

Zechariah

MEANING “Yahweh Remembers” or “Yahweh Has Remembered.”

AUTHOR: Zechariah

TIME WRITTEN: Possibly between 480 and 470 B.C.

POSITION IN THE BIBLE:

- 38th Book in the Bible
- 38th book in the Old Testament
- 16th of 17 books of Prophecy
- 11th of 12 Minor Prophet Books
- 37 have preceded it. 28 to follow it.

CHAPTERS: 14

VERSES: 211

WORDS: 6,444

KEY WORD: Prepare for the Messiah

TWO KEY PASSAGES:

1. **Zechariah 8:3** - “Thus says the LORD: 'I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, the Mountain of the LORD of hosts, the Holy Mountain.’”
2. **Zechariah 9:9** - “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; he is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

KEY CHAPTER: Zechariah 14

OBSERVATIONS ABOUT ZECHARIAH:

1. Zechariah was a popular name shared by no fewer than twenty-nine Old Testament characters.
 - a. Like his predecessors, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Zechariah was of priestly lineage as the son of Berechiah and grandson of Iddo (1:1, 7; Ezra 5:1; 6:14; Nehemiah 12:4, 16)
 - b. He was born in Babylon and was brought by his grandfather to Palestine when the Jewish exiles returned under Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest.
 - c. He was the “young man” of 2:4, he was called to prophesy at an early age in 520 B.C.
 - d. According to Jewish tradition, Zechariah was a member of the Great Synagogue that collected and preserved the canon of revealed Scripture.

- e. **Matthew 23:35** indicates that Zechariah was “murdered between the temple and the altar in the same way that an earlier Zechariah was martyred according to 2 Chronicles 24:20-21.
2. For a dozen years or more, the task of rebuilding the temple has been half completed.
 - a. Zechariah is commissioned by God to encourage the people in their unfinished responsibility.
 - b. Rather than exhorting them to action with strong words of rebuke, Zechariah seeks to encourage them to action by reminding them of the future importance of the temple.
 - c. The temple must be built, for one day the Messiah’s glory will inhabit it.
 - d. Note: Future blessing is dependent upon present obedience.
 - e. The people are not merely building a building; they are building the future.
 - f. With that as their motivation, they can enter into the building project with wholehearted zeal, for their Messiah is coming.
 3. Zechariah was a younger contemporary of:
 - a. Haggai the prophet.
 - b. Zerubbabel the governor.
 - c. Joshua the high priest.
 4. The historical settings:
 - a. The historical settings for chapter 1-8 is identical to that of Haggai (520-518 B.C.)
 - b. Chapters 9-14 are undated, but stylistic differences and references to Greece indicate a date of between 480 and 470 B.C. This would mean that Darius I (521-486 B.C.) had passed from the scene and had been succeeded by Xerxes (486-464 B.C.), the king who disposed Queen Vashti and made Esther queen of Persia.

SUMMARY OF ZECHARIAH

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Zechariah uses a series of eight visions, four messages, and two burdens to portray God’s future plans for His covenant people.
 1. The first eight chapters were written to encourage the remnant while they were rebuilding the temple.
 2. The last six chapters were written after the completion of the temple to anticipate Israel’s coming Messiah.
- C. There are three major divisions in the book:
 1. The Eight Visions. (1-6)
 2. The Four Messages. (7-8)

3. The Two Burdens. (9-14)

THE EIGHT VISIONS. (1-6)

A. The book opens with an introductory appeal to the people to repent and return to God, unlike their fathers who rejected the warnings of the prophets (1:1-6).

B. A few months later, Zechariah has a series of eight night visions, evidently in one troubled night (1:7)
(February 15, 519 B.C.)

1. The angel who speaks with him interprets the visions, but some of the symbols are not explained.
2. The first five are visions of comfort, and the last three are visions of judgment.
 - a. The five visions of comfort.
 1. The horseman among the Myrtle trees—God will rebuild Zion and His people. (1:7-17)
 2. The four horns and craftsmen—Israel's oppressors will be judged. (1:18-21)
 3. The man with a measuring line—God will protect and glorify Jerusalem. (2:1-3)
 4. The cleansing of Joshua the high priest—Israel will be cleansed and restored by the coming Branch. (3:1-10)
 5. The golden lampstand—God's Spirit is empowering Zerubbabel and Joshua. (4:1-14)
 6. The flying scroll—Individual sin will be judged. (5:1-4)
 7. The woman in the basket—National sin will be removed. (5:5-11)
 8. The four chariots—God's judgment will descend on the nations. (6:1-80)
3. The crowning of Joshua the high priest in Zechariah 6:9-15, anticipates the coming of the Branch who will be King and Priest (the composite crown).

THE FOUR MESSAGES. (7-8)

A. In response to a question about the continuation of the fasts (7:1-3), God gives Zechariah a series of four messages:

1. A rebuke of empty ritualism. (7:4-7)
2. A reminder of past disobedience. (7:8-14)
3. The restoration and consolation of Israel. (8:1-17)
4. The recovery of joy in the kingdom. (8:18-23)

THE TWO BURDENS. (9-14)

- A. The first burden (9-11) concerns the first advent and rejection of Israel's coming King.
 - 1. Alexander the Great will conquer Israel's neighbors, but will spare Jerusalem (9:1-8), which will be preserved for her King, the Messiah (9:9-10).
 - 2. Israel will succeed against Greece (the Maccabean Revolt). (9:11-17)
- B. The second burden is found in chapters 12-14