

ZECHARIAH

Silva, *Zechariah*, p. 1

Message:

Zechariah called for the returned remnant of Israel to repent and return to the LORD of host in order that He could return to them (1:3), and to return to re-building the temple which would eventually lead to the future restoration of God's people when Messiah the Branch comes to defeat the Gentiles nations and rule from His temple as the King-Priest over the restored nation of Israel-Judah forever (see Ezek 43: 1-12).

The overriding theme for the book:

Work hard for the LORD now, for there is a glorious future ahead for each of you (us) as a child of God!



Title

The title of this book is derived from the Hebrew prophet Zechariah who wrote it. The Hebrew name Zechariah, *zakar yah*, means “Yahweh remembers.” This name is an appropriate title for this book, as it emphasizes the fact that Yahweh is the covenant-keeping God of Israel who continually exercises loyal-love to His people. Zechariah prophecies Yahweh’s complete restoration of a future repentant remnant that will witness the return of Jesus “the Branch” in all of His resplendent glory to reside in His temple in Jerusalem from which He will reign as King/Priest over all the peoples of the earth.

Author

Zechariah¹ commences by recording his ancestry, as “the son of Berechiah, the [grand-] son of Iddo” (1:1). Feinberg points out that the collective usage of these three names in the patronymic formula presented here (Zechariah, Berechiah, and Iddo), convey the meaning: “the LORD remembers,” and “the LORD will bless” at “the set time.”² This provides a marvelous correlation to the theme of the book. Iddo was mentioned earlier by Nehemiah as one of the priestly families who had returned from Babylon to Judah with Zerubbabel and Joshua (Neh 12:4, 16). Tradition states that Iddo was a member of the Great Synagogue. This would make Zechariah a member of the priestly tribe of Levi, and intimate that he, like Jeremiah (1:1) and Ezekiel (1:3), probably served as both a priest

¹“Zechariah,” like Obadiah, was another very common name in the canonical period and is used of some twenty-seven other individuals.

²Charles L. Feinberg, *God Remembers: A Study of the Book of Zechariah* (New York: American Board of Missions to the Jews, 1965), 3.

and a prophet. In the Book of Nehemiah, Zechariah is mentioned as succeeding his grandfather Iddo as the head of his father's household and priestly family (12:6). It may be that Zechariah's father Berechiah never became prominent or possibly died at an early age.

Zechariah was born in Babylon but prophesied and wrote in the land of Canaan; unlike Jonah, Daniel, Ezekiel, and John who were born in Israel, but prophesied, ministered, and wrote outside of the land of Israel. The call of God came to Zechariah while still a youth (2:4), he is referred to as a רֶאֱוָאָן , *na'ar*—"a child" or "youth" (cf. Jer 1:6-7). This would indicate that he, like Jeremiah, received and delivered his prophetic visions as a very young man (Hag 1:1; Zech 1:1).

Zechariah's Contemporary. It is stated in Ezra (5:1; 6:14) that Zechariah joined with his contemporary Haggai in a ministry designed to encourage the returned remnant to finish the task of rebuilding the temple (Ezra 5:1-2). While their methods and purposes were similar, they were nonetheless different. Haggai was a *practical man* whose primary concern was one of exhorting the people to finish building the temple. Zechariah on the other hand was a *visionary man* who furnished the incentive to once again turn the people back to working on the temple through a revelation of Israel's glorious future. That is, while Haggai had both feet firmly planted in the *present*, Zechariah's message is derived from gazing off into the eschatological *future*.³ Hence, we find that God needs and can use both types of men. He has work for us all! The following chart⁴ depicts the differences exhibited between the two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah:

Haggai	Zechariah
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -exhortation -more concrete -concise -take part -centers on his immediate, local situation, rebuilding the temple. -present concerns, is concerned with re-building the physical dwelling place of Yahweh, the God of Israel. -older activist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -encouragement -more abstract -expanded -take heart -centers on universal, eternal promises derived from God's covenants with His people, the nation of Israel. -future concerns, is concerned with building-up the people spiritually so that their hearts would be the abode of God. -younger visionary, his prophecies are eschatological in scope and apocalyptic in theological presentation and outlook.

In summary, it may be stated that neither Jews nor Christians ever seriously challenged this book's canonicity or authorship by the prophet Zechariah. This may be due partly to the fact that Zechariah 9–14 is the most frequently quoted section of the Old

³Irving L. Jensen, *Simply Understanding the Bible* (Minneapolis: World Wide Pub., 1990), 163.

⁴The following comparisons have been adapted in part from Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, "Zechariah," in *Talk Thru The Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1983), 291.

