariah seeing then? Animals horns to be sure, but **how do they appear** to him? Four disembodied, floating horns in the air? Two animals with horns? Are they in a line? A pattern? The options may seem bewildering, but consider.

Curiously, and importantly, they put horns on the altar that went in the courtyard of Israel's sanctuary. Why so curious? Because there "just so happened" to be four of them. "**You shall make horns for it on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze**" (**Ex 27:2**). "Four" is the number of horns that Zechariah saw. Other than the tabernacle/temple altar, apocalyptic visions of the prophets are the only other times

² For more on the imagery of the horn see Leland Ryken et al., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 400.

we hear about “four horns.” So perhaps we should look more closely at these horns and altars.

The top of the tabernacle altar might have looked something like this:



Other altars in neighboring lands to Israel had similar motifs, with four “horns” on the four corners of the top of the altar:

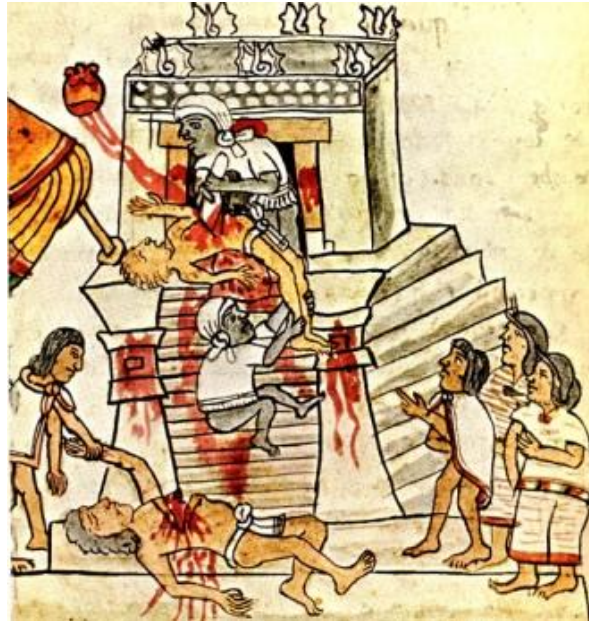


Beitzel 2004, Elephantine 52
Four-Horned altar



Minoan “Horns of Consecration”

So everyone was doing it. Even, across the ocean we even find altars with horns.



Aztec sacrifices, Codex Mendoza, wiki commons

These Aztec altars were gigantic, and were the top structure on their ziggurats, where they would perform such abominations as human sacrifices.



So what is a ziggurat? Importantly, the term comes from *zaqāru* which means, “be high”, “raised up.” I want you to notice how in our text this morning it talks about horns being scattered “so that no one raised his head” and “to cast down the horns ... who lifted up their horns” against Judah (**Zech 1:21**). This is not an accidental coincidence.

Ziggurats are man-made mountain temples as their very names explain: “Temple of the Mountain Breeze” (Nippur) or “Temple of the Exalted Mountain” (Ehursagkalamma). They were built all around the world and were attempts to recreate the original mountain temple: Eden “the holy mountain of God” (**Ezek 28:14; 16**), as well as other mountain temples that God would dwell upon such as Ararat, Sinai, Zion, The Mt. of Beatitude, or Calvary. Eden, of course, is where God would meet with Adam and the divine council, which is why the place is filled with angelic and supernatural beings (the Nachash; **Gen 3:1**; the cherubim; **3:24**; “guardian cherub” and “stones of fire;” **Ezek 28:14**).

