



World Christian Fellowship

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Book of Zechariah

Name meaning: Zechariah was born in Babylon, the grandson of Iddo, a priest who returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel and Joshua.

Nehemiah 12:4,

According to tradition, Iddo was a member of the Great Synagogue (the governing body of the Jews before the Sanhedrin).

The name Zechariah means “The Lord remembers.” It was a popular name (used in the Old Testament of 29 other people) and an appropriate name for this prophet who exhorted the people to return to God.

Because Zechariah occasionally mentioned as the son of his grandfather (Ezra 5:1 and 6:14 and Nehemiah 12:16), it is thought that his father, Berechiah, died at an early age before he could succeed his father into the priesthood.

Year Written: Zechariah prophesied to the people of Judah after they returned from their seventy years of exile in Babylon.

Zechariah 1:1,

Nehemiah 12:1, 4, & 16,

Zechariah's grandfather returned from Babylon with his young grandson. They were among the first group of Israelites who were allowed back, in 538 BC under the decree of Cyrus, king of Persia.

Because of his family lineage, Zechariah was a priest in addition to a prophet. He would have had an intimate familiarity with the worship practices of the Jews, even if he had never served in a completed temple.

Zechariah's opening words are dated from 520 B.C., the second year of Darius I (**Zechariah 1:1**).

He was a contemporary of Haggai and began his prophesying 2 months after him.

He is called a young man in **Zechariah 2:4**, suggesting that Zechariah was younger than Haggai.

The length of his ministry is uncertain, the last dated prophecy (Zechariah 7:1) came approximately two years after the first, making them identical in time with Haggai's prophecy (520–518 B.C.).

Chapters 9–14 are generally thought to come from a later period of his ministry. Differences in style and references to Greece indicate a date of 480–470 B.C., after Darius I (521–486 B.C.) and during Xerxes' reign (486–464 B.C.), the king who made Esther queen of Persia.

586 B.C.

Fall of Judah/
temple destroyed

538 B.C.

Decree of Cyrus/
end of exile

520–516 B.C.

Zechariah
prophesies/
temple rebuilt

Historical background:

Ezra 1:1–4,

Cyrus the Persian king made a proclamation in 538 B.C. which allowed the Israelites to return from Babylon to their homeland under the civil leadership of Zerubbabel and the spiritual guidance of Joshua the High-Priest.

Ezra 3:2,

About 42,360 Jews returned.

In 536 B.C., they began to rebuild the temple.

Ezra 3:1–4:5

But opposition from neighbours and indifference by the Jews caused the work to be abandoned (**Ezra 4:1–24**).

Sixteen years later Haggai and Zechariah were commissioned by the Lord to stir up the people to

1. Rebuild the temple
2. Reorder their spiritual priorities.

Ezra 5:1–6:22, As a result, the temple was completed 4 years later (516 B.C.)

Ezra 6:15,

Zechariah joined Haggai in stirring the people from their indifference, challenging them to resume the building of the temple.

Haggai's primary purpose was to rebuild the temple and his preaching has a tone of rebuke for the people's indifference, sin, and lack of trust in God.

Haggai used to start the revival, while Zechariah was used to keep it going strong with a more positive.

Calling the people to repentance and reassuring them regarding future blessings. Zechariah sought to encourage the people to build the temple in view of the promise that someday Messiah would come to inhabit it. The people were not just building for the present, but with the future hope of Messiah in mind.

He encouraged the people, still downtrodden by the Gentile powers (1:8–12), with the reality that the Lord remembers His covenant promises to them and that He would restore and bless them.

Thus, the name of the book (which means "The LORD remembers") contains in seed form the theme of the prophecy.

This book of prophecy called as "apocalypse of the OT", relates both to Zechariah's immediate audience as well as to the future. In each of the 3 major sections (chaps. 1–6, 7–8, and 9–14), the prophet begins historically and then moves forward to the time of the Second Advent, when Messiah returns to His temple to set up His earthly kingdom.

The prophet reminded the people that Messiah had both an immediate and long-term commitment to His people. Thus, the prophet's words were "good and comforting" (1:13), both to the exiles of Zechariah's day as well as to the remnant of God's chosen people in that future day.

This book is the most messianic, apocalyptic, and eschatological in the OT.

Primarily, it is a prophecy about Jesus Christ, focusing on His coming glory to comfort Israel (**Zechariah 1:13,17**).

While the book is filled with visions, prophecies, signs, celestial visitors, and the voice of God, it is also practical, dealing with issues like repentance, divine care, salvation, and holy living.

Prophecy was soon to be silent for more than 400 years until John the Baptist, so God used Zechariah to bring a rich, abundant outburst of promise for the future to sustain the faithful remnant through those silent years.

Purpose:

While Ezra sees Haggai and Zechariah motivating the Jews toward one goal, the two books of prophecy show some striking differences:

Haggai gives brief, almost clipped messages. Zechariah is the longest book of the Minor Prophets.

Haggai focuses explicitly on the present temple work, while Zechariah deals with the larger picture of Israel's history and future.

Haggai is very literal, directly addressing the economic decline and the tangible solution (building the temple). Zechariah is highly symbolic, instead pointing to the spiritual activities behind the scenes.

Zechariah is ultimately a message of assurance: God has brought the Jews back to Jerusalem, and His work of restoration is far from over.

