

Handout Zechariah Lesson 1

Jesus to the religious leaders in Jerusalem: *You serpents, brood of vipers, how can you escape being condemned to hell? [...] ... and so you will draw down on yourselves the blood of every upright person that has been shed on earth, from the blood of Abel the holy to the blood of Zechariah son of Barachiah whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. In truth I tell you, it will all recoil on this generation.*

Matthew 23:33-36

Summary Outline of the Book of Zechariah

BIBLICAL PERIOD	#9 THE REMNANT OF JUDAH RETURNS			
FOCUS	Zechariah's present: (Chapters 1-8)		The eschatological future (Chapters 9-14)	
COVENANT	The Sinai Covenant and Davidic Covenant			
SCRIPTURE	1:1-----1:7-----9:1-----12:1-----14:21			
DIVISION	Summons to repentance and conversion	Visions and oracles to the covenant people	Rejection of the Messiah	Reign of the Messiah
TOPIC	The beginning of Zechariah's mission and first oracle	Addressing Judah's present	Predicting the first Advent of the Messiah	Predicting the second Advent of the Messiah
	Transforming Judah's present		The Future Messianic Age and its Conclusion	
LOCATION	Jerusalem			
TIME	Chapters 1:1-8:21 = 520-518 BC Chapters 9:1-14:21 = c. 480-470 BC			

The theme of the Book of Zechariah is God takes care of His covenant people with His divine protection in their present struggles against their enemies and has a divine plan for them in the future that includes the Messiah and the outpouring of His Spirit.

Zechariah, like God's other prophets, comprehended only the outline of God's divine plan without discerning God's long-term goals. The meaning of the visions does not come into focus until the advent of the Davidic Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, and the complimentary visions in the last book in the New Testament canon, The Revelation of Jesus Christ to John.

Zechariah's Eight Visions	Symbolic Significance
1. The man on a red horse among myrtle trees (1:8)	God will again extend His mercy to Jerusalem (1:14, 16-17)
2. Four horns and four smiths (2:1-3)	Enemies who scatter Judah are cast out by angelic powers (2:4)
3. The man/angel with a measuring line (2:1)	God will provide a protective wall of holy fire around Jerusalem (2:3-5)
4. The cleansing of the High Priest Joshua (3:4)	Removing Judah's guilt in preparation for the coming of God's Servant, the Branch, who will save His people (3:8-9)
5. The golden lampstand and the two olive trees (4:2-3)	God empowers His people by His spirit (4:6)
6. The flying scroll (5:1)	Dishonesty is cursed (5:3)
7. The woman of wickedness in a barrel/basket (5:6-7)	Wickedness removed (5:9)
8. The four chariots (6:1)	God's judgment executed on the world (6:5-7)

Seven of Zechariah's eight visions find counterparts in the Book of Revelation:

Zechariah's Eight Visions	The Link Between Zechariah's Visions and the Book of Revelation
1. The man on a red horse with three other horses among myrtle trees (1:8)	The four riders on white, red, black, and pale horses (Rev 6:1-9)
2. Four horns and four smiths (1:18-20)	
3. The man with a measuring line (2:1)	John receives a measuring line and is told to measure God's Sanctuary (Rev 11:1). An angel measures the walls and gates of the Messianic Jerusalem (21:15).
4. The cleansing of the High Priest Joshua (3:4)	The spotless Bride of the lamb (Rev 19:8).
5. The golden lampstand with seven eyes and the two olive trees (4:2-3)	The seven golden lampstands (Rev 1:12, 20) and the two olive trees (Rev 11:4)
6. The flying scroll (5:1)	The small scroll (Rev 11:8-11)
7. The woman of wickedness in a barrel/basket (5:6-7)	The wicked woman riding a scarlet beast (Rev 17:3-7)
8. The four chariots (6:1)	The four horsemen (Rev 6:2-8)

Zechariah's Oracles in Part I

The five oracles in Chapters 1-6:

- The first oracle in 1:1-6
- The second oracle in 2:10-17 *
- The third oracle in 4:6b-10a
- The fourth oracle in 6:9-15

- The fifth oracle in 7:1-14

*the only oracle that does not begin with “the word of Yahweh was addressed to/came to Zechariah.”