Testament prophets in the New Testament.⁵

Date of Composition⁶

Zechariah began his prophetic ministry among the Jews who had returned from captivity in Babylon (i.e., the restoration community) two months after Haggai delivered his first prophetic message (1:1; 7:1; cf. Neh 12:10-16; Hag 1:1). He delivered his first message “in the eighth month of the second year of Darius” (1:1) which was in October/November of 520 B.C. The “eight night visions” of Zechariah recorded in chapters 1:7–6:15 came to the prophet a few months later—“on the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month . . . in the second year of King Darius” (1:7), which would have been February 15, 519 B.C. The final date recorded by Zechariah was “the fourth year of King Darius . . . on the fourth day of the ninth month” (7:1) which would have been December 7, 518 B.C. Zechariah’s preliminary ministry stretched over a two year period from October/November 520 B.C. to December 7, 518 B.C. The final seven chapters of Zechariah (9–14) are not dated, but appear to be from a later time. How much later cannot really be determined. Some conservative scholars suggest that Zechariah recorded the two “oracles” found in chapters 9–14 later in his ministry; specifically after the temple was completed.⁷

Critical Objections to the Unity of Zechariah. Many critical scholars have charged that the messages recorded in chapters 9–14 were not authored by Zechariah, but are latter appendices to Zechariah’s prophecies (recorded in chapters 1–8). Two competing views have arisen as to the origin of chapters 9–14: the “preexilic theory” and the “post-Alexandrian” or “post-Zecharian” theory.⁸

Zecharian authorship was held universally by both Jewish and Christian traditions until the seventeenth century when Joseph Mede (A.D. 1653) assigned chapters 9–11 to Jeremiah in view of his understanding of Matthew 27:9-10 which he felt contradicted the canonical placement of these chapters among the prophecies of Zechariah. In succeeding years other scholars, like Bishop Kidder (A.D. 1700), extended Mede’s original theory of Deutero-Zechariah to include chapters (12–14) because he dismissed predictive prophecy as untenable.⁹ All who deny the miraculous generally relegate these chapters to a later time and writer(s). “Today almost all critical scholars regard this book as the product of two or three writers who wrote either before the exile or after Zechariah.”¹⁰

⁵J. Carl Laney, “Notes on the Book of Zechariah” (unpublished class notes for course #304 The Prophets, rev. Ronald B. Allen, Dallas Theological Seminary, Spring 2001).

⁶See *Appendix A* for a detailed “Chronology of Prominent Postexilic Events.”

⁷See, for example, C. Hassell Bullock, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophetic Books* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), 316-17; and J. Carl Laney, *Zechariah* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1984), 13.

⁸See, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, rev. ed. (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 425-30; Robert B. Chisholm, Jr., *Interpreting the Minor Prophets* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 231-33; and Hobart E. Freeman, *An Introduction to the Old Testament Prophets* (Chicago: Moody, 1976), 338-44.

⁹*Ibid.*, 338. To trace the history of critical interpretations, see Ralph L. Smith, *Micah–Malachi* (Waco: Word Books, 1984), 169-73, 242-49.

¹⁰Thomas L. Constable, “Zechariah” (notes published by Sonic Light and available for on-line downloading from www.soniclight.com, May 2000 Edition).

Proponents of these various critical theories have based their objections against the original unity of Zechariah primarily upon internal evidence. They insist that the book of Zechariah lacks unity in its contents, style, and vocabulary.¹¹ Conservative scholars holding to the unity of Zechariah point out that many of the arguments advanced by critical scholars are often quite subjective in nature. They have further shown how any actual differences in the author's literary style may be due to changes in subject matter and literary genre (i.e., apocalyptic genre) of the material rather than through differences in authorship.¹² It may be that Zechariah wrote the initial chapters (1–8) of his book early in his prophetic ministry and the latter chapters (9–14) much later in his life and ministry.

Recipient(s)

Zechariah was called (together with Haggai) as a prophet to minister to the post-exilic remnant that had returned to Judah/Jerusalem from the seventy years of Babylonian captivity (1:2). Haggai and Zechariah were prophets who exhorted the people to repent of sin, to turn back to God, and to finish restoring the temple of the LORD.