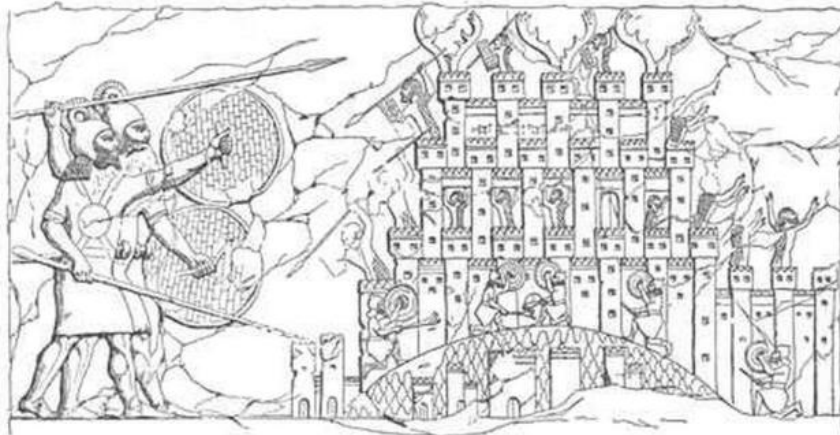
After being exiled from Eden, humanity grew restless for this communion, and basically, for their seat on the

heaven council. So they began to erect these ziggurats which were attempts to reach up into heaven to meet with God and the gods/angels/sons of God/watchers, etc. Again, the names of these ziggurats say this to us such as “**Temple of the Foundation of Heaven and Earth**” (Babylon) or “**Temple of the Stairway to Pure Heaven**” (Sippar) or “**Temple which Links Heaven and Earth**” (Larsa) or “**Temple of the Exalted Dwelling Place**” (Kish).³

The first attempt at this was after the flood was the **Tower of Babel**. Now, the Bible tells its own story of this event, but other cultures, including the Aztecs and more importantly the Babylonians themselves (for Babel was built in Babylon), also tell this story. The epic this is recorded in is called the *Enuma Elish*. Here, they give a name to the Tower. They call it **Esagila**. This name is very important to our story, because as **Meredith Kline** explains it means, “**The House of the Lifting Up of the Head.**” They explain that after a year of making bricks for it, “**they raised the head of Esagila on high**” (*EE* 6.62) and once the god Marduk was enthroned upon it, “**they looked up to its**

³ For more on this, see my sermon on Genesis 11:1-9.

horns” (*EE* 6.66).⁴ Thus, as with the Aztecs across the ocean, their mountain-tower was crowned with horns:



Bas-relief from Khorsabad

So by climbing up into heaven to bring God down to themselves, to touch the divine and regain their seat of authority and rule and decision-making in a way that usurped God’s authority, These mountain temples were the height of hubris. They were attempts of Coup d'état, mutiny against the Captain of the Armies of Heaven. But if God gave you permission, then it was acceptable to rise up the mountain to where he dwelt in glory and power.

Returning then again to Israel’s altar with its four horns on the top, what we discover in looking at it is that it

⁴ Meredith Kline, *Glory in our Midst*, 61.

is built to emulate the same cosmic mountain. The same goes for the altar that Joshua built and so on.



In the altar, the idea is that you would ascend to the place where God was, as the smoke from the fire represented the same Glory-Spirit Cloud that would descend upon the Tabernacle and be in the midst of the people. From there, because *he* invited you into *his* presence, the priest would meet with God as a representative of the sinful people who need forgiveness. Blood would be sprinkled on the four horns, and atonement would be made on behalf of all the people: north, south, east, and west. All of this took place in this seat of power, in the midst of the horns or power in the dwelling place of the God of All-Power. Or, if you

were a pagan, in the seat of the gods, in the midst of the horns of power, in the dwelling place of the gods.

“And I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, four horns!”
(Zech 1:18).

Before moving on, I wish to tell you one more thing about how horns were often used in military and religious symbolism. They were used on [sacred headdresses](#). And this is true around the world. We find them in Japan, Scandinavia, Africa, North America, Greece, South America, Cypress, etc.



Japanese
kabuto w/
horns



This sixth-century
Nordic helmet
plaque



Six
fingered
giant
African
Ivory



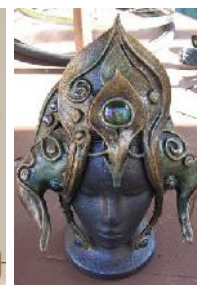
North
American
Rock Art



“Man
Mounds” of
Wisconsin



Bronze
Horned
God
Enkomi
Cyprus



Mayan
Horned
headdress



Etruscan
goat-horned
goddess
Uni, the
forerunner of
Juno.