The seven oracles in 8:1-17 concerning the restoration of Zion (verses numbered according to the NJB but may be numbered differently in other translations)

#1 = 8:2; #2 = 8:3; #3 = 8:4-5; #4 = 8:6; #5 = 8:7-8; #6 = 8:9-13; #7 = 8:14-17

The oracle on fasting and salvation in 8:18-23

Significant dates:

- 522 BC Darius I succeeded Cambyses as King of Persia and made Zerubbabel the Persian governor of Judah.
- 520 BC Haggai began his ministry in August, and work on the Temple resumed. Zechariah began his ministry in October/November (Zech 1:1)
- 519 BC February is the second date in Zechariah 1:7.*
- 518 BC December is the third date in Zechariah 7:1.
- 517 BC The Jerusalem Temple was completed and dedicated.
- 479 BC Xerxes/Ahasuerus I (486-465 BC) made Esther Queen of Persia.
- 465 BC Artaxerxes I succeed his father Xerxes as King of Persia (465-424 BC)
- 458 BC Persian governor Ezra led the second return of the exiles to Judah.
- 444 BC Persian governor Nehemiah led the third return of the exiles to Judah.

The dates in the ministries of Haggai and Zechariah in the year 520 BC, the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia:

Haggai	Zechariah
Haggai’s calling and first oracle were on the 1 st day of the sixth month in the second year of Darius or August 520 BC.	
Haggai’s second oracle was on the 21 st day of the seventh month in the second year of Darius or October 520 BC.	
	Zechariah’s calling and first oracle were in the 8 th month in the second year of Darius or October/November 520 BC.
Haggai’s third oracle was on the 24 th day of the ninth month in the second year of Darius or December 520 BC.	
Haggai’s fourth oracle was also on the 24 th day of the ninth month in the second year of Darius or in December 520 BC.	
	Zechariah’s four visions all occurred on the 24 th day of the eleventh month in the second year of Darius or mid-February 520 BC.*
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*We would record the year as 519 BC, but it was still the second year of King Darius' reign since the Persian year did not change until the spring equinox in March.

The first vision in 1:7-17 has a series of exchanges between Zechariah, Yahweh, and the Angel of Yahweh who interprets the vision, and the angel horseman. The Angel of Yahweh is the chief angelic figure (probably the "man" of 1:8) and the interpreting angel for each vision (mentioned 7 times in the Book of Zechariah, 150 times in the Old Testament, and 10 times in the New Testament). A summary of the exchange between the key figures in the first vision:

1. Zechariah asks the Angel of Yahweh a question (verse 9a).
2. The Angel of Yahweh responds (verse 9b).
3. The lead horseman-angel explains himself and his companions to Zechariah (verse 10).
4. The lead horseman-angel reports to the Angel of Yahweh on the success of the mission (verse 11).
5. The Angel of Yahweh petitions Yahweh concerning His forgiveness and restoration of the covenant people (verse 12).
6. Yahweh's comforting response (verse 13).
7. The Angel of Yahweh tells Zechariah to proclaim God's message to Judah and Jerusalem/Zion (verses 14-17).

God's promises in Zechariah in 2:10-17:

1. Yahweh is Jerusalem's protection (verse 9).
2. All exiles must return to Judah and Jerusalem because God will punish the nations who caused His people to suffer (verse 13).
3. Yahweh is coming to live among His people (verse 14).
4. God makes a promise of a future conversion of Gentile nations and one united people receiving God's gift of universal salvation (verse 15).
5. Once again, Judah will become Yahweh's holy possession and Jerusalem His choice (verses 16-17).

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