Notes on Zechariah

**ZECHARIAH**

• Dated prophecies: Nov. 520 BC – Dec 518 BC

• Contemporary of Haggai

• Mentioned in Ezra 5:1-2 6:1-10, 13-15 516 BC temple completed.

• Jerusalem is in ruins. The foundation for the temple has been built. However, the

exiles who returned from the captivity have stopped work on the temple to build their

“paneled houses.” There is serious need for a revival.

The practical goal of Zechariah is similar to Haggai, but the methodology is very different.

• The book is apocalyptic (it contains vivid symbolism which represents spiritual truths).

• The book contains many predictive prophecies, especially of the Messiah.

• The book is eschatological in nature (it includes material about end times).

Quote: “It is no exaggeration to affirm that of all the prophetic compositions of the Old Testament, Zechariah’s visions and oracles are the most messianic and, accordingly,, the most difficult, because it is mingled and intermingled with so much that is apocalyptic and exchatological.

Theme of Zechariah: The Messiah is coming; get your house in order.

Message of Zechariah: It is time to build the temple. Repent, Return, Restore, Rebuild a constant theme.

Obviously similar to Haggai, but the style is very different. Haggai: Repent. Get off your butt and build the temple, you lazy, thankless people.

Zechariah: much more subtle.

Q: Is your (spiritual) house ready for guests right now? If Jesus knocked on your spiritual door, would you secretly be scurrying around, putting everything which is out of order into order so as to create the (false) impression that everything is in order?

What if you mother-in-law showed up unexpectedly? Zechariah: Are you ready for Jesus to come back?

**Outline of Zechariah:**

I. 1:1-6 Prologue: Repent, Return, Restore and Rebuild

II. 1:7-6:8 Eight visions. Highly apocalyptic, not so prophetic

III. 6:9-15 Coronation of Joshua/Jesus

IV 7:1-8:23 Two Sermons

V. 9:1-14:21 Two Oracles concerning Jerusalem. More prophetic, less apocalyptic. More Messianic.

**I. Prologue**

Zechariah 1:1 November, 520 BC

1:2-6 Repent!

v. 2 Q: Why was God so angry with their forefathers?

V. 3 Q: What is the solution? Repent and return Return to me so I can return to you (Revelation 3:20)

Q: Do you need to repent and return? How so?

v. 4-6 What is God saying here? These faithless Jews are no longer around, but my Words are still around and what I decree will happen, will happen.

vs. 6. Good news. They repented and rebuilt the temple. What about you? Are you building God’s temple? The temple was actually completed in April, 516 BC. They repented, returned, were restored and were rebuilt.

Zechariah 1:1-6 tells us the end of the story before it tells us the story. The rest of the book is like a flashback.

**II. Eight Visions**

1:7-17 The first vision: A messenger on a red horse.

v. 11 All is quiet. Is that good? The messenger reports the world is at peace, which is bad news to Israel as that means they will stay in bondage to Persia.

Is peace God’s goal? Matthew 10:34-36. But isn’t Jesus the prince of peace?

v. 14 Q: Why is God so upset? (because Jerusalem is still not restored)

v. 15 Doesn’t God want people to feel secure? (Amos 6:1-7)

Zech 1:16-17 This, in essence, is the theme of Zechariah. Q: How would the Jews in the time of Zechariah envision this being fulfilled?

Q: How is it fulfilled in our day?

The Messiah is coming: Get your house in order!

God’s reply: (v 16) I will return to Jerusalem and rebuild my house! Do not look at outward appearances.

Application: If your situation or church seems stagnant, do not look at the outward appearance. God can and will work in your life.

1:18-21 Vision #2: The vision of four horns.

The four horns are four nations which scattered Israel. Assyria, Egypt, Babylon and Persia. The message: God used these nations to judge his people. Now they will get their come-uppance: God will judge these nations. Trust in God.

Question: How do you feel about the fact that God is a God of judgment on his enemies?

Who are these four “craftsmen”? I am not sure. Angels?

2:1-13 Vision #3 The man with a measuring line.

