Zechariah

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Zechariah

Notes:

Since Genesis 3 the world has been waiting for a Savior. The Old Testament word for that is ‘Messiah’. A careful study of the Old Testament reveals a progressive understanding of the characteristics and activities of the Messiah when He comes. Zechariah is one of the last books of the Old Testament and says more about the coming Savior than any other book. It is referred to at least ten times in the Gospels.

Zechariah was the son of Berekiah and grandson of Iddo. He was one of the exiles that came back from Babylon. It appears that he was a young man (Zech. 2:4). He began his prophetic ministry in the ‘eighth month of the second year of Darius’ (Zech. 1:1) which would be about October, 520 BC. Zechariah was a contemporary of Haggai, both ministered to the people in the city of Jerusalem.

There are about thirty men name Zechariah in the Old Testament.

The name Zechariah means ‘Yahweh remembers’. His name is a word of hope to the people of God. God’s people had been in exile for seventy years. Zechariah was born in Babylon and was one of the thousands who came back to Israel. At the time of his birth, Zechariah’s parents believed that God had not forgotten them. They believed God would be faithful and deliver them from their exile. God never forgets His people – then or now!

Zechariah’s grandfather was Iddo. A Levite named Iddo was listed as one of the heads of priestly families that returned from Babylon (Neh. 124; 16). This would mean that he had the dual role of priest and prophet, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

The book of Zechariah is unique in that it says more about the role of the Messiah than any other book in the Old Testament. It is quoted in several places in the gospels (Zech. 9:9; Matt. 21:5). It is quoted or alluded to about 70 times in the New Testament. It is second only to Ezekiel for its influence upon the book of Revelation.

Haggai’s ministry encouraged the people to return to the work of rebuilding the temple which had ceased about 16 years earlier (Ezra 4:23-5:2). Haggai’s ministry lasted about five months – Zechariah’s may have lasted as long as 50 years. Zechariah’s ministry echoed Haggai’s but included a call to spiritual rebuilding also.

Life had gotten very hard for the returned exiles. They had taken their eyes off the things of God (rebuilding the temple) and were focusing on their own things. Haggai calls them to get back to work and then Zechariah comes shortly after to further encourage them to be faithful to God.

Zechariah uses their past and current situations as a dark backdrop for a glorious future.

The book begins with a series of eight visions Zechariah receives from the Lord. A vision is a message the Lord gives in the form of images. It would be like a clip of a movie. It was meant to communicate a spiritual message from God to people.

Scriptures:

Zechariah 2:3-4 - And there was the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, 4 who said to him, “Run, speak to this young man, saying: ‘Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it.

Zechariah 1:1 - In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying…

Nehemiah 12:1-7; 12-21 -

Now these are the priests and the Levites who came up with Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, 2 Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, 3 Shechaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, 4 Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah, 5 Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, 6 Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, 7 Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, and Jedaiah.

These were the heads of the priests and their brethren in the days of Jeshua.

12 Now in the days of Joiakim, the priests, the heads of the fathers’ houses were: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah; 13 of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan; 14 of Melichu, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph; 15 of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai; 16 of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam; 17 of Abijah, Zichri; the son of Minjamin; of Moadiah, Piltai; 18 of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan; 19 of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi; 20 of Sallai, Kallai; of Amok, Eber; 21 of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; and of Jedaiah, Nethanel.

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.

Matthew 21:4-5 - All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

 5 “Tell the daughter of Zion,

 ‘Behold, your King is coming to you,

 Lowly, and sitting on a donkey,

 A colt, the foal of a donkey.’ ”

Ezra 4:23-5:2 - Now when the copy of King Artaxerxes’ letter was read before Rehum, Shimshai the scribe, and their companions, they went up in haste to Jerusalem against the Jews, and by force of arms made them cease. 24 Thus the work of the house of God which is at Jerusalem ceased, and it was discontinued until the second year of the reign of Darius king of Persia.
5:1 Then the prophet Haggai and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophets, prophesied to the Jews who were in Judah and Jerusalem, in the name of the God of Israel, who was over them. 2 So Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jozadak rose up and began to build the house of God which is in Jerusalem; and the prophets of God were with them, helping them.