Historical Background

The once invincible Babylonian empire collapsed on the night of October 12, 539 B.C. as Medio-Persian forces of King Cyrus, led by Darius the Mede, conquered the city. In keeping with his policy of allowing exiled peoples to return to their homeland, Cyrus, king of Persia, issued a royal edict in the first year of his reign (538 B.C.) permitting the captive Jews to return to Jerusalem to rebuild their temple (see Ezra 1:2-4; 6:3-5).¹³ According to Ezra 2–3 Sheshbazzar (“Zerubbabel’s” Babylonian name, cf. 5:16 with Zech 4:9), the Persian-appointed civil governor over Judea, and Joshua, the high priest, led some 42,360 Jewish people, with an additional 7,334 servants, (49,897) back to Jerusalem. It is estimated that the journey of about 900 traveling miles (530 direct miles) would have taken about four months (cf. Ezra 7:8-9). Upon arriving in Jerusalem, the people came together as one man and laid the foundation of the altar and began to offer sacrifices on the first day of the seventh month 537 B.C., which was the beginning of the Feast of Trumpets (3:1-6; cf. Num 29:1-6). The actual laying of the temple foundation was not realized until

¹¹Freeman, *Intro. to the Old Testament Prophets*, 338-44; Smith, *Micah–Malachi* 169-73, 242-49.

¹²Chisholm, *Minor Prophets*, 233.

¹³A parallel command issued by Cyrus has been discovered on a clay cylinder (“Cyrus Cylinder”) which records the following words of this great king:

(As to the region) from . . . as far as Ashur and Susa, Agade, Eshunna, the towns of Zamban, Me-Turnu, Der as well as the region of the Gutians, I returned to these sacred cities on the other side of the Tigris [River], the sanctuaries of which have been in ruins for a long time, the images which used to live therein and established for them permanent sanctuaries. I (also) gathered all their (former) inhabitants and returned (to them) their habitation. Furthermore, I resettled upon the command of Marduk, the great lord, all the god's of Sumer and Akkad whom Nabonidus has brought to Babylon . . . to the anger of the lord of the gods, unharmed, in their (former) chapels, the places which make them happy.

James B. Prichard, ed. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 316.

two years after their coming to Jerusalem, or in April/May 536 B.C. (Ezra 3:8-10).¹⁴ Unfortunately, the Jew's rejoicing that accompanied the laying of the temple foundation (Ezra 3:11) was short lived. The Samaritans and other surrounding peoples, referred to as "enemies of Benjamin and Judah" (Ezra 4:1), rose up in opposition and were able to secure an official government halt to the work on the temple that lasted for nearly sixteen years, until the time of Haggai and Zechariah (from 536 to 520 B.C.).

Darius I (Hystaspes) succeeded Cambyses as the king of Persia in 522 B.C. In 520 B.C. Darius issued a decree permitting the Jews to resume the building of their temple. In spite of the royal edict allowing the Jews to resume work on the temple, they chose to remain idle. Haggai and Zechariah were called on the scene by God to stir the people to repent of their sins and to return to the task of rebuilding His temple (see Hag 1:1; Zech 1:1; cf. Ezra 5:1-2). Through the combined efforts of Haggai and Zechariah the temple was completed and dedicated to the LORD in 516 B.C.

Theological Contribution

George L. Robinson has called the Book of Zechariah "the most messianic, the most truly apocalyptic and eschatological of all the writings of the Old Testament."¹⁵ Zechariah prophesies more about the Messiah than any other Old Testament prophet except Isaiah. "Christ is portrayed in His two advents as both Servant and King, man and God."¹⁶ The principle predictions and titles of the Messiah are seen in the following referents: The Angel of the LORD (3:1-2), the Branch [of David] (3:8; 6:12-13), a Servant (3:8; see Mark 10:45), the Stone (3:9), and the King/Priest (6:13; see Heb 6:20-7:1). He is portrayed as the Good Shepherd (9:16; 11:11) who would ride into Jerusalem as a humble King seated on a donkey's colt (9:9-10; see Matt 21:4-5; John 12:14-16), be rejected as Israel's Shepherd (chap. 11; see Christ's parable of the "Vineyard Owners" Matt. 21:33-46), be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver (11:12-13; see Matt 27:9), have His hands and feet pierced (12:10; see John 19:37), receive horrible wounds in the house of His friends (His own people, Israel; see John 1:10-11) leading to His abandonment and death (13:7); in order that He might become a cleansing fountain from sin (13:1; see John 1:29; Tit 3:5).

Zechariah also predicts Christ's second coming when He will return to the Mount of Olives as the Righteous Judge and King to defeat Israel's enemies (14:3, 12-15; see Matt 24:29-31; 25:31-46; Rev 19:11-21) establish His holy sanctuary in Zion, Jerusalem, from which He will reign over all mankind during His millennial reign (chap. 14; see Rev 20:4-6). It will be at this future time that the remnant, comprised of only one third of Israel and Judah, will be redeemed and restored to the land and blessings in fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant (13:8-9; see Rom 11:25-27).

