

## Zechariah – Review, Part 1

Zechariah has been a challenging book to understand all of the details. However, when we step back and look at the big picture, some things do come into focus. After the six introductory verses, Zechariah has eight visions of the night which occupy most of the first six chapters. After the eight visions is a sign act involving crowning Joshua the high priest and placing the crown in the temple as a memorial. Chapters 8 and 9 are God's response to the delegation from Bethel and their question about fasting in remembrance of the destruction of the first temple. Chapters 9 through 11 contain a long oracle. Chapters 12 through 14 complete the book with a final long oracle.

The Introduction (1:1-6) – Return to me and I will return to you.

The Eight Visions (1:7-6:10) – There is a focus on the temple being rebuilt. This was the task at hand.

- Vision 1 (1:7-17) – Horses have returned from a surveillance mission – the nations are at rest and that is not good because they need to be judged for their treatment of Judah. Justice is needed.
  - 1:16 – Yahweh has returned to Jerusalem
  - 1:16 – The temple will be built
  - 1:16 – Jerusalem will be rebuilt
- Vision 2 (1:18-21) – The four horns and the four craftsmen – the four craftsmen terrify and cast down the four horns of the nations which scattered Judah. Justice is executed.
- Vision 3 (2:1-13) – The man with the measuring line to measure the boundaries of Jerusalem – Jerusalem will be without walls because it will prosper so much that the old measurements of Jerusalem could not contain all the people.
  - 2:5 – Yahweh will be a wall of fire around Jerusalem for protection
  - 2:5, 10 – Yahweh will be the glory in the midst of Jerusalem
  - 2:6-7 – Flee from Babylonia and return to Jerusalem
  - 2:9 – Yahweh will judge those whom Judah served in exile
  - 2:11 – Many nations will come and join themselves to Yahweh
- Vision 4 (3:1-10) – Joshua the high priest stands before the angel of Yahweh – Joshua became unclean from the exile but is cleansed and clothed with clean garments.
  - 3:6-7 – If Joshua obeys Yahweh, he will rule the temple, have charge of the temple courts and have the right of access
  - 3:8 – The priests are a sign of the coming Branch, Yahweh's servant
  - 3:9 – Yahweh will remove the iniquity of the land in a single day
- Vision 5 (4:1-12) – The golden lampstand with the two olive trees – Zerubbabel will rebuild the temple and complete it.

- 4:6 – The temple will be completed not by might, nor by power but by Yahweh’s Spirit.
- 4:7, 9 – Zerubbabel will complete the temple with shouts of “grace, grace to it”
- 4:10 – Those who despised the day of small things will rejoice
- 4:11-14 – While some understand the two olive trees to be Joshua the high priest and Zerubbabel, I understand them to be the prophets Haggai and Zechariah. They are symbolic of the pouring out of God’s Spirit on the people of Judah through the prophetic word. God’s prophetic word strengthens the people to complete the work of the temple.
- Vision 6 (5:1-4) – The giant flying scroll – God will bring judgment on disobedience and thus cleanse the land.
- Vision 7 (5:5-11) – Wickedness in a basket – God will remove wickedness from the land of Judah and return it to Babylon where it belongs.
- Vision 8 (6:1-8) – The four chariots – God will bring judgment on the nations where Israel and Judah were exiles.

The Sign Act of Crowning Joshua the high priest (6:9-15) – Zechariah made a crown and put it on Joshua the high priest and then he put it in the temple as a memorial.

- 6:12-13 – The Branch shall come and build the temple, bear royal honor, and sit and rule on his throne. Like in 3:8, the Branch is associated with the priesthood but, based on Isaiah, Jeremiah and other parts of Zechariah, he is descended from David.

The Question of the Bethel Delegation and God’s Response (7:1-8:23)

- The Question (7:1-3) – a delegation sought Yahweh’s favor and asked if they should continue the fast of the fifth month in memory of the destruction of the first temple. Their statement that they had been doing it “so many years” revealed their hearts. They were tired of suffering the consequences of the seventy years of punishment prophesied by Jeremiah, but if they didn’t turn to God, they would suffer the same punishment as their fathers in exile.
- God’s Response (7:4-8:23) – just because the second temple was nearing completion, they should not relax and think that God’s eternal favor would be on them despite their disobedience.
  - 7:8-10 – They needed to obey God with all their hearts or they would become like their evil fathers. They needed to treat others with justice and mercy – the widow, the orphan, the sojourner and the poor.
  - 7:11-14 – God reminded them of their father’s evil. God said that as they refused to listen to God, so he no longer listened to them. For their stubborn evil, God scattered them among the nations and the land became desolate.
  - 8:1-3 – God is jealous for Jerusalem and has returned to dwell in it
  - 8:4-6 – Jerusalem will be safe and will prosper
  - 8:7-8 – God will gather his people who are scattered and they will be his people and he will be their God
  - 8:9-17 – God encouraged them to complete the temple. Their former cursing would be turned to blessing.
  - 8:18 – The fasts related to the exile will become feasts
  - 8:19-23 – People will come from the nations to Jerusalem to seek the favor of Yahweh

