

Zechariah

Bible Study

Timeline of Judah's history

586-585 BC

Jerusalem and temple destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon
➤ Jews taken captive to Babylon

539 BC

Babylon falls to Medo-Persian empire (Daniel 5: 1-28)

538 BC

Cyrus' Decree (Persia)—Ezra 1:1
Jews return to the land of Judah to begin to rebuild temple

Foundation of temple laid...but opposition against Jews sets in (Ezra 4: 4-5)

➤ Opposition: Samaritans—People the Babylonians had put in Palestine

Construction on temple stops—16 years

521 BC

Darius begins rule of Persia
Issues decree for construction on temple to continue

520 BC

Haggai and Zechariah preach—
exhorting Jews to resume work on temple (Ezra 5: 1; Haggai 1: 1)

515 BC

Temple completed

Background to Zechariah

Zechariah means: “The Lord remembers”

Zechariah: a prophet and priest

11th of 12 minor prophets...the 2nd of the Post exile prophets
(Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)

Born in Babylon among Jewish captives
Returned to Palestine (539-537BC)

520 BC Haggai and Zechariah preach—
exhorting Jews to resume work on the temple

Work on temple had stopped:
1. Samaritans & hostile neighbors
2. Indifference of the Jews

Wrote two months after Haggai

Purpose of book: Motivate the people
to build temple and Jerusalem...

And to give hope to the future

Message: God will not forget or forsake his
people...he will remember and restore
them

Book is filled with references to Christ

Ch. 6: 12
Origins and humanity

Ch. 6: 13
Christ's priesthood

Ch. 14:4
Second coming

Ch. 9: 9-10; 3:10
World peace

Zechariah called: Prophet of
Hope

Ch. 3:6; 13:7
Christ's deity

Ch. 6: 13; 9:9; 14:9, 16
His kingship

Ch. 9:14
Glorious reign

Ch. 11:12-13
Betrayal by Judas

Constant references to Christ

Eight visions in the book

1. Heavenly couriers (Chapter 1: 7-17)
Describes God's care for his people

2. Four Horns and Four Craftsmen
(Chapter 1: 18-21)
Israel's foes are defeated

3. Measuring line (Chapter 2: 1-6)
Jerusalem measured—repopulation

4. Joshua-High Priest (Chapter 3)
Cleansing of the priesthood

Book combines historical events with
future events

5. Golden candelabra & Olive trees
(Chapter 4)
Servants of God/Strength from God's spirit

6. Flying Roll (Chapter 5:1-4)
Telling people of their sins

7. Ephah (Chapter 5:5-11)
Bushel basket
Wicked in the land

8. Four chariots (Chapter 6:1-8)
God will protect his people

Book also combines Christ's first and his
second coming

Chapter 1

Verse 1

“**Eighth** month of the 2nd year of Darius, the word of the Lord **came** to Zechariah”

- 2 months after Haggai’s message

Work on the temple resumed on **the sixth** month (Haggai 1: 14-15)

Zechariah preached with Haggai before the work resumed...

Did not receive this message until two months after the work resumed

Verses 1-6

(A call to repentance)

The work on the temple had resumed...but the **attitudes** were not right
Remember: they complained that the temple was not as glorious as Solomon’s
(Haggai 2: 3)

Verse 2

“angry with your fathers”

- The sins that had caused them into
Babylonian captivity

Verse 3

“Return”= repentance

Don’t go the way of their forefathers

“Lord of Hosts”(YHWH Sabaoth)...would help them
➤ Used 80 times in Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi

The creator of all—a most inclusive and comprehensive name for God

Verse 4

The former (previous) prophets spoke but they did not repent

Verse 5

“Fathers”—did not change or repent

“Prophets”—are gone...but their message lives on to be fulfilled

Verse 6

“My words....overtake your fathers”

During captivity they had to acknowledge their wrong ways

Had to learn the lessons that the prophets had taught

Verse 7 (**First vision**)...the **key** to all the visions=(God’s care for his people)v. 14-17

Dated: 24th day of 11th month (Shebat)—mid Feb. 519 BC

A man on a red horse standing in a hollow ravine among myrtle trees

Verse 8

“a man riding on a red horse”

V. 11-12 identified as the **Angel of the Lord**

Chapter 3:1-4—is divine.. “the Lord”

The God who became Jesus Christ

“Angel of the Lord”= (Heb.) malakh—means messenger...can be divine or human
The context shows if it is divine or human

Exodus 23: 20-22

v. 20 “an Angel before you”v. 23 “My Angel”

“Angel”= malakh—messenger

v. 21 “my name is in him”

Has the power to forgive sins---angels never vested with such power
“obey his voice”—angels do not command or give law

Exodus 3: 2-6

v. 2 “Angel of the Lord”= malakh—messenger

v. 4 “God called to him”

v. 5 “holy ground”

v. 6 “I am the God of your father....”

