

## The Book of Zechariah

### The Author, Title, and Date of Zechariah

1. Title: Zechariah
2. Author: Zechariah (“The LORD remembers”).
  - a. Zechariah was a priest (Ne 12:12-16).
  - b. He was born in Babylon and returned to Jerusalem with his grandfather, Iddo, and Zerubbabel (Ne 12:4).
  - c. The Semitic word for “son” = “descendant”. As the “son” of Iddo (“Timely[?]”), it is possible his father, Berechiah (“The LORD blesses”) died when Zechariah was very young. See “Themes”
  - d. A younger contemporary of Haggai; referred to as a “young man” (2:4; 8:9; Ezra 5:1; 6:14).
  - e. He was murdered between the temple and the altar (Mt 23:35 & Luke 11:51).
3. Date: Oct-Nov, 520 to 518(?) B.C.
  - a. Zechariah’s opening words (1:1) were Oct-Nov, 520 B.C.
  - b. Zechariah began prophesying two months after Haggai began.
  - c. Zechariah introduces a particular night of visions given to him by the Lord in Jan-Feb 519 B.C. (1:7).
  - d. The last dated prophesy (7:1), came two years after the first. His writings in Chapters 9-14 are thought to come from a later period; however, the length of his entire ministry is unknown.
4. Literary construct:
  - a. The language of Zechariah is simple and direct.
  - b. “Lord of Hosts” appears more than 80 times in Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. In the Greek, this title is translated, “the Almighty”.
5. In the Canon.
  - a. The second of three post-exilic prophets (including Haggai & Malachi).
  - b. The eleventh of the twelve minor prophets.
  - c. This “apocalypse of the Old Testament” relates to Zechariah’s immediate audience and to the future.
  - d. Referenced in the New Testament by fulfilling prophecies! Nothing could give more credence!!
    - 1) Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a donkey (9:9) Matt 21:5; Jn 12:15
    - 2) The value of the LORD: Thirty pieces of silver (11:13) Matt 27:9
    - 3) Looking upon the LORD, who they pierced (12:10) Jn 19:37; Rev 1:7
    - 4) The shepherd is struck and the sheep scattered (13:7) Matt 26:31; Mk 14:27

### The Background and Setting of Zechariah

1. Historical (Same as Haggai).
  - a. Babylon invaded Israel/Judah three times 605-586 B.C.
    - 1) Destroyed Jerusalem’s defenses (2Kings 25:10)
    - 2) Destroyed the first temple and palaces (2Kings 25:9, 13-17; Jer 52:13, 17-23)
    - 3) Devastated the countryside (Jer 32:43)
    - 4) Israel was to remain in captivity for 70 years (Jer 25:11)
  - b. Cyrus, ruler of Media and Persia comes to over Babylon (See Ezra & Daniel notes)
  - c. By decree, Cyrus permits 50,000 captives to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple 538 B.C. (Ezra 1:1-4)
    - 1) Cyrus appoints Sheshbazzar, a prince of Judah (Ezra 1:8), governor (Ezra 5:14) and primary leader
    - 2) The captives return to Jerusalem; however, after 16 years, only the foundation was laid.
    - 3) Work on the temple came to a standstill due to the opposition of hostile neighbors and indifference among the people of Israel.
  - d. No longer in captivity; the people continue to be dominated by Gentiles but... “the LORD remembers”.
2. Physical location: Jerusalem, Judah.

### The Purpose of Zechariah

- 1) Along with Haggai, “rebuke the people and motivate and encourage them to complete the rebuilding of the temple.” Barker (4:8-10).
- 2) Spiritual renewal... Return to the Lord (1:3, 5-6).

### Key Verses

“The LORD was very angry with your fathers. “Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Return to Me,” declares the LORD of hosts, “that I may return to you,” says the LORD of hosts (1:2-3).

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“And just as He called and they would not listen, so they called and I would not listen,” says the LORD of hosts (7:13)

“And I will bring the third part through the fire, refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, ‘They are My people,’ And they will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’” (13:9)

### The Messages of Zechariah

1. God’s boundless grace is intermingled with His divine wrath.
2. “Nourish hope in the coming time of victory over the enemy.” Feinberg

### The Structure of Zechariah Merrill

1. Visions (1:1-6:8).
  - a. God’s desire for His people. Zechariah immediately establishes the context within the message the Lord gives through him.
  - b. The Single Night Visions (1:7-6:8).
    - 1) The Four Horsemen (1:7-17).
    - 2) The Four Horns (1:18-21).
    - 3) The Surveyor (2:1-13).
    - 4) The Priest (3:1-10).
    - 5) The Menorah (4:1-14).
    - 6) The Flying Scroll (5:1-4).
    - 7) The Ephah (5:5-11).
    - 8) The Chariots (6:1-8).
2. Oracles Concerning Hypocritical Fasting (7:1-8:23).
  - a. Introduction & concern (7:1-3).
  - b. Hypocrisy of fasting (7:4-7).
  - c. Blessing of true fasting (8:1-23).
3. Oracle Concerning the LORD’s Sovereignty (9:1-11:17).
  - a. Coming of the true King (9:1-17)
  - b. Restoration of the true people (10:1-12)
  - c. History and future of Judah’s wicked kings (11:1-17)
4. Oracle Concerning Israel (12:1-14:21).
  - a. Repentance of Judah (12:1-14)
  - b. Refinement of Judah (13:1-9)
  - c. Sovereignty of the LORD (14:1-21)

### The Themes of Zechariah

1. Zechariah dwells on the person and work of Christ more than all the minor prophets together. Within the Old Testament, Zechariah’s breadth of writings about the Messiah is second only to Isaiah.
2. Zechariah joined Haggai to rouse the people to rebuild the temple. If Haggai energized the people to action, it was Zechariah who kept them going.
3. Haggai rebuked the people; Zechariah came with “gracious words, comforting words” (1:13)
4. From his name, his father’s and his grandfather’s: “‘the LORD remembers’ and ‘the LORD will bless’ at ‘the set time,’ which, in a sense, is the theme of the book.” Barker

References: Merrill, Eugene H., *An Exegetical Commentary: Zechariah, Zechariah, Malachi*  
Barker, Kenneth L., *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Daniel and the Minor Prophets (Vol. 7)*  
Feinberg, Charles L., *The Minor Prophets*  
Macarthur NASB Study Bible  
Tom Vacek’s notes