

# ZECHARIAH

## Introduction & Chapters 1-3

*Teacher: John M. Brown, Flatwoods church of Christ, Sunday Bible Class*

### **AUTHOR:** Zechariah

1. His name means "He whom Jehovah remembers."
2. He was probably of priestly descent, being of the group which returned to Jerusalem from Babylon in 536 BC (see Nehemiah 12:4, 16; Ezra 5:1; 6:14).
3. He was a contemporary of Haggai, and delivered much the same message: the exiles are to return to the work of rebuilding the Temple.

**DATE:** 520-18 BC

### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:**

1. See also the introduction to Haggai for similar historical background.
2. Remember that during the reign of Cyrus, more than 50,000 Jews returned to Palestine from Babylon.
3. They laid the foundation of the Temple in 536 BC, then stopped working on it.
4. Zechariah, like Haggai, writes to encourage them to resume the work.

### **ZECHARIAH'S TWO-FOLD MISSION:**

1. Strengthening the hands of Israel for rebuilding the Temple.
2. Quickening the hope of Israel in portraying the coming triumph over every foe through the Messiah.

### **METHOD OF WRITING:**

1. Zechariah is a very apocalyptic book, containing many visions, signs and symbols to deliver the message.
2. The book is one of the longest, most difficult and most obscure of the Minor Prophets, and must be approached carefully and prayerfully!

## CHAPTERS 1-3

### **I. A CALL TO REPENTANCE, 1:1-6**

A. God calls upon the people to turn to Him.

1. Some who had returned from Babylon were dedicated to the work of rebuilding the Temple, and others' dedication was sorely lacking.
2. The land had been destroyed and many of the people had died -so, that was a powerful argument to repent!

B. God had done as He had said!

## II. 1<sup>ST</sup> VISION: THE HORSES & RIDERS, 1:7-17

A. A man riding upon a red horse, with others horses behind him.

1. These are they whom God had sent.
2. There had been many uprisings against Darius, but his throne had been assured.

B. Threescore and ten years: 586 BC (destruction of the Temple) -516 BC (Temple rebuilt) = 70 years!

C. God had returned to Jerusalem with mercy.

*\*But note: God's promise was conditional (see Deut. 30: 5, 8-10; Ezekiel 33: 13; 36: 11 ; Jeremiah 18:7-10).*

## III. 2<sup>ND</sup> VISION: FOUR HORNS & FOUR WORKMEN, 1:18-21

A. Four horns:

1. These were the hostile powers that had scattered the Jews ( cf. Amos 9:9).
2. "Horns" are symbols of power, strength (Amos 6:13).

B. Four carpenters:

1. These were powers raised up to terrify ("fray") the powers that had been hostile to Israel.
2. Note Genesis 12:3

## IV. 3<sup>RD</sup> VISION: A SURVEYOR, 2:1-13

A. Jerusalem is measured: the vision assures the restoration and blessing of Jerusalem!

B. God's spiritual Jerusalem:

1. Zion = the dwelling place of God -many nations shall be joined to the Lord.
2. Note Isaiah 2:2-4; Hebrews 12:22; Galatians 4:26

## V. 4<sup>TH</sup> VISION: JOSHUA THE HIGH PRIEST, 3:1-10

A. Joshua the high priest:

1. He represented the people of God whom God would cleanse and make His own.
2. "filthy garments" -the sins by which the priesthood and people had been polluted.
3. God would take away their iniquity.

B. "THE BRANCH" (see Isaiah 4:2; 11:1-10; Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15)

1. This is the Messiah!
2. "vine...fig tree" -a symbol of peace, safety, and security (see I Kings 4:24-25; Isaiah 36:16).

## ZECHARIAH Chapters 4 -6

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### I. 5<sup>TH</sup> VISION: THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK, 4:1-14

A. The vision concerns God rebuilding the Temple.

B. Zechariah sees a golden candlestick with a bowl on top of it, with seven lamps and seven pipes and two olive trees:

1. It is a message to despairing Zerubbabel: only by God's strength would the task of rebuilding the Temple be accomplished.

2. A headstone ("finishing stone") shall be brought forth: the Temple completed!

3. The "seven" represents the eyes of God (v. 10) -*God's omniscience*.

4. The "two olive branches" represent the "two anointed ones":

a. In the Old Testament, the two anointed offices were PRIEST and KING (see Exodus 30:30; 1 Samuel 10:1).

b. The two here are Joshua and Zerubbabel.

c. But the two offices of priest and king would be united in one in the Messiah (6:12-14).

### II. 6<sup>TH</sup> VISION: THE FLYING ROLL, 5:1-4

A. This vision concerns God cutting of sin.

B. The roll ("scroll") is God's curse against stealing and falsely swearing.

### III. 7<sup>TH</sup> VISION: A WOMAN SITTING IN AN EPHAH, 5:5-11

A. This vision concerns God removing evil.

B. Zechariah sees an ephah (something like a barrel) and a woman sitting in the midst of it.

1. This is wickedness: it represent the people of wickedness in the land.

2. The ephaph is lifted away and taken to Shinar .

3. In Shinar, Nimrod founded the first world kingdom (Genesis 10:10; 11:2; 14:1).

C. This vision symbolizes, then, the removal of wickedness from Judah.

#### IV. 8<sup>TH</sup> VISION: FOUR CHARIOTS, 6:1-8

A. This vision shows God bring peace and rest to Israel.

B. Zechariah sees four chariots with horses:

1. These are God's judgments of sword, famine, pest, and pestilence (see Ezekiel 14:21 and 5:16-17).
2. They are sent forth to accomplish the purposes of God.
3. They go to the North (Assyria & Babylon) and to the South (Egypt, Edom, Ethiopia) -the whole of heathen powers.