Chisholm presents the following cogent statement on the theology of the book:

¹⁴It is interesting to note that the work on the temple proper commenced in the same month that King Solomon had begun building his magnificent temple 430 years earlier (1 Kgs 6:1). The postexilic temple was begun "in the second month of the second year after their arrival at the house of God in Jerusalem" (Ezra 3:8).

¹⁵*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1956), 5:3136.

¹⁶Wilkinson and Boa, "Zechariah," in *Talk Thru The Bible*, 290.

The Lord [assures the returned remnant that He] would completely restore His covenant people, delivering the rest of the exiles by bringing them back to their homeland. He would make the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem the center for His worldwide rule and restore the Davidic throne and the priesthood to their former positions of leadership and prominence. Though the realization of these promises would be delayed and seemingly jeopardized by the post-exilic community's rejection of God's leadership, the Lord would eventually deliver His people from renewed Gentile oppression, move them to genuine repentance, and restore them to a vibrant covenant relationship with Himself. In that day He would also bring the nations into His kingdom.¹⁷

Literary Genre and Structure

Zechariah records numerous visions and oracles that are pertinent to the historical situation of the prophet's own day, as well as eschatological in their application. These various dream-visions are delivered in the form of apocalyptic,¹⁸ that is, in a form referred to as "revelatory literature." The clearest biblical examples of apocalyptic literature, apart from Zechariah, are Daniel and Revelation. This type of literature employs visions, symbols, highly figurative language, and prophecies of end time events. This is why the Book of Zechariah is often referred to as the "Old Testament Book of Revelation."¹⁹ J. Collins has observed in his comparisons between the visions recorded in Zechariah and Daniel that Zechariah's visions are "much less elaborate" than those of Daniel and Jewish apocalyptic literature in general. However, the visions of Zechariah are more developed than those of prophets that came before him.²⁰

The structure of Zechariah lends itself to a two-fold division (chap. 1–8 and 9–14). The characteristics of the material comprising the two sections demonstrate a marked difference. Whereas the first section of the book (1–8) deals primarily with a series of dated *night visions* (1:7–6:8), to which divine instructions concerning a symbolic act are appended (6:9–15), and a series of four divine proclamations prompted by a delegation from Bethel, who came with questions about fasting (7:1–8:23); the second division of the book (9–14) is comprised of two undated *verbal oracles* that are clearly eschatological in scope. The two oracles appearing in chapters 9–14 present the theme of the LORD's ultimate defeat of Israel's enemies, the deliverance of Jerusalem from Gentile domination, and the establishment of the returning messianic King's rule and authority in Jerusalem.

Outline

¹⁷Chisholm, *Minor Prophets*, 273.

¹⁸Greek *apokalupsis*, meaning "to uncover," "to reveal," "to disclose."

¹⁹Irving L. Jensen, *Jensen's Survey of the Old Testament*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1978), 462. See Eugene Merrill, who provides a good synopsis on "Apocalyptic Literature" in his *Introduction to "Zechariah,"* in *An Exegetical Commentary On Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi* (Chicago: Moody, 1994), 69-74.

PART I CHAPTERS 1-8

I. Introduction 1:1-6

- A. The Date 1:1a
- B. The Author's Name and Ancestry 1:1b
- C. The Admonition for the Remnant to Repent 1:2-6
 - 1. God's anger expressed 1:2
 - 2. God's invitation extended 1:3
 - 3. God's warning expounded 1:4-6

II. Eight Night Visions of the Prophet Zechariah 1:7-6:8

- A. First Vision: The Riders and Horses Among the Myrtle Trees 1:7-17
 - 1. The date of the vision(s)²¹ 1:7
 - 2. The description of the vision 1:8
 - 3. The explanation of the vision 1:9-11
 - a. Zechariah's question to the angel 1:9a
 - b. The interpreting angel's reply²² 1:9b
 - c. The rider's (individual) response 1:10
 - d. The riders' (corporate) report 1:11
 - 4. The oracle concerning God's jealousy over Jerusalem 1:12-17
 - a. God's compassion for Jerusalem 1:12-14
 - b. God's anger at Jerusalem's oppressors 1:15
 - c. God's promise to return and restore Jerusalem 1:16-7
 - 1) His promise to restore the temple 1:16a
 - 2) His promise to restore and prosper Jerusalem 1:16b-17
- B. Second Vision: The Four Horns and the Four Craftsmen 1:18-21
 - 1. The vision of four horns 1:18-19
 - a. The description of the vision 1:18
 - b. The explanation of the vision 1:19
 - 2. The vision of four craftsmen 1:20-21
 - a. The description of the vision 1:20
 - b. The explanation of the vision 1:21
- C. Third Vision: The Man with the Measuring Line (Surveyor) 2:1-13

²⁰See John J. Collins, *Daniel, with an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 6-7; Joyce G. Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries, series (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1972), 29.