Similarly, we find the gods themselves sometimes depicted with horns or horned headdresses. And of course, this includes the Devil or Satan.



Zeus Ammon.
Roman copy
of a Greek
original late 5th
century BC.



Loki, Heimdall, and Oden
from the movie Thor



Alexander the
Great after
his deification
in the temple



Pan



Satan,
Bug's
Bunny
Cartoons

It might be tempting to simply think that ancient peoples were somehow just worshiping animals, such as when El is depicted as a bull (of course, with horns). But they weren't worshiping animals. They personified animal traits as a way of communicating the theological or spiritual truth. Power, beauty, regality, nature, and divination were all included in the purpose of the horns. When a man put horns on his head, it was a symbol of his being in communication with the gods or gifted with a special power from the gods and, as their vice-regent or mighty warrior on earth, carrying their power in his person. So it

is similar in function to the horns of the ziggurats and altars. This is a leader of the peoples. This is a king, or is it a *Vi*-king:



“And I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, four horns!” (**Zech 1:18**).

Four Craftsmen

In Zechariah’s vision, **vs. 21** refers to them as “**the horns of the nations**.” Thus, people have tried to identify four particular nations that would satisfy a very literal-historical interpretation of the vision. But the language is not that the horns are nations. It is rather than the horns *belong to* the nations in some way. Perhaps they are then kings of nations. This is more plausible, until we come to realize who it is that throws them down.

Here we where we want to consider the second part of the vision: **craftsmen**. Zechariah saw **four craftsmen**. Now,

craftsmen are **artisans**. They usually work with wood or stone or metal. Sometimes they make weapons. We all know about metalsmiths and tailors and weaponsmiths and woodworkers who would make swords and armor and bows and other such things in days gone by. Well, believe it or not, the ancients had the equivalent of such people in their spiritual worlds.

Outside of the Bible they had what are called “**craftsmen deities**.” It was a whole tier of heavenly beings who fell somewhere below the gods and above the angels in terms of their hierarchy. For example, **Hephaestus** made a great shield for Achilles which he used to defeat Hector at the battle of Troy, and **Kothar** made a great bow for Baal which he used to destroy the sea-monster Yam. What does a sea-monster look like again? “**And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads**” (**Rev 13:1**).

This word for a craftsmen can be used figuratively such as in **Ezekiel 21:31** “**artificers of destruction**” (YLT). Of course, normally, artesians build things, not destroy them,

So Ezekiel has a very ironic sense to it. That might be the case with Zechariah as well, if he were simply seeing a vision of general devastation of nations or something. The problem is, that isn't what he is seeing at all. Instead, he sees these craftsmen destroying horns, and we have seen in particular how these there are "four" horns and how this corresponds to very religious symbolism of altars and ziggurats.

Curiously, returning to a now familiar theme for our sermon, craftsmen are also closely associated with [the temple](#). After creating the weapon that killed the sea-monster, Kothar, is assigned the task of [building Baal's temple](#) (curiously, as this is a creation story, it is in seven days). This is true closer to home as well. After striking Leviathan in the sea (where Pharaoh is likened to the sea-monster, see below), God says, "[I have called by name Bezalel](#) [["In the shadow of God"](#)] [the son of Uri ... and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, to work](#)

in every craft ... I have appointed with him Oholiab [“Tabernacle of my Father”] ... And I have given to all able men ability, that they may make all that I have commanded you: the tent of meeting, and the ark of the testimony, and the mercy seat that is on it, and all the furnishings of the tent, the table and its utensils, and the pure lampstand with all its utensils, and the altar of incense, and the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils...” (Ex 31:2-9). Notice the supernatural empowering here from the Holy Spirit. That is important for later.

The key here is identifying the meaning of the verb “cast down.” Numerous attempts have been made at this, but almost all have to mess around with the vowels that the Jewish scribes inserted into the text via tradition or even with the consonants as they have been received by us. In other words, older people didn’t know what they were talking about. The simplest solution is to see that the verb here (*ydh*) is related to a Ugaritic verb *ydy* meaning “to cast out,” which is used with respect to some very interesting “artisans” in so-called “magical” texts.