### First Long Oracle (9:1-11:17)

- 9:1-7 – God fights for Judah from the Euphrates River to the land of the Philistines and reestablishes the borders of the kingdom to what they were in the days of David and Solomon
- 9:8 – God encamps at the temple and will be the guard and protector
- 9:9 – Rejoice greatly, Jerusalem, because your king is coming. He is humble and rides on a donkey.
- 9:10 – The king is a man of peace and will rule from sea to sea
- 9:11-12 – The prisoners are set free and given a double portion
- 9:13-15 – Yahweh will strengthen his people, fight for them, protect them and make them victorious
- 9:16 – Yahweh will save the flock of his people
- 9:17-10:1 – Yahweh will answer prayers for rain and prosper the land
- 10:2-3 – Yahweh's people lack good leadership and suffer as a result
- 10:4 – Yahweh will produce good leaders for his people
- 10:5-6 – Yahweh will strengthen Judah
- 10:6-12 – Yahweh will save the northern tribes, Israel. He will gather them from all the places where they were scattered and they shall return home. Yahweh will punish the nations where they were exiled.
- 11:1-3 – Yahweh will make the proud leaders of the nations fall into ruin.
- 11:4-14 – Yahweh told Zechariah to perform a sign act. The good shepherd will tend the flock destined for slaughter. He will take two staffs. One is named Grace and the other is named Union. He will be rejected by the sheep and he will bring in a price of thirty shekels of silver which will be cast into the temple for the potter.
- 11:15-17 – Yahweh told Zechariah to perform another sign act. He was to take the equipment of a foolish shepherd. The foolish shepherd does not care for, protect or nourish the flock. Instead he devours the flock himself. Yahweh condemned and judged the foolish shepherd.

### Second Long Oracle (12:1-14:21)

- 12:1-9 – Jerusalem will be under siege but God will protect Jerusalem. God will make Judah an instrument of fire which consumes everything around it. God will save Judah and Jerusalem. God will protect Jerusalem. The weakest will be as strong as king David and the house of David will be like the angel of God. God will destroy the nations that come against Jerusalem.
- 12:10-13:1 – The victory will come at a cost. They will look on the one they pierced. Yahweh will pour out a spirit of grace and supplication so that they will greatly mourn for the one who was pierced. The prominent mention of the house of David (12:12, 13:1), the previous mention of the Branch (3:8, 6:12-13), the coming king (9:9) and the possible association with king Josiah (12:11) alone would lead one to think that the one pierced was the Messiah. For me, John 19:34-37 and Revelation 1:4-7 make the association of this passage with the Messiah an absolute certainty. God the Father is symbolically pierced when God the Son is physically pierced. The mourning will be intense and also wide spread. On that day a fountain will be opened for the cleansing of sin and

uncleanness. This reminds us of the promise in 3:9 that Yahweh would remove the iniquity of the land in a single day.

- 13:2-6 – Yahweh will cleanse the land of idols, false prophets and the spirit of uncleanness.
- 13:7-9 – Yahweh calls on the sword to strike “my shepherd” so that the sheep will be scattered. Some will perish and the remnant that is left shall be refined, purified and tested.
- 14:1-2 – Yahweh will call the nations to fight against Jerusalem and they will loot the city and take half the inhabitants into exile.
- 14:3-5 – Yahweh will fight against the nations and defeat them
- 14:6-11 – the earth and sky will be changed, Jerusalem will be secure and Yahweh will be king over all the earth
- 14:12-15 – Yahweh will send a plague upon the people who fight against Jerusalem and a plague upon the animals in their camps. Yahweh will turn the enemies against each other so that they fight each other. The nations shall be looted.
- 14:16-19 – All the surviving nations shall go to Jerusalem each year to worship Yahweh and to observe the Feast of Booths. If they do not do this, Yahweh will send drought and a plague on them.
- 14:20-21 – On that day even common things will be considered holy.

## Zechariah – Review, Part 2

The last six chapters of Zechariah are challenging but they are rewarding as we see more of God's plan of salvation unfold. At first glance, the four passages from Zechariah which are quoted in the New Testament may seem odd but when viewed in the larger context they become very revealing.