#### V. THE CROWNING OF JOSHUA, 6:9-15

A. Joshua the high priest was to be crowned (a foreshadowing of what was to come).

B. But another is coming: THE BRANCH

1. THE BRANCH:

- a. He shall grow up.
- b. He shall build the temple of God.
- c. He shall bear the glory (see 2 Samuel 7:11-14; Isaiah 9:6-7).
- d. He shall be both priest and king.

2. TEMPLE: see 1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:21ff; Hebrews 3:6

3. PRIEST: see Psalm 110:4; Hebrews 5:9; 7:1-3

4. KING: see Acts 2:29-31; Hebrews 1:3,13; Revelation 3:21

C. "They that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord..."= GENTILES (see Ephesians 2:11-17).

## ZECHARIAH Chapters 7-10

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### I. QUESTIONS ABOUT FASTING, chapter 7

A. The question. vv. 1-3

B. The answer, vv. 4-14

1. There had not been genuine sorrow and repentance on the part of the people in the past.
2. Those who had experienced captivity did so because of their rebellion.
3. Their condition was brought about by their refusal to hear when God called.

### II. GOD'S LOVE FOR HIS PEOPLE, chapter 8

A. God was jealous for Zion, vv. 1-8

1. God had returned to Zion!
2. God's three-fold promise unto them (vv. 7-8).

B. God's exhortation, vv. 9-23

1. "Let your hands be strong..."
2. There will be a new condition in the land.
3. As God had fulfilled His Word concerning His wrath, so He will fulfill His Word concerning their blessing.
4. Their fasts will be turned into feasts of joy; the nation will go from disdain to respect!

### III. THE GRECIAN PERIOD, chapters 9-10

A. The conquering of Alexander the Great:

1. Over Syria, 9: 1-2
2. Over Phoenicia, 9:2-4
3. Over Philistia, 9:5-8

B. The Messiah, 9:9-10

1. The triumph of Zion through Messiah! ( cf. 1 Kings 1:33, 38; Deuteronomy 17:16).
2. The Messiah's kingdom will not be brought about nor sustained through physical force.
3. The Messiah's rule will be universal (see also Ephesians 2:17; Psalm 72:8; Amos 8:12; Micah 7:12).

C. The Maccabees, 9:11-17

1. God's exhortation to return to Zion: God is pictured as a mighty warrior!
2. God will defend His people, guarding them as a shepherd guards his flocks.
3. Prosperity and plenty for God's people.

D. God's blessings, 10:1-12

1. The people are told to ask of God for their needed blessings.
2. In contrast to the true God, idols can provide nothing.
3. Israel had been scattered as a sheep without a shepherd, but the Messiah is coming!
4. As they were redeemed from their captors, so they will be redeemed by their Messiah.

## ZECHARIAH Chapters 11-14

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### I. THE ROMAN PERIOD, chapter 11

*\*Chapter 11 is a picture of the final judgment on the political and religious system of the Jews by the Romans in 70 AD.*

A. From Lebanon to Bashan to the Jordan, judgment and destruction are coming, vv. 1-3

B. The Shepherd is coming, but He will be rejected, vv. 4-17

1. Zechariah is seen as portraying the coming Shepherd.
2. He takes two staves, one named "Beauty" (representing favor) and the other named "Bands" (representing brotherhood), and breaks them.
3. God's favor is broken (and His covenant).
4. And as they reject God, so He rejects them!
5. Having rejected the true Shepherd, Israel is given into the hand of a foolish or worthless shepherd.

### II. THE LORD'S CARE FOR JERUSALEM, chapter 12

A. "Israel" = spiritual Israel, the church - the period under Christ, vv. 1-11

1. Notice the phrase "in that day" - it represent the day of the Messiah.
2. God's protection over spiritual Jerusalem is promised: though all heathen powers gather against spiritual Israel to destroy it, none shall succeed.
3. The spirit of God's goodness (grace) brings repentance.
4. Notice verse 10, and compare it to John 19:37.
5. Notice verse 11, and compare it to Luke 23:27.

B. Mourning among all families of the earth!, vv. 12-14

### III. THE LORD'S CLEANSING OF JERUSALEM, chapter 13

A. A fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness! , vv .1-6

1. This fountain will be the means of Israel's sanctification (see also Hebrews 9:15).
2. Idolatry will but cut off, and false prophets exposed.
3. Notice the phrase in verse 6: "...wounded in the house of my friends."

B. The Shepherd shall be smitten. vv. 7-9

1. "Smite the shepherd..." (cf. Acts 2:23).
2. Judgment and refining shall follow the smiting of the Shepherd! (see also 1 Peter 1:6-7; 4:12; etc.)
3. "...It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God" -compare Hosea 2:1, 23; Romans 9:25-26; 1 Peter 2:9-10

IV. THE LORD'S RULE, chapter 14

A. Another description of spiritual Jerusalem, vv .1-8

1. The assault of the world upon spiritual Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22; Galatians 4:26).
2. God defends His "city" (compare Acts 8:1-4; Revelation 19:11-21).
3. On verse 6 if, see Joe1 2:2, 10; Isaiah 13:10; John 14:18; Hebrews 13:5

B. God rules as King over all the earth, in the Messiah, vv. 9-21

1. "...one Lord, and his name one" (compare Ephesians 4:4-6).
2. A plague will confront any who war against God's Jerusalem.
3. Great tumult among the enemies of the Lord's people.
4. All enemies of God's camp are defeated.
5. All partaking of the kingdom of God will be holy.
6. Notice verse 21: "...the house of Lord of hosts" - compare Ephesians 5:26-27