God will make his kingdom into a city without walls.

The church will become very great and will spread across the world. God will protect his kingdom like a flame around a wall-less city.

2:1-2 Q: What is measuring a city about? Rev 11:1-6. Ezekiel 38:7-16 It is about relying on God, not on ourselves, for our protection and security.

2 Sam 24:1f David takes a census of the church. God is very angry! Why?

We should not rely on statistics. We should rely on God.

2:3-5 No walls. God is our wall? Question: Is God your wall, or is your 401K your wall?

Q: What are the worldly “walls” we tend to build to protect us from the troubles of life?

2:6 Repent and return! The “North” is Babylon/captivity. We were all once in the “North.”

Only come back, escape Babylon (sin) and come into my city (the kingdom of God). This scripture is being fulfilled before our very eyes in this day.

2:8 How does it feel to be the “apple” of God’s eye?

2:10-13 Kingdom prophecy. I will live among you (in the form of the Holy Spirit) Many nations (v. 11) Be in awe of what God is doing. Close parallel here with Ezek 36:24-38 and Ezek 37:11-14

Kingdom Prophecies in Zechariah:

Zech 2:10-13

Zechariah 6:15 Those who are far away will come and help build the temple of the Lord.

Zechariah 8:1-7 I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem.

Zechariah 9:10-13 His rule will extend from Sea to Sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

Zech 12:7-8

Zechariah 13:1-3 On that day…. Pentecost.

Zechariah 14: the whole thing!!!

And many more….

3:1-10 Vision #4 Joshua (the high priest) accused by Satan and exonerated.

3:1-2 Q: Who does Joshua represent here? Joshua = Jeshua in Hebrew = Jesus in Aramaic. This is a vision concerning Jesus himself.

Q: What do we see about Satan here? Are you accused (Zech 3:2, Rev 12:10) Or are you the deceived type (Jn 8:44)?

Q: What would Satan say to you? What would he accuse you of? What would he deceive you about?

In case you were not sure: The branch (3:8,9) is Jesus. (Jeremiah 23:5, Jer 33:15-16) The Messiah is coming to Jerusalem!!!

Zech 3:3-10 The symbolism could be a bit confusing here.

Is this about Joshua and Judah? Yes

Is this about the Messiah? Yes

Is this about us and about the church? Yes

v. 6-7 God: If you will repent and return, I will restore and rebuild.

v. 8-9 The Messiah is coming. Get your house in order.

3:10 Have you invited your neighbor to sit under your vine by sharing your life and faith with him yet?

4:1-16 Vision #5 The golden lampstand with a bowl and seven lamps and the two olive trees.

4:1-4 What is he seeing? He is seeing, figuratively, the Mehorah in the temple, with an olive tree on either side.

Oil = the Spirit of God = annointing by God (Heb 1:9, Ps 23, etc.)

Memory verse: Zechariah 4:6. Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of Hosts.

The twin olive trees represent the permanent, unending, river of power which can flow into our lives if we remain tapped into God.

[4:7 The capstone is Jesus Christ (Acts 4:10,11)]

Q: How does this make you feel? John 7:37-39 Streams of living water!

4:10 The seven channels are the seven “spirits” of God (Rev 2:1)

Stressed? Harried? Worried? Think about the two olive trees and the seven lamps!!!

4:12-14 The two trees, are symbolically, the priesthood and the kingship/governorship, which were combined forever in Jesus Christ. Jesus is priest and king! (Messiah is Hebrew for annointed).

5:1-4 Vision #6. The flying Scroll.

Judgment on sinners and the enemies of God’s people.

5:5-11 Vision #7 The woman in a basket. Judgment on sinners.

Measuring basket = judgment. 2 Cor 5:10 We will all appear before the judgment seat to account for deeds done in the body.

v. 7 Who is this woman? The woman = “sin” = Babylon (Revelation 18:2)

Sin has fallen, Judgment has come

v. 10-11 Those who choose evil are taken to “Babylon”/captivity.

