

# ZECHARIAH - meaning, he whom God remembers

The second of the post-exilic prophets, Zechariah prophesied 2 months after Haggai. Thus, we have the same historical background for this book as for Haggai's prophecy: the Exiles had returned, the work on the Temple had just been started again--a little over a month before Zechariah begins his prophecy. See Hag. 1:14, 15.

The dates in Zechariah's prophecy are not as complete as those in Haggai's, but we do notice three (remembering that the 2nd year of Darius is generally considered to be 520 B.C.):

- 1) In 1:1, the 2nd year, the 8th month. This is when the revelation in 1:1-6 was given to Zechariah.
- 2) In 1:7, the 2nd year, the 11th month, the 24th day. Evidently all of the visions from 1:7 to 6:15 were given to him on the night of this particular day.
- 3) In 7:1, the 4th year (518 B.C.), the 9th month, the 4th day. This has reference to chapters 7 and 8.

From this point on in the prophecy we are not given dates, but we have two burdens:

- 1) "The burden of the word of the Lord in the land of Hadrach" (chs. 9-11). While this name is obscure, the contents of the chapter seem to indicate that it is a title given by the prophet to the lands surrounding the land of Israel.
- 2) "The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel" (chs. 13, 14).

This leads us to see that we have four parts to Zechariah's prophecy:

I. Introduction (1:1-6). This message to Zechariah for his people seems to point to the main reason for giving the prophecies of this book to the people.

II. The Eight Visions (1:7-6:15):

- A. The rider on the red horse, and the other horses--showing God's faithfulness to His people, and indicating that "my house shall be built in" Jerusalem (1:7-17; see v. 16).
- B. The four <sup>stopped</sup> horns and the four carpenters (1:18-21). Here we see how God has ~~stopped~~ the powers which scattered His people, so that the work can proceed on the Temple.
- C. The man with the measuring line (ch. 2). The city will be rebuilt, and the Lord will dwell with them (see vv. 5, 10). Instead of being enemies, many Gentile nations will be turned to the Lord in that day.
- D. Joshua, the high priest (ch. 3)--picturing the cleansing of the priesthood. In 3:8 we have a Messianic prophecy.
- E. The golden lampstand and the two olive trees (ch. 4). It shows the sufficiency of the Lord for Zerubbabel and Joshua in enabling them to overcome all obstacles so that the work of the Temple can be completed.
- F. The flying roll, or scroll (5:1-4). Here we see how God will purge His people from sin and sinners.
- G. The ephah (5:5-11)--more about cleansing (as in the one above). This has to do with the land.
- H. The four chariots (ch. 6). Finally, we have God's protection of His people from other nations. A Messianic prophecy: 6:12.

Note: Thus, in the visions we have God's plan for His people from Zechariah's day to the end time.

III. The Question (asked by the exiles). Cf. chs. 7, 8. It has to do with whether or not they should continue to fast (and mourn) on the four months that the exiles had observed since 586 B.C. Cf. 8:19.

He was a priest. Cf. Neh. 12:1, 4, 16

Esp. important when we remember that Zech. was a priest.

These four months commemorated:

- 1) The fourth month--when Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem (Jer. 52:6).
- 2) The fifth month--the Temple was burned (Jer. 52:12).
- 3) The seventh month--when Gedaliah, the governor, was murdered (Jer. 41:1, 2).
- 4) The tenth month--the month when Nebuchadnezzar began his siege which ended in the fourth month (above) with the fall of Jerusalem. Cf. 2 Kings 25:1. This also remembered the capture of Zedekiah when his sons were killed before him, and then his eyes were put out.

The answer is given in 8:19, and the explanation follows to the end of ch. 8.

IV. The Two Burdens (9-14). No dates are given here, and Zechariah's name is not mentioned as before.

A. The Burden of the word of the Lord in the land of Hadrach (9-11). This is evidently for the nations to hear--especially the nations in the vicinity of Israel. See this esp. in vv. 1-8.

The hope of Israel is introduced in 9:9. Note its fulfillment in the first coming of Christ.

Then A SPECIAL NOTE OF INTEREST IS TO BE SEEN IN V. 10 WHERE WE HAVE NOT ONLY "JERUSALEM," BUT ALSO "EPHRAIM"--THE NAME OF THE NORTHERN KINGDOM. Thus, Zechariah predicts the restoration of the whole nation. See again the two in 10:6.

There will be a dispersion (10:9), but a regathering (10:10).

Notice the rejection of the Messiah in 11:12, 13.

Vv. 15-17 could speak of the antichrist.

B. The burden of the word of the Lord for Israel (12-14). He addresses it to Israel, but speaks concerning Jerusalem--added reason to see that he is talking about the entire nation.

Here we have the battle of Armageddon. In 12:9 we see the result.

This leads to the second coming of Christ. See 12:10-13:1.

Notice the question given to the Messiah in 13:6, and the answer, leading to the statement in v. 7, quoted in Matt. 26:31.

Then with 13:8 we have The Great Tribulation, with the sparing of the remnant (only 1/3). See v. 9.

Then Armageddon again (14:1-3), followed by the second coming of Christ (14:4).

After this 14:9 indicates that He will be King over all the earth. The nature of this kingdom and its blessings follow to the end of the prophecy.

*See K&P excellent discussion on Israel + Judah as one nation in R + D, Minor Prophets, II, pp. 220, 221.*

What is the purpose of Zechariah's visions and prophecies? There are several.

- 1) As we have seen so often in the prophets, the future is used to encourage the people of God in the present. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:19.
- 2) We have support for believing the Scriptures to be the Word of God. Cf. the references to "the former prophets" (1:4; 7:12). BUT WE HAVE THE ADDED ENCOURAGEMENT OF SEEING WHAT WAS FULFILLED WHEN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST CAME THE FIRST TIME. THIS ENCOURAGES US TO BELIEVE THAT THE REMAINDER OF ZECHARIAH'S PROPHECIES WILL BE FULFILLED.
- 3) The faithfulness of God toward His people.
- 4) The righteousness of God--in His hatred of evil, and judgment of those who sin.
- 5) The grace of God.
- 6) The sovereignty of God over mighty nations who have no concern for Him, and in carrying out His purposes for His people in spite of their sinfulness and insignificance among the nations of the earth.

*Cf 9:1 - "all the tribes of Israel" with 9:13 repeated  
Cf 8:13 refs to Judah*

*See how this was anticipated even before the Captivity*

*Hosea 1:11.  
Isa. 11:13.*

*Ezek. 37:15-17.*