In several different texts you have a problem like **poison** from a snake bite which needs to be “**expelled**” (*ydy*; KTU 1.100), or a mortal **disease** which needs to be “**cast out**” (*ydy*; KTU 1.16 v.11-12, 26-27), or a **demon** that must be “**expelled**” (KTU 1.6 vi.49-50). Diseases and demons that need to be cast out is an idea found all over the Gospels. The thing is, in each instance this Ugaritic word is used, you have some kind of a heavenly being doing the expelling. Again, Kothar, the chief Craftsman deity of the Baal Cycle whose job it was to build the temple of Baal.

Why a Craftsman, if his job was to build temples? It was “**because artisans are believed to be skilful in spells. Incantations are essential both to the production of weapons, and for the improvement of their efficacy ... by magic arts [artisans] prepare weapons for the expulsion of sea monsters.**”⁵ Curiously, demons, like the sea monsters of the Bible, were also said to have horns. We can see from

⁵ Eibert J. C. Tigchelaar, *Prophets of Old and the Day of the End: Zechariah, the Book of Watchers, and Apocalyptic* (Brill, 1996): 47-55 [51-54].

https://books.google.com/books?id=yHTu2ExWyoQC&pg=PA134&lpg=PA134&dq=E.J.C.+Tigchelaar,+Prophets+of+Old+and+the+Day+of+the+End&source=bl&ots=MMXLg3XJYs&sig=6V_o0vpAIBUJ1Lmw3P8ad1yiMow&hl=en&sa=X&ei=0IyQVbKcMZLzggSdpIHwBA&ved=0CCMQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q=enoch&f=false

Pan the Satyr (above). Pan was a goat-demon. They spoke of creatures called “The Devourers” described as having “**horns like bulls**” (KTU 1.12.i.30).



ARSLAN TAS AMULET NO. 1 (AT1) C.G. HÄBERL

(the demon is the animal figure below and both it and the figure above may represent Lilith)

https://www.academia.edu/5074216/Arslan_Tash_Amulet_No._1_AT1

The biblical images are the same. We’ve seen John’s beast of the sea with horns. This is similar to Daniel who saw a sea-beast with horns. “**It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one, before which three of the first horns were**

plucked up by the roots. And behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things” (Dan 7:7-8). In Daniel, the beasts are kingdoms. From there it gets more tricky. Are the horns kings? Possibly. However, “Both the hybrid character of the beasts and their emergence from the sea (one of the typical dwelling places of demons and monsters) [think the Deep] reveal the *demonical* nature of the beasts” [emphasis added].⁶

When we put all of this together, the best suggestion I’ve seen for the interpretation of all of this is one that is becoming more and more familiar to us in our studies of other books of the Bible. Why? Because this is no minor theme. It is literally everywhere. One scholar writes, “The horns in Zech 2:1-4 are neither symbols nor metaphors for kingdoms or kings, but signify demons [I would add the heavenly beings behind even them] in charge of an representing the nations.”⁷ The whole point of Babel was to reach up into the divine council and to regain a seat at the table, a seat that Adam lost. Esagila—*The House of the Lifting Up of the Head*—used the very same symbolism of

⁶ Tigchelaar, 54.

⁷ Ibid. See also Kline.

Zechariah's vision. The whole point of wearing the horns was to signify being a vice-regent of a god of the council. Now, we add the fact that it takes supernatural beings to "exorcise" or "cast out" or using the imagery of horns, "throw down" the horns shows that something more than just physical judgment upon physical nations is in play here. This is a cosmic battle, spiritual warfare in heavenly places.

