

INTRODUCTION TO ZECHARIAH: A LOOK BACK TO LOOK FORWARD. CHAPTER 1 VERSE 1
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Zechariah

Tonight, we will be starting a new book. As we were drawing to the conclusion of the Book of Colossians; which the theme was “The Christ of the Church.” I began to pray and seek the LORD for HIS guidance.

I felt that HE wanted me to go to the Hebrew Scriptures next. (share two books and how the LORD confirmed Zechariah).

Zechariah is one of the Minor Prophets. Minor not because what he has to say was less than the Major Prophets of Isaiah; Jeremiah and Ezekiel, but just because of the size of the book.

Zechariah was written approximately 520 BC, during the reign of Darius the Mede. It is known as a post exilic, book or Post Exile. For reference the timing of Zechariah would coincide with the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. (More on that shortly.)

Zechariah’s name means, Ya-hovah Remembers. May his name be an encouragement to you. Just as the LORD remembered Zechariah; HE remembers and knows you too.

[Malachi 3:16](#)

“16 Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name.”

The LORD has a Book of Remembrance for those who fear HIM and meditate on HIS name. So just as we may eavesdrop when we pass a conversation and hear

our name mentioned, so does the LORD. Every time we seek HIM and talk about HIM, HE remembers it.

HE also remembers promises that HE has kept and is a GOD who keeps HIS promises. HE remembers and sees you in your trials and has promised to never leave you nor forsake you.

[Hebrews 13:5c](#)

5c “For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.””

The exile that is referred to is when The Nation of Judah was taken into captivity to Babylon. To understand what led to this captivity; we need to go back a little farther.

Turn to [1 Kings 6:11-13](#)

“11 Then the word of the Lord came to Solomon, saying:

12 “Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David.

13 And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel.””

God promised Solomon, that as long as the people obeyed and walked in the ways of the LORD; the LORD keep HIS word which to David. To dwell with the Children of Israel.

But how did Solomon do?

[1 Kings 10:28a](#)

“28 Also Solomon had horses imported from Egypt and Keveh;”

The LORD said not to multiply horses.

[Deuteronomy 17:16](#)

“16 But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the Lord has said to you, ‘You shall not return that way again.’”

[1 Kings 11:1-2](#)

“1 But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites—

2 from the nations of whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel, “You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you. Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love.”

God warned about this:

[Deuteronomy 17:17](#)

“17 Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself.”

Did Solomon seek gold?

[1 Kings 10:14](#)

“14 The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold,”

Interesting number, right?

What was the result?

[1 Kings 11:4-6](#)

“4 For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David.

5 For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.

6 Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not fully follow the Lord, as did his father David.”

Solomon pursued other Gods.

What happened?

[1 Kings 11:9-11](#)

“9 So the Lord became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the Lord God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice,

10 and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the Lord had commanded.

11 Therefore the Lord said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant.”

After this the LORD began to raise up adversaries to Solomon.

We can look at Solomon’s life and point fingers. I would never have done that. Are you sure? If the LORD gives you a warning about something; take HEED to it and pray that you do not fall into temptation.

Remember Peter:

Peter boasted that he would die rather than deny Jesus. Jesus warned Peter;

[Luke 22:34](#)

“34 Then He said, “I tell you, Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me.””

Can I encourage you also to pray for your Pastors; for Pastor Phil; Pastor Zech and myself. That the LORD would protect us from the 3G’s.

Gold

Glory

Girls

That we would be devoted to the LORD and the WORD of God and not chase or seek after worldly gain, that we would not seek a name for ourselves; or that we would seek the desire of women outside of their wives.

When Solomon died, the LORD fulfilled what he said to Solomon and torn the kingdom out of his son, Rehoboam's hand.

(Recount the story.)

Out of the LORD's promise to David, one tribe remained that there would always be a lamp before the LORD.

When this happened, the Nation was divided and became two. The Northern Kingdom of Israel, which consisted of ten tribes; and the Southern Kingdom of Judah; which consisted of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.

(Recount the history between North and South until the North fell to Assyria.)

After the Kingdom of Israel fell to Assyria the LORD had given the Southern Kingdom more time. However, they were disobedient to the LORD as well. The kings in the Kingdom of Judah began to become more and more evil

GOD commanded the children to give the land a rest; like he instituted for man back in the Garden of Eden.

[Leviticus 25:2-4](#)

“2 “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the Lord.

3 Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit;

4 but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the Lord. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard.”

GOD promised the children of Israel that HE would provide bountifully in the 6th year to allow for the 7th year Sabbath for the land until the land produced in the 8th year.

This went on for 490 years until the LORD spoke through Jeremiah.

[Jeremiah 25:11-12](#)

“11 And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

12 ‘Then it will come to pass, when seventy years are completed, that I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity,’ says the Lord; ‘and I will make it a perpetual desolation.’”