²¹Zechariah apparently received these eight visions during the course of a single night, which he dated as having occurred on February 15, 519 B.C.

²²The interpreting angel appears 11 times in chapters 1-6 to interpret or explain the night visions to Zechariah (cf. 1:9, 13-14, 19, 21; 4:1, 4-5; 5:5, 10; 6:4).

1. The vision of the Surveyor 2:1-5
 - a. The description of the vision 2:1-3
 - b. The explanation of the vision 2:4-5
 - 1) Jerusalem will be dramatically expanded 2:4
 - 2) Jerusalem will be divinely protected 2:5
 2. The oracle about enemy destruction and Israelite blessing 2:6-13
 - a. God calls for scattered Israelites in Babylon to return to Jerusalem 2:6-7
 - b. God predicts that Israel's enemies will be judged 2:8-9
 - c. God promises to return to possess and bless Jerusalem 2:10-13
- D. Fourth Vision: The Cleansing and Restoration of Joshua/Judah 3:1-10
1. The vision: the symbolic act of cleansing Joshua 3:1-5
 - a. Joshua's defilement: Joshua and Satan standing before the Lord 3:1
 - b. Satan's rebuke by the Lord 3:2
 - c. Joshua's cleansing by God: provision of divine grace 3:3-5
 2. The accompanying promises to Joshua/Judah 3:6-10
 - a. The promise of blessings for obedience 3:6-7; cf. Deut 28:1-14
 - b. The promise to send the Righteous Branch 3:8
 - c. The promise to send the Stone, Messiah, who will remove iniquity 3:9
 - d. The promise of secure universal peace 3:10
- E. Fifth Vision: The Gold Lampstand and the Two Olive Trees 4:1-14
1. The vision 4:1-3
 - a. A lampstand with seven lamps 4:1-2
 - b. Two olive trees 4:3
 2. The inquiry about the vision 4:4-5
 3. Two oracles concerning Zerubbabel 4:6-10
 - a. Zerubbabel will accomplish God's purposes by His Spirit's power 4:6-7
 - b. Zerubbabel will rebuild the temple 4:8-10
 4. The renewed inquiry and interpretation of the vision 4:11-14
 - a. Zechariah's question to the angel 4:11-12
 - b. The interpreting angel's reply 4:13-14
 - 1) Historically: Zerubbabel and Joshua to serve as God's anointed ones 4:11-14
 - 2) Eschatologically: Elijah and Moses to serve as God's anointed ones Rev 11:1-14
- F. Sixth Vision: The Flying Scroll of Judgment 5:1-4
1. The vision 5:1-2
 2. The interpretation 5:3-4

- a. God's curse will go through the whole land (world) 5:3
- b. God's curse will destroy those who steal and swear falsely (sinners) 5:4

G. Seventh Vision: The Woman in the Basket 5:5-11

- 1. The vision 5:5-7b
 - a. Observation of an ephah (basket) and lead cover 5:5-7a
 - b. Observation of the woman inside 5:7b
- 2. The interpretation 5:8-11
 - a. The woman is identified as "Wickedness" 5:8a
 - b. The woman is cast into the ephah 5:8b
 - c. The woman is carried away to Shinar (Babylon) 5:9-11

H. Eighth Vision: The Four Chariots 6:1-8

- 1. The vision 6:1-3
 - a. Four chariots coming forth from between two bronze mountains 6:1
 - b. Each chariot was drawn by different colored horses 6:2-3
- 2. The inquiry about the vision 6:4
- 3. The interpretation 6:5-8
 - a. The four spirits of heaven patrol the earth 6:5-7
 - b. The forthcoming destruction of Babylon 6:8

III. The Symbolic Crowning of Joshua the High Priest 6:9-15

- A. The Preparation and Crowning of Joshua 6:9-11
 - 1. The collection of offerings from the exiles 6:9-10a
 - 2. The instructions to fabricate a crown and crown Joshua 6:10b-11
- B. The Presentation of Messiah the Branch 6:12-13
 - 1. The Branch is Messiah, Joshua's antitype 6:12a
 - 2. The Branch will build the temple 6:12b-13a
 - 3. The Branch will be glorified as the ruling King/Priest 6:13b
 - 4. The Branch will be assisted by Gentiles in building His temple 6:14-15