In moving to the fulfillment of this vision, let's think about the nation of Israel and then move farther into time and history. Psalms 74 and 75 (among others) recount things we have seen in Zechariah's vision. "Psalm 74 emphasizes this blasphemous dimension of attacking the Lord's heritage. The situation is much like that in Zechariah's vision. God's people, pictured as his flock (vv. 1, 2), appeal to him, the one who broke the heads of the leviathan monster (vv. 13, 14), to raise them from the ruins wrought by their adversaries (v. 3), who are referred to as animals (vv. 4, 19). They lament that the foes 'burned your sanctuary to the ground; they defiled the dwelling place of your Name' (v. 7) and they plead, 'How long [see Zech

1:12] will the enemy mock you, O God?’ (v. 10). ‘Rise up O God, and defend your cause’ (v. 22). And in Psalm 75 such defiance of the God of heaven is described by the horn metaphor: ‘To the arrogant I say, “Boast no more,” and to the wicked, “Do not lift up your horns. Do not lift your horns against heaven” ’ (vv. 4, 5a [5, 6a]).”⁸

They had attacked Judah and Israel, the two terms for the northern and southern divided kingdoms. But they went for the heart, destroying the temple in Jerusalem on God’s holy mountain. The literally knocked down Israel’s horns. Daniel says they then took the religious vessels from the temple and put them in the temple of the “**land of Shinar**” (**Dan 1:2**), one of only four times that word is used outside of Genesis, thus calling our minds back to Babel, which makes sense because that’s where Daniel has also been taken. But in calling us to Babel, we are reminded again of its tower and horns and its lifting its own horns and casting down the horns of God’s people.

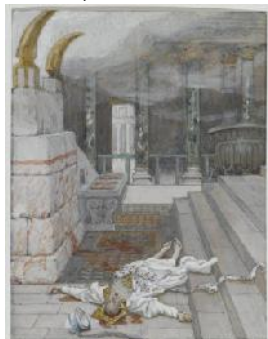
But Babel is not just a physical nation ruled by a physical king, though it was not less than that.

⁸ Kline, 59.

Nebuchadnezzar saw himself as the world tree (**Dan 4:10ff**), the very link between heaven and earth, in accordance with the ancient tower symbolism as well. He was himself a vessel of Marduk and other gods. Babylon was also the home of ancient astrology and astronomy, linking them further with heavenly and spiritual things. Isaiah uses the demonic imagery of centaurs and satyrs and sirens, which **Revelation 18:2** summarizes as “**demons.**” Yes, there is much more going on here behind the scenes, leading and inspiring men with such hate and violence as they rage against both God and his people.

So God showed Zechariah the craftsmen (**Zech 1:20**). “**What are they coming to do?**” (**1:21**), the prophet asked. “**These are the horns that scattered Judah.**”⁹ Not the

⁹ As we noted in the first sermon, someone named Zechariah was murdered as the symbolic last martyr of the OT. Curiously, he was murdered between the temple and the altar (2 Chron 24:20-21; Matt 23:35).



Zachariah Killed Between the Temple and the Altar
(Zacharie tué entre le temple et l'autel)
Source: The Brooklyn Museum
1886-1894

nations, but its horns. These are the entities behind the power of the nations, physical and spiritual as they are linked together in that “as in heaven, so on earth” dance. They scattered Judah so that he could not raise his head. Judah was beaten. Judah was powerless. Judah was without its temple, without its altar, without hope of atonement and sacrifice and forgiveness. He was laid low.

“These [craftsmen] have come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations who lifted up their horns against the land of Judah to scatter it” ([Zech 1:21](#)). So ends the second vision. Thus, the temple craftsmen with their skills in making altars and horns and beautifying the temple of God, the craftsmen come to terrify the Terrors of the Night, the enemies of God—in heaven and on earth. And how does this happen?

While the vision does not itself say, we can be confident of a few things. [First](#), kingdom after kingdom was [thrown into disarray](#) in the days between Daniel, Zechariah, and Christ. Babylon fell to Persia. Persia fell to the Medes. The Medes fell to the Greeks. The Greeks fell to the Romans. In each subsequent takeover, there was

terror thrown into the hearts of men as both earthly and heavenly principalities duked it out for the right to rule humanity. Scripture makes clear that each overthrow occurred at the sovereign will and choosing of God Almighty—the Lord of Hosts.