# Zechariah 1

Scriptures:

Notes:

##  Zechariah 1:1-6 - The Glory of Returning!

Title ideas:

Return to God’s Blessings!

The Glory of Returning!

**1** In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,

Scriptures:

Notes:

The prophet begins (v1-6) with four summonses to the people of God:

First – v3 – Repent to experience all of God’s blessings

Second – v4 – Respond to the lessons of history

Third – v5 – Realize how brief time and opportunities are

Fourth – v6 – Remember the unchangeableness of God’s Word

H5030 – “prophet n. — someone who speaks on behalf of and interprets the will of a supernatural being, often rebuking or predicting events; can be used of poets who were said to be inspired by the gods.

H2148 – “Jehovah has remembered”

H3068 – “YHWH” – Yahweh or Jehovah – The Jewish national name for God

H1697 -

2 “The LORD has been very angry with your fathers.

Scriptures:

2 Peter 3:9 - The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Isaiah 55:6-7 -

 Seek the LORD while He may be found,

 Call upon Him while He is near.

 7 Let the wicked forsake his way,

 And the unrighteous man his thoughts;

 Let him return to the LORD,

 And He will have mercy on him;

 And to our God,

 For He will abundantly pardon.

Matthew 4:17 - From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Notes:

‘your fathers’ = ancestors. This is not just referring to Zechariah’s ancestors but to all the people of Israel.

God promised great blessings, prosperity, and protection to the people of Israel if they would love, worship, and obey Him and Him alone. God also warned them of great consequences of they chose not to do that. Deuteronomy 28 is a great summary of that.

Zechariah’s ancestors had chosen not to love, worship, and obey God, and so, God kept His promises of consequences (curses). One of the promised consequences was exile from the Promised Land. God is always faithful to His Word.

Some may object to God being represented as a God who gets angry and pours out His wrath. It seems to them that this is the opposite of the image of the God of love. It is not opposite, but two sides of the same coin. God is perfectly holy, and He is love. God’s holiness cannot be separated from His love. Anything that is not as holy as is God is sin. Sin gets in the way of God’s love and anger is the appropriate response to that.

One of the sicknesses of our culture is that we tolerate and even celebrate sin and wickedness. God is very patient because He is a God of love (2 Pet. 3:9) but His patience is not eternal, and He is storing up the wrath that sin deserves until it is time for the judgment. The only hope sinners have is to repent and falls on their knees at the foot of the cross of Christ. This was the constant call of the Old and New Testaments (Isa. 55:6-7; Matt. 4:17).

H7107/H7110 – to be angry & wrath

3 Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Return to Me,” says the LORD of hosts, “and I will return to you,” says the LORD of hosts.

Notes:

**First – v3 – Repent to experience all of God’s blessings**

‘Return to Me.’ – This was a regular call from God to the people of Israel (Isa. 44:22). It continues on in the New Testament for the church (Jam. 4:8).

The Bible only offers one solution to the problem of sin – repentance. To repent is to away from the way you are going and turn back to God. Jesus says He is the way to God (John 14:6).

“In all of Scripture that is the one prerequisite to receiving any of God’s blessings.” (Kaiser, 1992) page 303

The world was not more wicked in the days of Zechariah than they are today. If the people of Jerusalem needed to repent, the people of our culture need to also. If Christ walked through the world today, His message would be the same as it was 2,000 years ago – Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

It is only through repentance that we have any fellowship with God (1 John 1:9). When we repent, confessing our sins, God forgives us and restores back into a right relationship with Him and we can once again experience the fullness of God’s grace.

‘Lord of hosts’ - The title ‘LORD of hosts’ refers to Almighty God – ruler over all of creation. It occurs 245 times, but only in the Old Testament. The fact that it appears three times in this one verse adds emphasis to the call to repent.

Scriptures:

Isaiah 44:22 - I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions,

 And like a cloud, your sins.

 Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.”

James 4:8 - Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

John 14:6 - Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

1 John 1:9 - If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

H7725 -

H7725 – turn back

4 “Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets preached, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds.” ’ But they did not hear nor heed Me,” says the LORD.

Notes:

**Second – v4 – Respond to the lessons of history**

Zechariah was speaking to people who had lived through or were born in the exile to Babylon. God reminds them that He had warned them (2 Chronicles 36:15-16)

‘Turn now…’ God warned the people of Judah through the prophets that He was displeased with their ways and deeds. He told them to turn back to God so that He didn’t have to punish them (Jer. 3:12).

There is a saying, ‘Those who do not learn from the past are doomed to repeat it.’ God faithfully recorded the failures of His people and the consequences they experienced that that future generations would learn from their mistakes. Personally, I would rather learn from the mistakes of others than make those mistakes myself and suffer the consequences they suffered.

Scriptures:

2 Chronicles 36:15-16 - And the LORD God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. 16 But they mocked the messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy.

Jeremiah 3:12 - Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say:

 ‘Return, backsliding Israel,’ says the LORD;

 ‘I will not cause My anger to fall on you.

 For I am merciful,’ says the LORD;

 ‘I will not remain angry forever.

H7181 – “to heed v. — to listen, hear, or pay close attention to, and usually respond in conformity.“

H8085 – to hear intelligently – implies obedience

4611 - actions

1870 – course of life or mode of action

H7451 -

H7121 -

5 “Your fathers, where *are* they?

Notes:

**Third – v5 – Realize how brief time and opportunities are**

Life is not permanent. Opportunities are not always going to be there. The time to repent and do the good works of God is today (Job 7:6a; 7a).

Scriptures:

Job 6:6-7 -

 My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle…

 7 Oh, remember that my life is a breath…

 And the prophets, do they live forever?

H5769 – time out of mind, eternity, always

H2421 – to be alive

6 Yet surely My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets,
did they not overtake your fathers? “So they returned and said: ‘Just as the LORD of hosts determined to do to us, according to our ways and according to our deeds, so He has dealt with us.’ ” ’ ”

Notes:

**Fourth – v6 – Remember the unchangeableness of God’s Word**

God’s people and prophets are temporary, but God’s Word is permanent, immutable, unchanging.

‘My words and My statutes’ – When God says something, it is going to happen just as He said it would (Isa. 55:11). This is one of the reasons we read and study God’s Word. The better we know what God said, the better we understand what is happening in our lives and in the world.

God is telling them to acknowledge that God did what He said He as going to do. The prophet Jeremiah wrote the book of Lamentations from the exile (Lam. 2:17).

It is also important to remember that the failures of God’s people, especially those in positions of authority, like pastors, does not change the veracity of God’s Word.

You can’t run away or hide from the truths contained in God’s Word – they will overtake you, especially if you are one of His children (Deut. 28:15).

God is always faithful to keep His word, whether it is promises of blessing or warnings of consequences for sin. God’s Word does its work (Jer. 23:29).

How can we as individuals, families, or as a nation hope to experience the blessings of God if we do not repent? And God is not looking for the outward expressions of repentance – He is looking for a change of heart (Joel 2:13).

Scriptures:

Isaiah 55:11 - So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;

 It shall not return to Me void,

 But it shall accomplish what I please,

 And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

Lamentations 2:17 - The LORD has done what He purposed;

 He has fulfilled His word

 Which He commanded in days of old.

 He has thrown down and has not pitied,

 And He has caused an enemy to rejoice over you;

 He has exalted the horn of your adversaries.

Deuteronomy 28:15 - But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you…

Jeremiah 23:29 - Is not My word like a fire?” says the LORD,

 “And like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?

Joel 2:13 - So rend your heart, and not your garments;

 Return to the LORD your God,

 For He is gracious and merciful,

 Slow to anger, and of great kindness;

 And He relents from doing harm.

H5381 - to befall ⇔ overtake v. — to befall something or someone, conceived of as overtaking them.

H2161 – plan, devise

