

Books of The Bible

A Survey of Zechariah

Introduction

The books of the Old Testament can be divided into three distinct sections:

- There are 17 historical books. These begin with Genesis and end with Esther.
- There are 5 poetical books. These begin with Job and end with the Song of Solomon.
- There are 17 prophetic books. These begin with Isaiah and end with Malachi.



When there are 17 of anything in the Scriptures God always divides it into a group of 5 and then a group of 12. Consequently, as we look at the last 17 books of the Old Testament they are normally divided as follows:

- 5 books are related to the major prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel.
- There are 12 books which are spoken of as the minor prophets, these are the books from Hosea to Malachi.
- When God tells us twelve of anything it is always divided into a nine and a three, for instance, there were 12 apostles, but Peter, James, and John are always marked out as distinct. Zechariah is one of the last 12 books of the Old Testament and is one of the group of three, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The difference between these three and the nine previous minor prophets is the nine minor prophets majorly relate to events before the captivity, whereas these three books concentrate on the events after the captivity.

Since Haggai and Zechariah were contemporaries with only two months between when they started (Hag. 1:1; Zech. 1:1), there is similarity of thought and the books intertwine in their datings.

Zechariah The Man

It is evident that "Zechariah" was a popular name with over 25 individuals in the Scriptures known by it. Apparently this Zechariah was the same as the son of Iddo (Ezra 5:1; 6:14; Neh. 12:16). If this understanding is correct, he was a member of one of the priestly families who came back to Israel after the captivity, which would help explain his interest in matters concerning the Temple (Zech. 1:16; 3:1-4:14; 6:9-15; 8:9, 20-23; 14:16-21).

The Man

His name means Jehovah remembers or Jehovah is renowned, and like Haggai, he was a prophet of the restoration, thus by birth he was a priest and by calling a prophet.

The Times In Which Zechariah Prophesied For God

Zechariah prophesied during a time of political turmoil, for while God had brought them back into the land, they were not there in completeness, but there was not a spiritual restoration. The restoration to God had to come before they would fully inherit the land, and by the power of the Lord all the nations around them would be destroyed and they would live in peace. That will ultimately happen in the millennium.

The Purpose Of The Book

To discern the purposes of the book, it is best if when reading the book the individual marks the following references for:

- Zechariah's exhortations are to arouse the people to activity in the rebuilding of the temple of God.
- The messages reminding them of the sovereignty of God and His government over all the nations.
- Messages of hope to reignite the nation's faith and hope in the days of desolation.
- Messages to remove idolatry from the land.

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- e) How God will establish His kingdom despite the determination of the nations and the unbelief and sin of Israel.

Keywords

There are a number of key words and key phrases found throughout the book of Zechariah.

1) Key words:

- a) "What" - occurs in 15 verses in the clauses:
 - i) "What are / be these/ these be (ch. 1:9, 19; 4:4, 5, 11, 12, 13; 6:4; 13:6)
 - ii) "What come these to do? (ch. 1:21)
 - iii) "What seest thou? (ch. 4:2)
 - iv) "What is it?" (ch. 5:6)
 - v) "What is the breadth? (ch. 2:2)
- b) "Two" (ch. 4:3, 11, 12, 14; 5:9; 6:1; 11:7; 13:8)
- c) "Four" (ch. 1:18, 20; 2:6; 6:1, 5)
- d) "Jerusalem" (37 references mentioned in every chapter except chapters 4, 5, 6, 10, 11)
- e) "Behold" (21 occurrences)
- f) "See" (ch. 2:2; 4:10; 5:2, 5; 9:5; 10:7)
- g) "Turn" (ch. 1:3, 4; 9:12; 10:9; 13:7)
- h) "Dwell" (ch. 2:10, 11; 8:3, 4, 8; 9:6; 14:11)
- i) "House" (26 occurrences)

2) Key clauses:

- a) "The day of the LORD", while only occurring once (ch. 14:1), its truth is spoken of throughout the book by the emphasis drawn to Jerusalem.
- b) "In that day" which occurs in twenty verses (ch. 2:11; 3:10; 9:16; 11:11; 12:3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11; 13:1, 2, 4, 14:4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 20, 21)
- c) "The word of the Lord" (ch. 1:1, 7; 4:6, 8; 6:9; 7:1, 4, 8; 8:1, 18; 9:1; 11:11; 12:1)
- d) "It shall come to pass" (ch. 8:13, 23; 12:9; 13:2, 3, 4, 8; 14:6, 7, 13, 16)

Characteristics Of The Book

God will make use of symbols throughout the book. For instance, he will speak about four horses (ch. 1:8).

The Structure

1) The book is divided into three distinct sections which are:

- a) ch. 1:1-6:8 - The visions and their significance
- b) ch. 6:9-7:14 - The historical section
- c) ch. 8:1-14:21 - Prophecies relating to the future (some of them have a double fulfillment)

2) Messages given during the building of the Temple (chs. 1:1-8:23) which is subdivided as follows:

- a) Communication from God verbally (ch. 1:1-6)
- b) Communication from God visually (ch. 1:7-6:8) (The following are my understandings of the visions. No doubt Zechariah would have understood them completely)
 - i) The vision of the myrtle trees (ch. 1:7-17) indicating God standing in judgment in the shadows before Millennial glory. The myrtle tree is associated with the Feast of Tabernacles which carries the truth of the millennium (Neh. 8:15; Isa. 41:19; Isa. 55:13).
 - ii) The vision of the horns and carpenters (smiths) indicating the overthrowing of the Gentiles who are at ease or rest (ch. 1:15), who have afflicted God's people and the restoration of Israel (ch. 1:18-21).