6:1-8 Vision #8 The four chariots. Judgment! (again)

See Revelation 6:2-7 for a parallel passage about judgment on sinners and on the enemies of God’s people

**III Coronation Scene**

6:9-15 The coronation scene. The Messiah is coming!

v. 9-11 Q: Why is this odd? You do not give a crown to a priest!

v. 12 What/who is this about? Branch = nazer = Nazarene (like Zech 3:8, Zech 4:14 note Matthew 2:23 Nazarene) It is not Joshua literally, because he never sat on a throne.

v. 13 “harmony between the two” means between the priesthood and the government/king/governor (between Joshua and Zerubbabel). This was accomplished in Jesus who is both high priest and king

Q: Is there normally friction between the king and the priest? Yes!

The ruler (Jn 18:33-37) and the mediator (1 Tim 2:5) will be the same man.

vs. 15 A great picture of the kingdom of God.

**IV Two Sermons Zech Ch 7-8**

7:1-14. Religious observance versus true worship of God.

7:1 4th year of Darius 518 BC People of Bethel come to ask a question.

v. 3 Should I mourn? Do you detect an attitude. Do I haavvveee to fast? (note: for so many years) Do I haaavvvveee to serve the poor, to share my faith, to go to Bible group, etc.

There were three fasts begun as a remembrance of God’s punishment on Judah:

1. The 5th month: to remember the destruction of the temple in 586.

2. The 7th month: to remember the assassination of Gedaliah (2 Kings 25:25)

3. The 10th month: to remember the capture of Jerusalem in 597.

Their question is, to some extent, a good question. Now that the temple is well on the way to being completed, does it even make sense to continue to mourn over the earlier destruction of Solomon’s temple.

God’s response Zech 7:4-7

Should we stop fasting in the fifth month? God: you were doing it as a hypocrite anyway, so what use were your fasts?

God: Give me your heart, not your religion. This is not an uncommon biblical teaching.

Zech 7:8-10 God’s solution to legalistic religion: Act like God (Exodus 34:6-7). Show social justice. (Note: in Isaiah 58:6 God also connects fasting and social justice)

Q: Are you struggling with lack of motivation in your walk with God? Solution: Go out and help a needy person. Practice social justice.

A great memory verse: Zech 7:9-10.

By the way: God’s answer to their question is found in Zech 8:18-19 No. Stop fasting. It is time to celebrate

(like JTB’s disciples fasting but Jesus’ disciples partying. Mark 2:19)

What you need to do is to repent and not act like your earlier countrymen Zech 7:11-14. Look where it got them!

Like Mark Wilkinson would say: “How’s that working for you?”

8:1-11 The Messiah will come to Jerusalem.

v. 13 They would not listen to me, so I will not listen to them.

8:1-2 God can’t wait for it to happen. I am jealous for my people until the temple is built. God is zealous. Are we?

God says to his people, after you repent, you will be restored to me and I will rebuild Zion.

v. 3 We are the “city of truth.” What a thought. This prophecy was partially fulfilled in April, 516 BC when the temple was completed, but to a fuller extent in about 30 AD when Jesus came to Jerusalem.

v. 4 men and women of ripe old age…. Each with a cane I hand… Safety security

Q: Is he talking about restored Judah and Jerusalem or is he talking about the church? (from the countries of the West?)

v. 9 (like Haggai) Build the temple!

(Skip v. 12-17)

8: 20-23 Did this happen at the time of the restoration? Not exactly. It is about the church.

God will bless our evangelism v. 23. A great Bible group.

**V. Two Oracles Zech Ch 9-14**

**Ch 9-11 First Oracle.**

9:1-8 Judgment on Phoenecia. After disciplining his people he will now judge those who attacked his people.

9:9-17. The Messiah is coming to Jerusalem. (do you see a pattern here yet?)