But still, though this might hit on a bit of Zechariah's imagery in this vision (and more from later visions), it doesn't really get at the whole religious symbolism of the altar and mountain and so on. So again, Psalm 75, “*All the horns of the wicked I will cut off, but the horns of the righteous shall be lifted up*” (Ps 75:10). This is language used throughout our vision today, with the addition of lifting up the horns of the righteous.

Enter the Lord Jesus Christ. While God certainly could have used heavenly craftsmen (whatever kind of tasks they have in heaven, I don't know) to terrify the horns of the nations, Jesus Christ was the Chief Artisan of the NT, casting out demons and healing diseases of all kinds with merely a word. And notice what he says when they accuse him of casting out by the power of Satan, “*If it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of*

God has come upon you” (Matt 12:28). It was only by the Spirit of God that the craftsmen of the OT were able to build the tabernacle, in part, because the tabernacle was a holy place that cast out evil things.

But it was by the Spirit that he also built God’s NT temple. It is Jesus Christ who would “raise” the temple. “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19). Building the temple, as we have seen, was the work of the craftsmen inspired by the Holy Spirit in Exodus. It is actually also the work that Jesus and the Spirit say about the Son of God in Proverbs 8 when Wisdom (see Isa 11:2; Php 1:19; 1 Pet 1:11; etc.) calls himself “the master craftsmen” who is building the creation-temple of God. “I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always” (Pro 8:30).

Let’s remember here that Christ has no problem whatsoever with the sea-creatures during his creation week (Gen 1:21), unlike the gods of the Babylonians in their creation stories. Yet, once they did defeat them, they built new temples to live in. Let’s also remember that Psalm 74 and other places refer to the Red Sea as a conquering of the

sea-monsters. But as soon as this occurs in Exodus, God inspires craftsmen to build his tabernacle.

This all culminates in Jesus who, in the temple of his body, would offer his body on the altar in heaven as a sacrifice of atonement that once-for-all takes away sin. “For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf” (Heb 9:24). “And the priest shall put some of the blood on the horns of the altar of fragrant incense before the LORD that is in the tent of meeting” (Lev 4:7). And thus we come “to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood” (Heb 12:24).

This all refers to Jesus’ death, which is a defeating of the powers of heaven, the demons of hell, the ruler of this world, so that when he rises from the dead he is now enthroned above every name in heaven and on earth (Eph 1:21; Php 2:9-10), having subjected them (1 Pet 3:21) to public disgrace, triumphing over them at the cross (Col 2:15), killing the hostility (Eph 2:16), abolishing their rule (1 Cor 15:24). Only then, after having defeated these great

enemies and horns, does he then raise the temple by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:11) as the Great Craftsman making all things new in himself.

“I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar before God, saying to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, ‘Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates’” (Rev 9:14). Notice the number “four” again. Notice the Euphrates, the river of Babylon. Notice the altar. And notice the voice. Who has the power to command such a thing? The Lamb—Thrice Holy—standing as if it had been slain, but now alive and claiming victory.

Of Messiah it was predicted “I will make a horn to sprout for David” (Ps 132:17). In the great Melchizedek Psalm it says, “He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs over the wide earth. He will drink from the brook by the way; therefore he will lift up his head” (Ps 110:6-7). “And his father [that is John the Baptist] Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, ‘Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his

people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David” (Luke 1:67-69).

“Christ Jesus *is* the lifting up of the head-horn; it is in him, its head, that the church’s horn is exalted. He is the original that was counterfeited in Babel’s Esagila ziggurat (cf. Deut 30:12, 13; Rom 10:6, 7). He is the true mountain stairway to God and gate of heaven (cf. Gen 28:12–17; John 1:51), the true altar and tabernacle, the true and only way to the heavenly Father. Jesus *is* the head lifted up. For God “raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph 1:20–23).”¹⁰

How shall you then respond? “My horn is exalted in the Lord” (1 Sam 2:1). “You, O Lord ... are the lifter up of

¹⁰ Kline, 70.

my head” (Ps 3:3). “You [O Lord] have lifted up my horn like that of the wild ox” (Ps 92:10).

“Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory! Selah” (Ps 24:7-10). “He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his saints, for the people of Israel who are near to him. Praise the LORD!” (Ps 148:14)!