IV. Messages Against the Practice of Hypocritical Fasting 7:1-8:23

- A. The Delegation from Bethel's Question to the Lord 7:1-3
 - 1. The date of the request: December 7, 518 B.C. 7:1
 - 2. The delegation from Bethel's question: "Should we continue to observe the fast commemorating the temple's past destruction?" 7:2-3

- B. The Lord's Reply: Four Messages Delivered Through Zechariah 7:4–8:23
 - 1. Rebuke for practicing hypocritical ritualism 7:4-7
 - a. Revealed their insincerity over fasting 7:4-5
 - b. Revealed their self-centeredness 7:6-7
 - 2. Repentance required: Reminder of past sins 7:8-14
 - a. The practice of social injustices 8:8-10
 - b. The peoples' past rebellion and refusal to heed God's warnings of impending judgment 8:11-12
 - c. The peoples' judgment resulted in destruction and dispersion 8:13-14
- D. Restoration of Israel Promised 8:1-17
 - a. The future return of the Lord to, and restoration of, Jerusalem 8:1-8
 - 1. The return of God to Jerusalem promised 8:1-3
 - 2. The realization of peace will be experienced by the people 8:4-5
 - 3. The restoration from captivity is certain 8:6-8
 - b. The present exhortation to rebuild the temple of the Lord 8:9-17
 - 1. Be strong and rebuild the temple of the Lord 8:9-11
 - 2. Be courageous and trust in the promises of God 8:12-15
 - 3. Be righteous in all your conduct before God and man 8:16-17
- E. Rejoicing and Restoration of Jewish Favor Promised 8:18-23
 - a. The Jews' fasts will be turned into joyous feasts 8:18-19
 - b. The Jews' will lead in gathering before the Lord in Jerusalem 8:20-23

PART II CHAPTERS 9–14

V. Two Prophetic Burdens of Zechariah 9:1–14:21

- A. The First Burden: Judgment on Israel's Enemies, and the Advent and Rejection of the Messiah 9:1–11:17
 - 1. The revelation of God's judgment against Israel's surrounding enemies 9:1-8
 - a. The prophecy against Hadrach, Damascus, and Hamath 9:1-2a

- b. The prophecy against Tyre and Sidon 9:2b-4
 - c. The prophecy against the cities of Philistia 9:5-7
 - 1. Their ruin/destruction 9:5-6
 - 2. The remnant determined by God 9:7
 - d. The protection provided for Israel 9:8
2. The rejoicing of the nation over the advent of her King, Messiah 9:9-10
 - a. His first advent 9:9
 - 1) His coming promised 9:9a
 - 2) His character portrayed 9:9b
 - b. His second advent: universal rule of peace 9:10
 - 1) He will subdue the nations 9:10a
 - 2) He will secure universal peace 9:10b
 3. The revelation that God will liberate, defend, and bless His people 9:11-17
 - a. The captives will be set free 9:11-12
 - b. Those coming under attack will be defended and blessed 9:13-17
 4. The restoration and blessing of the righteous remnant of God 10:1-12
 - a. The Lord, and not false god's, is the One who provides blessings 10:1-2
 - 1) God brings the rain which provides productivity to the land 10:1
 - 2) Idols deceive and cannot provide hope 10:2
 - b. The Lord contrasts His True Shepherd with false shepherds 10:3-11:3
 - 1) God will judge the false shepherds of Judah 10:3
 - 2) God will grant His people victory over their enemies 10:4-7
 - 3) God will restore His people to their promised land 10:8-12
 5. The rejection of the true messianic King will result in judgment 11:1-17
 - a. The result of rejecting the Messiah 11:1-6
 - 1) The desolation of the land 11:1-3
 - 2) The destruction of the people 11:4-6
 - b. The reason for the judgment: rejecting the true Shepherd, Messiah 11:7-14
 - c. The raising up and judgment of the worthless shepherd 11:15-17
 - 1) The raising up of the worthless shepherd 11:15-16
 - 2) The resulting judgment of the worthless shepherd 11:17
- B. The Second Burden: The Advent and Acceptance of Messiah 12:1–14:21
1. The Lord's deliverance and conversion of Judah and Jerusalem 12:1–13:9
 - a. God will physically deliver Judah and Jerusalem from their enemies 12:1-9
 - 1) The gathering of the nations against Jerusalem and Judah 12:1-3
 - 2) The destruction of the nations by the Lord 12:4-9
 - b. God will spiritually deliver Judah and Jerusalem from sin and idolatry 12:10–13:6
 - 1) The Lord will pour out His Spirit on the house of David 12:10a
 - 2) The nation will look on Him (Christ) whom they pierced and mourn over their former sin of rejecting Him 12:10b-14

