

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 2nd 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.