

SURVEY OF ZECHARIAH

David Rountree

Introduction

1. The name *Zechariah* means, “*Yahweh has remembered.*” The underlying theme of this book is that through Yahweh’s remembrance of his covenant with his people, they will be blessed.
2. Contemporaries of Zechariah (see Zech. 1:1, 7; 7:1; Ezra 5:1-2; 6:14, 15) are Haggai, the prophet; Zerubbabel, the governor; Joshua, the high priest, and Darius I, the king of Persia. God used these men to convey a message regarding the future importance of the temple. Their involvement in building the temple was an activity of building the future, a place to be used by the coming Messiah. We need to gain a multi-generational view of kingdom work. Many times when we build something for the Lord we have our own generation in mind as to the beneficiaries of such ministry. We must learn to think beyond ourselves to greater ministries. Let us develop strategies for building the future for the glory of God.
3. Because of Jesus’ reference to the murder of Zechariah by religious leaders (Matt 23:35,36), Zechariah is often thought to be the last of the Old Testament prophets who wrote an Old Testament book.
4. Date: The historical time frame is identical to the prophecy of Haggai. The people of Judah had returned from exile in c. 536 B.C. After the initial two years of work on the temple reconstruction project they let fourteen more years pass convinced it was just not the right time to do this work (Hag. 1:2). Haggai and Zechariah began to prophesy in 520 B.C., Zechariah, two months after Haggai’s first message (Zech. 1:1), urging God’s people to complete the temple. The temple was completed in 516 B.C. (Ezra 6:15). This takes us through the first eight chapters of Zechariah. Chapters 9-14 are undated and may represent a latter historical period. Reference to Greece (9:13) indicates a date between 480 and 470 B.C. Thus, by the time of the writing of this material, Darius I (521-486 B.C.) would have been succeeded by Xerxes (486-464 B.C.) the king who deposed Queen Vashti and made Esther queen of Persia.

Outline

1. The Pictures to encourage the rebuilding (1-6)
2. The Problem to address concerning fasting (7-8)
3. The Predictions to prepare for concerning the Messiah (9-14)

The Summary of Issues--4 issues Zechariah addresses (1:3-6)

- 1) **Repent** and return to have God’s blessing (v.3)
- 2) **Respond** to the lessons of history or be destroyed (v.4). Don’t be like fathers with evil ways. Dad is not the standard, God’s word is.
- 3) **Realize** how little time we have to do anything of significance (v.5)
- 4) **Rest** in the sufficiency of God’s Word for direction and significance (v.6)

The Pictures (8 Visions)

1. ***The horseman among myrtle trees*** (1:7-17): Our merciful God is determined to rebuild his house and his people. Unless God is chastening us for our sins, does he not want to prosper us for his kingdom work and glory?
2. ***The four horns and craftsmen*** (1:18-21): Israel’s enemies/oppressors will face destruction under God’s judgment. God may wait seventy years but he will by no means leave the guilty unpunished.

3. ***The man with a measuring line*** (2:1-13): God's people will expand among the nations (cf. Acts 1:8; Matt.28:19-20 with Zech. 2:6, 7, 11).
4. ***Joshua, the high priest, pardoned and clothed with beautiful garments*** (3:1-10): God's people will be cleansed and restored.
5. ***The golden lamp stand*** (4:1-14): God's people receive illumination, power, and strength from God's Spirit. God will not allow his church to remain small and despised (v.10). God will himself supply what we need to advance his kingdom (v.6).
6. ***The flying scroll*** (5:1-4): Individual wickedness will be destroyed and removed.
7. ***The woman in the basket*** (5:5-11): National wickedness will be destroyed and removed.
8. ***The four chariots*** (6:1-8): God's protection will extend from every direction.

Note: All eight visions encourage zeal in temple construction and in working to advance the kingdom of God on earth. The object of faith or trust for this work is in the power of God's Spirit not in the forces of men or majority rule.

The Problem of Continuing Fasts (7-8)

1. The problem (7:3-5).
2. The answer: Never have we needed empty ritualism (7:4-7); remember your past disobedience understanding God desires obedience this time (7:8-14); be consoled that your difficult past was a means to a glorious future (8:1-17); and turn now your fasts into cheerful feasts (8:18-23). If God is with us we need not mourn or fast to gain his attention or deliverance. His power is already evident among us (v.23).

The Predictions (9-14)

1. God will conquer Israel's neighbors (done through Alexander the Great) but spare Jerusalem for the coming king Messiah (9:1-10).
2. Israel will have victory over Greece (the Maccabean revolt, 9:11-17; and Antiochus Epiphanies, 12:1-9) and although they will be scattered, the Messiah will bless them and then there will be a progressive return of the captives from captivity (10:1-11:3).
3. The coming Messiah will be rejected (11:4-17; 13:7; Matt. 21:5; 26:14-16).
4. Christ will be received by the true elect, the remnant (12-13).
5. Christ will pour out his Spirit and reign over all the earth doing away with previous shadows and ceremonies (14).