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- iii) The vision of the man with the measuring line, indicating the impossibility of the task for Jerusalem will be enlarged and all nations to flow into it during the millennium (ch. 2:1-13)
 - iv) The vision of Joshua the priest being cleansed, indicating the lifting up of the Day of Atonement to a higher level when there will be a superior cleaning of the entire nation and not just for a year (ch. 3:1-10)
 - v) The vision of the candlestick indicating great changes morally will not be done by human endeavor but by the Spirit of God through His two anointed servants (ch. 4:1-14)
 - vi) The vision of the flying scroll indicating the opened judgment of God on an ungodly world (ch. 5:1-4)
 - vii) The vision of the ephah and the woman representing the spirit of universal wickedness being established by two women in Babylon, the land of Shinar (ch. 5:6-11)
 - viii) The vision of the chariots, indicating the judgment on the nations has begun (ch. 6:1-8) for the quietening of God's judgment.
- c) Communication from God verbally (ch. 7:1-8:23)
- i) The questions asked (ch. 7:1-3)
 - ii) The divine answer in four parts (ch. 7:4-8:23)
- 3) Messages given after the building of the Temple (chs. 9–11)
- a) The burden of Hadrach (chs. 9-11)
 - i) The coming King and kingdom
 - 1. A word of encouragement:
 - (a) The judgment of God on the nations which have sought to destroy Israel and Jerusalem. He shall not destroy them totally for there will be those who fear God, and to them he shall be their God, therefore all abominations will be removed (ch. 9:1-7)
 - 2. A word of comfort:
 - (a) When the enemies come God will encamp around His house (then Jerusalem) and no enemy shall come through (ch. 9:8)
 - (b) Israel's King will come (ch. 9:9)
 - 3. A word of encouragement:
 - (a) He shall cut off all opposing forces but speak peace to the heathen (ch. 9:10a & b)
 - (i) The extent of His kingdom (ch. 9:10c)
 - (ii) The victory for Israel (ch. 9:11-10:12)
 - (b) While judgment will fall and Israel accepts the false Messiah, evaluating her true Messiah as only worth thirty pieces of silver, He will come and deliver them (ch. 11:1-12:4)
 - i) Israel will be restored and will cry, not for deliverance, but because of the realization of that which they did to their Messiah (ch. 12:5-14)
 - ii) Their restoration morally (ch. 13:1-4)
 - iii) The realization deepened (ch. 13:4-9)
 - (c) Returning to the theme of Judgment, the Lord speaks of the "Day of the Lord", Israel will be a cup of trembling while the Lord judges until Christ is King over all the earth (ch. 14:1-9)
 - (d) His coming judgment with power and glory, and His ruling with a rod of iron during the millennium will be a comfort knowing, "No more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of Hosts" (ch. 14:10-21).

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Description And Titles Of Divine Persons

- 1) Christ
 - a) My Servant, the BRANCH (ch. 3:8)
 - b) The King (ch. 9:9-10 with Matt. 21:4-5)
 - c) The smitten Shepherd (ch. 12:10)
 - d) The wounded One (ch. 13:6)
 - e) The BRANCH (ch. 6:12)
 - f) The King Priest (ch. 6:13)
 - g) The Lord of Hosts (ch. 14:3-4)
 - h) The Angel of the Lord (ch. 1:11)
 - i) Christ sold for 30 pieces of silver (ch. 11:13 with Matt. 26:15)

- 2) God
 - a) Names:
 - i) The LORD (ch. 1:1)
 - ii) The LORD of hosts (ch. 1:17)

 - b) Attributes:
 - i) Sovereignty. Seen in the repeated expression, “I will” used in 37 verses
 - ii) Displeasure (ch. 1:15)
 - iii) Restoring grace (ch. 1:16; 8:3)
 - iv) Jealousy (ch. 1:14)
 - v) Ability (ch. 2:6; 3:4, 9; 9:11, 13)
 - vi) Mercy (ch. 10:6)
 - vii) Restoration and mercy (ch. 10:8)

 - c) His Person and position:
 - i) “I am the LORD their God” (ch. 10:6)

Questions To Consider

- 1) Why was the Lord displeased with Israel (ch. 1:4, 6) and does He get displeased with His collective saints? If so, is it for the same reasons?
- 2) Do we see God’s discipline on assemblies today, and if so, in what ways? Which was the only assembly in Rev. 2-3 which God threatened to remove and why?
- 3) Why does God speak in visions/dreams? Why did God speak in a dream to Nebuchadnezzar, Pharaoh, Daniel, and Joseph, but not Belshazzar?
- 4) What can we learn about the activity of the Devil from chapter four? Are there other instances of satanic influence on individuals and nations?

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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