When chapters 9 through 14 were written, it is likely that the 2<sup>nd</sup> temple was already complete. The returned exiles now had their temple, an altar and the high priest, Joshua. Yes, the walls needed to be rebuilt, but there was a bigger issue. When would they see a king sitting on David's throne in Jerusalem? Israel begged for a king during the time of Samuel and were given Saul. God rejected Saul and replaced him with David, a man after his own heart. In 2 Samuel 7:16, God promised David, "And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever." Where was this king? Cyrus and Darius were Persian kings. They didn't fit the bill. God gave the people hope through the messages he delivered through Zechariah.

- 3:8-9 – Yahweh will bring his servant, the Branch. According to Isaiah 11:1, the Branch would be a shoot from the stump of Jesse. According to Jeremiah 23:5, the Branch would be descended from David and he would reign with wisdom, justice and righteousness. Yahweh will remove the iniquity of the land in a single day.
- 6:12 – The Branch will build the temple, shall bear royal honor and shall sit and rule on his throne
- 9:9 – Rejoice greatly Jerusalem because your king is coming, humble and riding on a donkey
- 9:10 – The coming king is a man of peace and he rules from sea to sea
- 11:4-14 – Zechariah was asked to perform a sign act. The good shepherd became the shepherd of the flock destined for slaughter. The sheep rejected the shepherd and a price was assigned to him of thirty pieces of silver which was thrown into the temple to the potter. While the meaning of these verses is greatly debated, the overall picture does sound very familiar.
- 12:1-14 – Yahweh defends and protects Jerusalem, but it is not without a great cost. Yahweh pours out a spirit of grace and supplication so that they look on "me" whom they have pierced and they mourn greatly.
- 13:1 – On the day when they look on the one pierced and mourn for him, a fountain is opened to cleanse from sin and uncleanness.
- 13:7 – Yahweh calls for "my" shepherd, his close associate, to be struck so that the sheep will be scattered.
- In 6:12, 9:9-10, we see the coming king who is humble and a man of peace but who reigns from sea to sea. But in 11:4-14, 12:10, 13:1, 13:7 we see a different aspect of Yahweh's servant. He is rejected and slain which results in mourning and cleansing from sin.
- One more thing that is interesting about Yahweh's coming servant who will rule. He is associated with priests in 3:8 and with Joshua, the high priest, in 6:11-13. When he is pierced, a fountain is opened for cleansing from sin (13:1). And then there is the name "Joshua". "Joshua" and "Jesus" in the Greek Old Testament and the manuscripts of the New Testament are the same Greek word. We don't make the association in English but someone who read Greek would. Greek, in the time of Christ, was like English is now. It was used in many different countries as a common language.

## Zechariah – Review, Part 3

Besides the coming Messiah (see part 2), there are a number of repeated themes throughout the book of Zechariah.

### I) God's Blessings

- God's return to Jerusalem which includes his protection of the temple and Jerusalem and his prospering Jerusalem
  - 1:14, 16, 17; 2:4-5, 10-12; 3:10; 8:1-7, 11-13, 15, 18-19; 9:1, 8, 10-17; 10:1, 3, 5-12; 12:1-9; 14:3-5, 8-15
- The temple will be built
  - 1:16; 4:6-10; 8:9
- God's people will return to Judah and Jerusalem
  - 2:6-7; 6:15; 8:7-8, 20-21; 10:6-10
- God's people will be cleansed and sin will be removed from among them
  - 3:3-5, 9 (remove the iniquity of the land in a single day); 5:1-11; 13:1-6, 9; 14:20-21
- The nations will gather to God in Jerusalem and will be God's people
  - 2:11; 8:22-23; 14:16

### II) God's Judgments

- God's judgment of the nations
  - 1:15, 20-21; 2:8-9; 6:1-8; 9:1-7, 13-15; 10:5, 11; 11:1-3; 14:12-15, 17-19
- God was angry with your fathers' sins so don't be like your fathers
  - 1:2, 4-6; 7:8-14; 8:14, 16-17

יְהוֹשֻׁעַ - Yohshua (Joshua) found in Ex 17:9, Zechariah 3:1 and many others verses, especially in the book of Joshua

יְהוֹשֻׁעַ - Yohshua (Joshua) has the same consonants as above, found in Haggai 1:12 and Zechariah 3:3, 6

יֵשׁוּעַ - Yeshua (Jeshua) – a post-exilic form of the word above, found in Ezra 2:2 (only in Ezra, Nehemiah, 1 Chr 24:11, 2 Chr 31:15) “Joshua” and “Jeshua” were both names used for the high priest during the time of the building of the second temple. Haggai and Zechariah used the older form “Joshua”. Ezra and Nehemiah used the post-exilic form “Jeshua”. In the Greek NT, Jesus is descended from Jesus/Joshua (Lk 3:29 [23-38]) – but KJV has Jose (Ἰωσή), Acts 7:45, Hb 4:8 Joshua = Jesus.