- 3) The Lord will cleanse the nation from its sin and idolatry 13:1-6
 - a) God's provision of a fountain to cleanse from sin: Christ's death 13:1
 - b) God's purging of idolatry 13:2a
 - c) God's purging of false prophets 13:2b-6
- c. God will ultimately restore a remnant after a period of trial caused by His peoples' rejection of the Good Shepherd 13:7-9
 - 1) The Shepherd of God, the Messiah, will be rejected and killed 13:7a
 - 2) The scattering of God's people in judgment 13:7b
 - 3) The slaughter of two-thirds of the people in the land of Israel 13:8a
 - 4) The salvation of one-third of the people who will cry out to God 13:8b-9
2. The coming of Messiah to rescue Jerusalem and establish His kingdom reign over the whole earth 14:1-21
 - a. The siege against Jerusalem 14:1-2
 - b. The coming of Christ to deliver His people 14:3-8
 - 1) Christ will come to defend His people 14:3
 - 2) Christ will cleave the Mount of Olives in two when He stands upon it 14:4
 - 3) The remnant in Jerusalem will escape through the Mount of Olives 14:5
 - 4) Christ will bring about cosmic disturbances in the heavens 14:6-7
 - 5) Christ will provide living waters to flow from Jerusalem 14:8
 - c. The establishment of Christ's kingdom 14:9-11
 - 1) Christ will reign as King over the whole earth 14:9
 - 2) Christ will bring about physical changes in the land of Israel 14:10a
 - 3) Christ will provide for His peoples' permanent security 14:10b-11
 - d. The destruction of Israel's enemies 14:12-15
 - e. The universal celebration of the Feast of Booths 14:16-19
 - f. The ultimate fulfillment of God's promises to bless His people Israel 14:20-21

Argument

As mentioned above under "Literary Genre and Structure,"²³ the Book of Zechariah lends itself to a two-fold division (chap. 1–8 and 9–14). Part I of the book (chaps. 1–8) commences with an Introduction (1:1-6) which provides a chronological reference derived from Zechariah's recording the date of his prophetic call by God as having taken place in the "eighth month of the second year of King Darius' reign (Otc/Nov 520 B.C.), the author's name and ancestry (1:1b), and an admonition for the returned-remnant to repent and return to the LORD, so the He could return to them (1:2-6).

²³See above under the heading "Literary Genre and Structure," page 658.

Following his Introduction, the prophet Zechariah records Eight Apocalyptic Visions that he had apparently received in the course of a single night (1:7–6:8).²⁴ These eight night visions detailed God’s purpose for the future of Israel, particularly Jerusalem which would once again serve as the seat of the Davidic dynasty and the site of the temple of Messiah. None of these visions was fulfilled in Zechariah’s day. The broad theme of this section is the coming of the King. The purpose of these visions was to encourage the returnees to persevere in their work of rebuilding the temple. Joyce Baldwin and others have pointed out that the arrangement of the visions follows a chiastic pattern abbcbbba:

The first and last [visions] bear a strong resemblance to one another, the second and third, sixth and seventh are pairs, and the fourth and fifth, with their assurance of God-given authoritative leaders, form the climax. All eight visions are meant to be interpreted as one whole, for each contributes to the total picture of the role of Israel in the new era about to dawn.²⁵

The first vision of the riders and horses among the myrtle trees provides the downtrodden returnees with hope and assurance that God’s promise to return and restore Jerusalem will be fulfilled (1:7-17). The second vision of the four horns (1:18-19) and the four craftsmen assures Israel of their ultimate triumph through Messiah over all four of the great Gentile world powers (1:20-21). The third vision of the man with the measuring line depicts the future restoration, rebuilding, and blessing of Jerusalem in the messianic kingdom (2:1–13).

The fourth vision of Joshua’s cleansing and restoration is symbolic of the nation of Israel’s future restoration as God’s high-priestly nation, a people holy unto God (3:1-10). The fifth vision of the golden lampstand and the two olive trees portrays the fact that Israel will serve as the light of the world in the future kingdom of Messiah and that the temple would be rebuilt by the Holy Spirit of God, who will also empower men to carry out a godly witness (4:1-14).²⁶ The sixth vision of the flying scroll denotes the judgment that will accompany the coming of Israel’s messianic King, who will purge sinners from the land (5:1-4). The seventh vision of the woman being carried away in a basket portrays the removal of commercial and ecclesiastical wickedness from off the face of the earth (5:5-11).