The God who became Jesus Christ

Verse 8 (last part)

“and behind him were horses: red, sorrel, and white”

Horses symbolize divine activity on the earth

Different colors represent the different missions to be carried out

“red”= war/“white”= victory and triumph

“sorrel”= mixture of both

“among the myrtle trees” — “represents Israel in her lowliness among the nations of the earth as still fragrant to the Lord” (Feinberg)

Myrtle trees (evergreen) are associated with making booths for the Feast of Tabernacles

➤ Represent hope and promise for the future (Isa.43: 19; 55: 13)

“red horse” (war and bloodshed) (Isa. 63: 1-6; Rev. 6: 4)

Angel of the Lord is riding on...

Represents: vengeance upon Israel’s enemies (key)

Verse 9

“What are these?...”I will show you what they are”

Verse 10

These are angelic messengers (riders on the horses)...going throughout the earth

who report to the Angel of the Lord (v. 11)

➤ Verse 11

Report: “all the earth is resting quietly”

- Pertains to the circumstances of the day

The Persian empire was in a secure state...but Judah was in a lowly situation
(Just returned from captivity)

Verse 12

Angel of the Lord (Christ) is moved to intercede with the father on behalf of Judah...to ask for mercy after having suffered 70 years of captivity

Verse 13

God answers with comforting words foretelling good for Israel
(v. 14-17) show what the comforting words are...

Verse 14

God’s jealousy for Israel’s welfare...the punishment was over

Verse 15

God’s anger with the nations

“I was a little (while) angry (at Israel)...for their sins

The nations helped (used to punish Israel) ...but the nations had evil intent...they wanted to annihilate Israel

(Eze. 25: 3, 8, 12, 15; 26:2)

End time element to verse 15:

Peace and ease of the nations when the Gentile powers triumph as Israel and Judah are subjugated

Great sin of the nations: their hatred of Israel...will culminate in the events of chapters 12 and 14 with Christ's return

Verse 16

Just as a line had been stretched over Jerusalem to destroy it (II Kings 21:13; Isa. 34: 11)...now a line is stretched to rebuild

“my house (temple) shall be built” (considering Haggai 2:9) and rest of Zechariah:

1. Temple in that day
2. God's church the spiritual temple
3. Millennial temple

Verse 17

Jerusalem and the cities of Judah would be prosperous again...will have a greater fulfillment in the kingdom

Verses 18-21

(second vision) **Four horns and four craftsmen**

(Remember) --The first vision is the key: God's care for... (he remembers his people)

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Helps us understand the 2nd (v. 18-21) : Israel's foes defeated---the **meaning** of the four horns and four craftsmen

Verse 18
Vision of four horns

Horns symbolize power (of nations)... strength of bulls is in their horns

Verse 19
What are these? (horns)

“horns (margin)= kingdoms or powers

“that **have scattered** Judah, **Israel** and Jerusalem
Hebrew word can be translated: scatter—pointing to the future as well

Verse 20
Four craftsmen (carpenters: OKJ)—*iron smiths* (Companion)
Hebrew word can be **any** skilled workman in wood, iron or stone

Verse 21
The **purpose** of the craftsmen: to terrify the nations that scattered Israel...the craftsmen are the instruments of God to break the horns (kingdoms) to pieces

Four horns (kingdoms) that scattered God's people:

1. Assyria: scattered no. tribes (721 BC)
2. Babylon: scattered Judah (585 BC)
3. Rome: deported the Jews (70 AD)
4. End-time revival of these (future)

Four workmen who remove the kingdoms
(that scattered God's people):

1. Babylon: conquered Assyria
2. Persia: conquered Babylon
3. Germanic tribes: brought down Rome
4. The Messiah: will defeat the end-time Roman-Babylonian-Assyrian power