The final kings of the Southern Kingdom of Judah, had become more and more wicked; so much so that GOD pronounced a blood curse on Coniah or Jehoachin and the royal line that declared this man as childless in the LORD’s sight. See Jeremiah Chapter 22:24-30.

The LORD spoke to Jeremiah:

[Jeremiah 29:10](#)

“10 For thus says the Lord: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.”

Jeremiah pleaded with the people to obey and submit to the LORD’s judgement. The LORD promised that it would be well for them and that they were to build house and settle there.

But the nation rebelled and Zedekiah the final King before the Babylonian Captivity and the nation went in to exile, rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar the King of Babylon, and was taken captive to Babylon.

[2 Chronicles 36:20-22](#)

“20 And those who escaped from the sword he carried away to Babylon, where they became servants to him and his sons until the rule of the kingdom of Persia,

21 to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths. As long as she lay desolate, she kept Sabbath, to fulfill seventy years.

22 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom.”

As the Book of 2nd Chronicles ends with Cyrus’s decree, the Book of Ezra begins with it.

[Ezra 1:1-3](#)

“1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying,

2 Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord God of heaven has given me. And He has commanded me to build Him a house at Jerusalem which is in Judah.

3 Who is among you of all His people? May his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (He is God), which is in Jerusalem.”

Cyrus was King of the Medo-Persian empire and issued the decree allowing the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild the City of Jerusalem and the temple.

I am not sure of the exact figure of the number that went into the Babylonians Captivity, but sadly only about 50,000 Jews made the trek back to Jerusalem.

This now brings us to the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. As Ezra and those who returned began to rebuild Jerusalem. They faced severe and stiff opposition.

[Ezra 4:4-5](#)

“4 Then the people of the land tried to discourage the people of Judah. They troubled them in building,

5 and hired counselors against them to frustrate their purpose all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.”

Here we have a transition from Cyrus the King of Persia to Darius the King of Persia.

It was not just the Persian Empire, but the Medo-Persian Empire. I am not sure if Cyrus and Darius were co-rulers or if Darius followed Cyrus in order.

As Ezra continued the opposition increased to the point that the work on the temple was ordered to cease.

[Ezra 4:24](#)

“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.”

Continuing on to chapter 5 we read.

[Ezra 5:1](#)

“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.”

So, Haggai and Zechariah were contemporaries.

[Haggai 1:1](#) “1 In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,”

[Zechariah 1:1](#)

“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,”

What else can we tie to the second year of Darius?

The Book of Daniel.

[Daniel 5:30-31](#)

“30 That very night Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, was slain.

31 And Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.”

[Daniel 6:1](#) “1 It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty satraps, to be over the whole kingdom;”

So, the events of Daniel Chapter 5; the famous “handwriting on the wall chapter;” ends with the start of the reign of Darius. Daniel Chapter 6 with Daniel in the Lion’s Den takes place during the reign of Darius.

To give some chronology as to how all of these fit together.

Jeremiah, part of 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles 70 years earlier.

The Book of Daniel spans the 70 years. The first six chapters are chronological. The visions of Daniel Chapter 7-12 take place between the events of Chapters 1-6.

Daniel was a teenager when he was taken to Babylon; and he understood that the nation would be in captivity for 70 years.

[Daniel 9:1-2](#)

“1 In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of the lineage of the Medes, who was made king over the realm of the Chaldeans—

2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.”

Daniel would have been around 85-90 when the 70 years were over. He did not return to Jerusalem.

After Daniel spans the 70 years; the Book of Ezra and Nehemiah take place; with Haggai and Zechariah taking place during the time of Ezra.

Haggai and Zechariah definitely knew each other and wrote in direct contrast to each other; even though they were writing to the same people at the same time.

Haggai was on site measuring the temple. Zechariah as we will see had visions from God.

Haggai was more practical; while Zechariah was more of a visionary.

As we explore Zechariah, we will be examining a series of visions that the LORD gave him.

Many times, when prophets were given visions; they could point to a near term; a middle term or a far term for fulfillment.

As we study Zechariah, we are going to see that he has several Messianic prophecies which are all fulfilled in JESUS, CHRIST.

There could be a reference to JESUS's First Coming; HIS Second Coming or the Millennial Kingdom. Zechariah has more Messianic prophecies than any of the other minor prophets.

[Zechariah 1:1](#)

“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,”

As we bring this to a close. We will look at the verses next time; but Iddo was a priest and Berechiah was a wall builder.

While Solomon, was one generation removed from the Sweet Psalmist of Israel when he turned his back on the LORD. Zechariah was the third generation of a family who followed and served the LORD.

Men, you matter in the lives of your children and grandchildren. You are the key influence in their lives to train them up in the ways of the LORD. May GOD give us the Grace to be the men that HE has called us to be.