Messianic Prophecies in Zechariah:

Zechariah 3:8-9 My servant the branch (The Branch of Jesse Isaiah 11:1,10)

Zechariah 6:11-13 Crowning of the Messiah/Branch

Zech 9:9 Jesus triumphal entry into Jerusalem. (Matt 21:2-7, Mark 11:4)

Zech 11:7-13 30 pieces of silver Matt 26:14-15 The potter Matt 27:3-10

Zechariah 12:10-14 The one they have pierced (John 19:31-37)

Zech 13:7 Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered. (Mark 14:27)

9:9 A great Messianic prophecy. Fulfilled in Mark 11:4-10

Q: What do you see about Jesus here?

Gentle Jews? Probably not.

Righteous Jews? Yes!

Bringing salvation Jew? Yes!

9:10-13 A kingdom prophecy. waterless pit = us before salvation

9:10 Q: What do you see about the kingdom of God here?

Q: How will God create peace without war-horses?

9:11 We were freed from a waterless pit. Q: What waterless pit were you freed from?

9:13 Judah (Judea) → Ephraim (Samaria) → Greece That is exactly how the church spread. A very specific prophecy.

9:13 Judah/The Church will be bent like a bow. God will use us to do great things. He will prepare us for spiritual battle.

9:14 A kingdom prophecy cont. Doesn’t this contradict 9:10? Is God a God of peace? Isn’t Jesus the prince of peace? Matthew 10:34-36

God’s desire is for peace and the Kingdom is a place of peace, but with the world there will be war because the kingdom of God is at war with the world (spiritually). Only in heaven will there be peace.

Victory for God’s people in apocalyptic language.

9:16 We will sparkle!!!

9:17 We will be attractive and beautiful!!! (To those who love and are seeking God, to others we are the aroma of death 2 Cor 2:16)) We will be a city on a hill Matthew 5:14-16

What will be the grain and new wine for you? How will God make you thrive?

Zech10:1-12 As you read this, how would Zechariah’s hearers see this? How might we see this differently?

Zech 10:6 I will restore them… Q: to what?

Return, Restore, Rebuild.

Q: What is 10:5 to you?

11:4-17 God will revoke the Old Covenant and establish a New Covenant.

11:4-9 God says, “I have had enough.” The Romans will come and judge my people.

God will judge unfaithful Israel for rejecting his appearing to them (fulfilled in 70 AD when Jerusalem was destroyed). Favor = (old) covenant Union = unity of God’s people.

11:9 As prophesied in Leviticus 26:29.

This was literally fulfilled at the siege of Jerusalem. Josephus gives a dreadful detail respecting a woman named Mary, who, in the extremity of the famine, during the seige, killed her sucking child, roasted, and had eaten part of it, when discovered by the soldiers.

v. 10-11 the old covenant will be revoked. Staff called favor = Old Covenant

v. 12, 13 A very specific prophecy about the Messiah. Fulfilled in Matt 26:14 and 27:1-10 where a literal potter’s field was bought for a literal 30 pieces of silver.

v. 14 Staff called Union: The Jew’s dream of a reunited Israel and Judah is dead.

(Note: Ezekiel 37:15-23 describes the joining of two sticks: Judah and Ephraim, but this passage is not about physical Judah and Ephraim, but is about the Church/Kingdom, as can be seen from Ezekiel 37:24-28 …my servant David will be king over them and they will have one shepherd…. David my servant will be their prince forever.)

11:10-14 must have been a bit confusing to the Jews who received Zechariah’s prophecy.

**Zech 12-14 Oracle #2**

12:1-9 God will bless his kingdom.

Who is this about?

Restored Judah?

The church?

Heaven?

Any individual who has fallen into sin and slaver, repented and returned and who is now being restored and having their spiritual life rebuilt?

v. 1-5 We will be persecuted but God will protect us. Reminds of Zech 2:3-5 where God says he will be our wall.

v. 6 Like a firepot in a pile of wood. Not consumed when all around us are.

Like a torch among sheaves On the contrary, we will set all of them on fire.

v. 7-8 very encouraging. A kingdom prophecy. This is us! Luke 7:28 The least in the kingdom is greater than John the Baptist because we have the Holy Spirit. We are the temple of God!!!!

12:10-14. A prophecy about the Messiah and about the church.