Zechariah introduce the reality of the people who had returned from exile to have a heavenly standpoint. The supreme God is working out His eternal purpose for Judah and Jerusalem, equipping His covenant people to fulfil the spiritual role for which He chose them. (Zechariah 1:7--6:15)

To demonstrate that the Lord will establish His kingdom, not through a gradual evolutionary process, but through struggle and tension.

To urge Israel to return to God so that He would return to them and continue to fulfil His word.

To promise that in spite of the nation's lowly position and its spiritual insensitivity, a Deliverer will bring a time of ultimate blessing.

Brief Outline of the book:

1. The Call to Repentance, 1:1-6
2. **Eight Night Visions of Zechariah (1:7–6:15)**
 - a) The Vision of the Four Horses and Riders, 1:7-17
 - b) The Vision of the Four Horns and Four Craftsmen, 1:18-21
 - c) The Vision of Man with Measurement, 2:1-13
 - d) The Vision of Joshua the High Priest, 3:1-10
 - e) The Vision of the Golden Lampstand, 4:1-14
 - f) The Vision of the Flying Scroll, 5:1-4
 - g) The Vision of the Woman in the basket, 5:5-11
 - h) The Vision of the Four Chariots, 6:1-8

The Crowning of Joshua, Zechariah 6:9-15

3. **Four Messages of Zechariah (7:1–8:23)**
 - a) Question about Fasting (7:1–3)
 - b) Four Responses (7:4–8:23)
 - i) Rebuke for Wrong motives 7:4-7
 - ii) Repentance required 7:8-14,
 - iii) Restoration of favour 8:1-17,
 - iv) Fasts becomes Feast 8:18-23,
4. **Two Burdens of Zechariah (9:1–14:21)**
 - a) Messiah's Rejection at First Advent (9:1–11:17)
 - b) Messiah's Acceptance at Second Advent (12:1–14:21)

1st Vision of Four Horses



2nd Vision Four Horns and Four craftsmen

Zechariah 1:18 - 21



4 Horns vs. 4 Craftsmen

3rd Vision Man with Measuring line



4th Vision Joshua the High Priest garments and consecrated.



5th Vision Seven lamps and 2 olive trees



6th Vision The Flying scroll



7th Vision Women sitting in the basket



8th vision four chariots between 2 mountains



Key Verses:

Zechariah 1:3, *Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts: “Return to Me,” says the Lord of hosts, “and I will return to you,” says the Lord of hosts.*

Zechariah 2:8, *For thus says the Lord of hosts: “He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye.*

Zechariah 4:6, *So he answered and 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 of hosts.*

Zechariah 7:13, *Therefore it happened, that just as He proclaimed and they would not hear, so they called out and I would not listen,” says the Lord of hosts.*

Zechariah 9:9, *“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.*

Zechariah 11:12-13, *Then I said to them, “If it is [\[1\]](#)agreeable to you, give me my wages; and if not, refrain.” So they weighed out for my wages thirty pieces of silver. ¹³And the Lord said to me, “Throw it to the potter”—that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord for the potter.*

Zechariah 13:9, *I will bring the one-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, ‘This is My people’; And each one will say, ‘The Lord is my God.’”*

Conclusion:

Chapters 1-6: EIGHT DREAMS

To Show God has fulfilled His plans

Chapters 7-8: FOUR SERMONS

To Show God does bless His people

Chapters 9-14: TWO PROPHECIES

To show God will enthrone His Son to Reign

Zechariah’s prophecy begins with a cycle of vivid and complex visions. It would be easy to get lost trying to explain all the details. Yet we are not left alone to try to understand these visions. The Lord sent an interpreting angel to Zechariah (and to us), and we can find the meaning of the visions explained in the angel’s comments.

He repeatedly points us to the coming of “the Branch” (3:8; 6:12),

The messianic offspring of David promised in Jeremiah 23:5 and 33:15, who combines in himself the offices of king and priest (Zechariah 6:13).

This Branch will purify his people and remove their sin in one day (3:9).

Writing to people who were discouraged by living, after the exile, in a “day of small things” (4:10), when there seemed to be little progress toward the glorious future promised in the earlier prophets, Zechariah encouraged them to look forward to the day when the Lord would act once again.

The righteous King was coming to bring salvation and to bring an end to war and suffering (9:9–17).

That coming would result in the piercing of God Himself by which a cleansing fountain would be opened for sin (12:10–13:1).

The Good Shepherd would be struck for his sheep, who would continue to endure great suffering until the time of the end (13:7–14:5).

Yet the outcome of that time of suffering and pain would be the final victory of God and the vindication of his people (14:9).

Given all these messianic themes, it is not surprising that the book of Zechariah is one of the Old Testament books most frequently quoted in the New Testament.

Application for today:

God expects sincere worship and moral living of us today.

Zechariah's example of breaking through national prejudice reminds us to reach out into all areas of our society. We must extend God's invitation of salvation to people of all national origins, languages, races and cultures.

That salvation is only available through the shed blood of Jesus Christ on the cross, who died in our place to atone for sin. But if we reject that sacrifice, there is no other sacrifice through which we can be reconciled to God.

There is no other name under heaven by which men are saved (Acts 4:12). There is no time to lose today is the day of salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Have you struggled with discouragement?

Read Zechariah.