

ZECHARIAH

“Whom Jehovah Remembers”

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INTRODUCTION

A. THE MAN:

1. Zechariah was a popular name among the Hebrews; there are at least twenty-seven men bearing the name in the Old Testament.
2. Zechariah identifies himself as “the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo.”
3. He is not to be confused with Zechariah, also a priest, son of Hehoiada, (II Chron. 24:20-22).
4. The book of Zechariah may be thought of as a sequel to Haggai. The temple was begun and constructed in the midst of conflict, but it would be completed.
5. Zechariah looks beyond the immediate temple to the Messiah and the spiritual temple of God, and to the final consummation of God’s purpose in the glory of the Messiah and His rule.

B. THE DATE:

1. No controversy concerning the first 8 chapters. All scholars agree that these prophecies were spoken in the years 520-518 B.C.
2. But of the last 6 chapters much confusion. Some even deny Zechariah as the author.
3. It seems most likely that the final 6 chapter were written by the same author, but at a much later date, dealing with different problems.

BACKGROUND

A. Following Babylon Captivity.

1. Judah had been carried away to Babylon, 586 B.C. some as early as 605.
2. Returned under Zerubbabel in 536 B.C. Isaiah had spoken of this in Isaiah 44:24-45.
3. In about 536 the foundation of the temple had been laid.
4. Sixteen years later nothing had been done to rebuild it.
5. The people had not prospered, in fact they had suffered much during this 16 year period.

B. CHARACTER OF THE BOOK.

1. It is the longest and most obscure of all the Minor Prophets and in many ways the most difficult to interpret.
2. Some judge Zechariah’s book “the most Messianic, the most truly apocalyptic and eschatological, of all the Old Testament.”
3. Zechariah differs in three points from the prophets who preceded him:

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- a. He gives emphasis to visions as a means of divine communication.
 - b. Angelic mediation occupies an important place.
 - c. Apocalyptic symbolism entering into the visions is another outstanding characteristic of his writings.
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THE VISIONS OF ZECHARIAH

A. ABOUT HIS VISIONS:

1. A typical feature of Zechariah's prophecies may be found in his visions. Some are brief; some set forth bold imagery. Through them the prophet of God conveys the same lessons found in the other portions of his inspired work. In the midst of these visions is found the most familiar and striking statements made by the prophet Zechariah: “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts” (4:6).
2. The visions of Zechariah focus one's thoughts on the omnipresence of Jehovah, the reality of sin and suffering, and the dire need of divine pardon. Zechariah's visions foretell the overthrow of Zion's enemies, the heathen nations who would thwart the purposes of God. and his vision thrill the heart with promises of Jerusalem to become the City of Peace.
3. All of the visions have a single divine source: “the word of the Lord unto Zechariah.” And all the visions have the same date: “upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month....in the second year of Darius.”

B. THE VISIONS:

1. “The horsemen among the myrtle trees.” The “angle of the Lord” is encountered in the first vision to show that God's eyes are upon the nations.
2. “The Four Horns.” They represent the heathen powers which had so oppressed God's people. The four carpenter, or smiths, will fray or terrify Israel's oppressors. The enemies of Judah will be thrown into disorder and chaos. The forces of evil, then or now, who may be arrayed against the body of Christ cannot stand against the power of God. “If God be for us, who can be against us”?
3. “The man with the Measuring Line.” A young man measures the outline and limits of the city. Thus Jerusalem would be judged and blessed. What God could and would have done for the city of Jerusalem....an unwall'd city...great and protected by God.
 - a. For a moment consider the message would go out from Jerusalem and all nations would flow unto it. See Daniel 2; Acts 2; Eph. 2.
 - b. “Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of his

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holy habitation”. (2:13).

4. “The High Priest”. The first 3 visions show how God is going to act in Jerusalem’s behalf. Now we begin to see the condition of the people and their relationship with God. The High Priest stands as a representative of the people before the angel of the Lord. Satan appears to accuse, but God himself intervenes and rebukes the accuser. God commands the angels to take the filthy garments from Joshua and cloth him with rich, festal apparel. Such an action of grace typifies the cleansing of Joshua and representively the people. (See the Hebrew letter’s discussion of Christ as our High Priest).
 5. “The Golden Candlestick and The Olive Trees.” The unending source of blessings God brings to His people. Man’s works were not sufficient, but God’s will must prevail. “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit.” (4:6; Eph. 2:8,9).
 6. “The Flying Scroll.” Given to depict God’s judgment upon individual sinners. The two sins of stealing and perjury are listed on opposite sides of the scroll. Maybe they are given to represent the whole law. Judgment proceeds from the throne of God.
 7. “The Woman In The Barrel”. “This is Wickedness” (5:8). The very personification of wickedness. Though attempting to escape, she is thrust back into the ephah - barrel. Sin must be banished from the land. (5:9-11)
 8. “The Four Chariots and Two Mountains”. This final vision sets forth a divine judgment upon the heathen nations. The chariots of God go forth to execute His judgment. It is altogether fitting that the concluding vision would deal with the heathen and his being shaken, completing a circle of visions dealing with the heathen and with Jehovah’s own.
- C. See Homer Hailey’s, A Commentary on The Minor Prophets, for an outline of the book.
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Book Preserved Because....

- A. The book explains God’s dealing with the wicked, and His protection of the righteous.
1. Israel’s deliverance, depended; “*Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts*” (4:6).
 2. Israel was very slow to learn this lesson and many times in fear they reached out to Egypt and other nations for their help, when all they needed to do was call upon God.
 3. Never were the heathen nation able to protect them!

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4. **Never** did God fail, when they turned to and followed Him.
 - B. In so many ways this typifies man's search for salvation today.
 1. God in His love has sent His Son, (John 3:16) and His Grace as appeared bring salvation to man (Titus 2:10).
 2. Yet man today, like Israel of old, find it difficult to completely trust and obey God.
 - a. They do not study His Word.
 - b. Reject specific commands as not being important.
 - c. They had rather have “what they feel” than what God has said.
 - d. Man adds to and takes from God's Word until they don't recognize it when they see it.
 3. Man desires the protection, and salvation of God, but like Israel of old they look to others and other teachings for instruction.
 4. They are well described by Jesus and Isaiah.... *“This people honoreth me with their lips; But their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, Teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men.”* (Matthew 15:8,9).
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