Pour out spirit = Acts 2: Pentecost. Joel 2:28-31

pierced = the sword in Jesus’ side John 19:31-37. Note, God says, “they will look on ***me***” Here we see the deity of Jesus.

12:11 Hadad Rimmon This is where Josiah, the most righteous of all the kings of Judah, and the last good king, was killed in battle in 609 BC and where there was great mourning in the land. (2 Kings 23:29-30, 2 Chron 35:24-25 Jeremiah composed a lament for this occasion).

When Jesus dies and his apostles abandon him it will be a time of great mourning, but…..

13:1-9 Further prophecies about the kingdom of God.

v. 1. On that day… The day of Pentecost (Acts 2:36-41) (more on that fountain in Zech 14:8, also see Ezek 36:25 about this cleansing water)

v. 2-6 I will bring prophecy to an end. Hebrews 1:1 In the past God spoke through the prophets… but in these last days he has spoken to us by his son. This is a specific prophecy that prophecy will cease in the church age.

v. 7 The sheep will be scattered. Fulfilled in Mark 14:49

v. 8-9 A prophecy about the persecution of the church. 2/3 struck down = those who were not able to remain faithful during the horrible persecutions under Rome. Would you be among the 2/3 who lost their faith, or would you be among the 1/3 who remain faithful even though your life was threatened? (a parallel to Ezek 5:1-4—the hair—1/3 buned, 1/3cut with sword, 1/3 scattered in wind?)

v. 9 Even if you survive, you will be refined 1 Peter 1:6,7 This is a good description of the church in the first three centuries.

Zech 14:1-21

This passage has many parallels in Revelation 20:11-22:5 (especially Rev 22:1-5), Ezekiel 47:1-12 and Daniel 12. It is about final judgment and the final place of both those who obey God and those who do not. It is principally a vision of heaven and our final restoration to God.

However, like Matthew 24:4-35 it is a mixed prophecy, with some application to AD 70 (by the way, this sermon was preached on the Mount of Olives (see Zech 14:4) and Jesus ascended from the Mount of Olives)

The key to understanding this chapter: 14:1 A Day of the Lord is coming…. This is an eschatological vision of God coming in judgment. Used many ways in the OT, both as a day when God comes to deliver his people and when God comes to judge his people or his enemies.

On that day… v. 4,6,8,9,13,20

The Day of the Lord in the OT:

***Is. 2:12 Is. 13:6-9Is. 13:10-13 Is. 34:4, 8-10 Jer. 46:10 Lam. 2:22 Ezek. 13:5 Ezek 30:3 Joel 1:15 Joel 2:1 Joel 2:11 Joel 2:31 Joel 3:14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.***

***Amos 5:18-20 Obad. 15 Zeph. 1:8 Zeph. 1:14 Zeph. 1:18-2:3 Zeph. 1:15-17 Zech. 14:1 Malachi 4:5***

Zech 14:2-7 has more affinities with AD 70.

Zech 14:8-21 is more about end times.

v. 5 earthquake in the time of Uzziah (Amos 1:1)

v. 8 Parallel to Ezek 47:3-12, Rev. 22:1-5 John 4:14, 7:38 Jesus claims to give this stream of living water. An allusion to heaven—the ultimate expression of the kingdom of God.

v. 10-11 Jerusalem will be secure

v. 12-15 But God’s enemies will be judged. Look at v. 12.

v. 16-19 Feast of Tabernacles imagery. To the Jews it was “the feast.” Tabernacles = living in safety with God. All the tents faced inward toward the Tabernacle where God dwelt. The feast was a remembrance of living in intimate fellowship with YHWH.

Here is the picture: All those who choose not to have a relationship with God will get their wish. They will be shut out forever from fellowship with God.

But….

v. 20-21 A picture of heaven. The main image here is holiness. “HOLY TO THE LORD” was inscribed on the gold medallion on the front of the High Priest’s turban. Even the unimportant items in the temple—even the cooking pots and bowls—will be holy. No Canaanites = no merchants? (either that or it means there will be no foreigners… all will be citizens of the kingdom of God) . All your needs will be provided by God.