The final vision of the four chariots coming forth from between two bronze mountains depicts the judgment of God upon the nations of the world, with a special focus on the coming judgment of God on the nation of Babylon (“the land of the north,” v. 8) (6:1-8).

In the third section, Zechariah next witnesses the Symbolic Crowning of Joshua the High Priest (6:9-15). This action served as a symbol of the future crowning of Israel’s true King, the Messiah, who is described as “Messiah the Branch” (a clear allusion to Messiah’s Davidic roots as the Greater Son of Jesse and David; see Isa 11:1 and Jer 33:15).

In the fourth and last division of the first part of the book, Zechariah delivers Four Messages from the LORD Against the Practice of Hypocritical Fasting (7:1–8:23). The question concerning fasting is raised by a delegation from Bethel who come to Jerusalem to inquire of the LORD through the priests to find out if they should continue to observe

²⁴Zechariah dated these eight night visions as having been received on February 15, 519 B.C.

²⁵Baldwin, *Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi*, 93.

²⁶Many feel that just as Zerubbabel and Joshua served historically as God’s anointed ones in this context (4:11-14); so too, Elijah and Moses will serve eschatologically as God’s anointed ones in that future day of tribulation that will come upon the earth as a judgment from Almighty God (Rev 11:1-14).

the fast commemorating the temple's past destruction?" (7:1-3). Zechariah dates this event as occurring on December 7, 518 B.C. (7:1). The LORD replies by rebuking the people for practicing hypocritical ritualism (7:4-7); reminds them of past sins and the fact that repentance is required (7:8-14) which will lead to the future return of the LORD and to the restoration of Jerusalem (8:1-17) that will result in rejoicing and the restoration of Jewish favor and their fasts will become times of great blessing and joy (8:18-23).

**The second part of Zechariah presents Two Prophetic Burdens
of the Prophet Zechariah (9:1–14:21).**

The first burden (chaps. 9–11) delineates judgment on Israel's surrounding enemies, and the first advent and rejection of the Messiah (9:1–11:17). Zechariah records the revelation of God's judgment against Israel's surrounding enemies (9:1-8) issuing prophecies against Hadrach, Damascus, and Hamath (9:1-2a), Tyre and Sidon (9:2b-4), and the cities of Philistia (9:5-7). In addition, he prophecies the protection that God will provide for Israel (9:8). He next records the rejoicing of the nation over the first advent of her King, Messiah (9:9); as well as Messiah's defeat of the nations and establishment of His universal rule and peace at the time of His second advent (9:10). Zechariah continues by revealing that God will liberate, defend, and bless His people (9:11-17) when He comes to restore and bless the righteous remnant of God (10:1-12). He then notes that rejection of the true messianic King will result in judgment (11:1-17).

Zechariah's second burden (chaps. 12–14) concerns the second advent and acceptance of the Messiah (12:1–14:21). When Messiah comes again, He will Personally see to the physical deliverance of Judah and Jerusalem from their enemies (12:1-9); as well as to the spiritual deliverance of the people of Judah and Jerusalem as He pours out His Spirit (12:10–13:6). As a result of the out-pouring of God's Spirit, the nation will repent when they look upon Him (Christ) whom they pierced (12:10b-14). God will ultimately restore a remnant comprised of one-third of the people who will cry out to Him following a period of terrible tribulation that will result in the slaughter of the other two-thirds of the people in the land of Israel (13:8b-9). Zechariah concludes his book with the coming of Messiah to rescue Jerusalem and establish His kingdom reign over the whole earth (14:1-21). Christ will return and defeat the nations gathered against His holy city Jerusalem (14:1-3). When His feet touch down upon the Mount of Olives the mountain will be split in two (14:4).

Christ will bring about cosmic disturbances in the heavens and provide living waters that will flow from Jerusalem to heal and provide life to the people and the land (14:5-7). The establishment of Christ's messianic kingdom (14:9-11) will find the King reigning over the whole earth at which time His redeemed will participate in a universal celebration of the Feast of Booths (14:16-19).²⁷ This will provide the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises to bless His people Israel forever (14:20-21).

²⁷Louis A. Barbieri, Jr., provides a good synopsis of God's future plans for His covenant people Israel, see "The Future for Israel in God's Plan," in *Essays in Honor of J. Dwight Pentecost*, ed. Stanley D. Toussaint and Charles H. Dyer (Chicago: Moody, 1986), 163-79.