

Minor Prophets: Past, Present & Future

Zechariah: Prophet of Encouragement

Key Verse: 1:14 Then the angel who was speaking to me said, "Proclaim this word: "This is what the Lord Almighty says: 'I am very zealous for Jerusalem and Zion.'"

Theme: Encouragement. Eight-night visions make up the first half of the book and bring a word of encouragement to get on with building the temple, for Jerusalem has a blessed future. A new day is coming! As God is zealous, you be zealous too.

The last half speaks of the coming of the Messiah, identified as the Branch, who will be identified as one who rides in on the colt of a donkey, and will be pierced. He will bring blessings to Judah. The prophesy ends by speaking of a future day of the Lord, accountability of all the nations, and the reign of the Messiah. The promise of restoration, blessing, and a Messiah, were good news that brought encouragement.

Historical Context: Zechariah, like Ezekiel and Jeremiah, and likely Habakkuk, Zephaniah and Haggai, were both priests and prophets. Haggai and Zechariah were contemporaries and prophesied during the time of the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 5:1, 6:14). Haggai's message led to the restart of the building of the temple after a sixteen-year gap, and Zechariah brought a message of encouragement to finish the work. Zechariah was a young man when called as identified in the third vision (2:4).

In 538 BC, Cyrus issued a decree which permitted the Jews exiled in Babylon to return to Jerusalem to build the temple (2 Chr. 36:22-23, Ezra 1). About 50k returned. The temple was finished after many delays in 516 BC. Haggai began prophesying in Aug. 520 BC and Zechariah two months later in Oct. Three and half years later the temple was completed and dedicated on Mar. 12, 516 (Ezra 6:15-18). It had been seventy years since its destruction in 586 BC.

Highlighted Verses *

Part One Ch. 1-7 God's Call to Repent and Rebuild

A. Call to Repent 1:1-6 Repent *:6

B. Encouragement to Trust God 1:7-6:15

Eight Night Visions (Apocalyptic Language)

1. The horsemen: God's watching over the Nations 1:7-17

*:10-11; :14-16 God sees all.

2. The four Horns and four Craftsmen 1:18-21

Four empires who had come against Judah with plans and intentions to destroy it. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece & Rome. (Cf. Dan 7-8) All will be ultimately defeated.

3. The Measuring Line: Jerusalem Restored 2:1-13

*:5 Mentioned in 1:17, the surveyor's line was for measuring the city, a sign of what's to come. (Cf. Jer: 29-10-11)

4. The High Priest and the Branch 3:1-10 (A Representative Priest & Governor)

*:2 Defense of an accusation against not only a person, but a people (Cf. Rev. 12:10 accuser; 1 John 2:1 advocate) who will be cleansed Rom. 11:25-27; :8-10 a BRANCH to come (6:10)

Jesus is the BRANCH = the menorah – the light of the world, a light of righteousness, Jn. 8:12. He is also the Vine Jn. 15 and we are his branches (witnesses), and without him we can do nothing Jn. 15:4. With Christ we can do all things Ph. 4:13.

5. The Gold Lampstand and Two Olive Trees 4:1-14

*:6-7 By God's power! God enables what a governor couldn't do. By God's grace the capstone will be placed on the temple. :10 this is no "small thing" you are doing and do not write this off as insignificant, :14 Since the Lord is "Lord of all the earth" and he is for us, what shall we fear? Jesus prayed, was betrayed and arrested as the Living Word on the Mount of Olives. God and His Word can't be defeated. Rom. 10:17

6. The Flying Scroll & Evil Purged 5:1-4 *:3 Sins curse. Curse removed by Jesus Gal. 3:10-14. Compare message of John 10:10 The thief... vs the Shepherd.

7. The Woman in a basket 5:5-11 *:11 Land of Shinar, Babylon. In Rev. 17 the world system is represented by an evil woman. The woman is the great city of Babylon 17:18 and will be defeated. The evil world commerce that seeks to control all will be defeated, Rev. 18. Is it any wonder why many have suspicions of the pandemic being all part of a great heist from thieves and liars, who will answer to God?

8. The Four Chariots: The Gentiles judged 6:1-8 *:5 Four chariots of judgment as in Isaiah 66:15. It is echoed in the four horsemen of the apocalypse, Rev. 6:1-8 who bring judgment. God will fight the battle for us. The colors of the horses of the chariots represents war, famine & plagues. The message is that God will judge the nations, go on and finish the temple.

Interlude: 6:9-8:23

A. Crowning of Joshua 6:9-15 *:12-13 The crown spoke of new kind of priest/king. Heb. 7 speaks of Jesus bringing a new order of priesthood, a uniting again of God as the Priest/King over his people. Not an earthly king like the nations, but one who will build a different kind of temple, not just a building in Jerusalem, but a temple 1 Cor. 6:19, 2 Cor. 6:16 of priests who give praise to the Lord for all the world to hear 1 Peter 2:9. Those "priests" shall one day lay their crowns before the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world Rev. 4:10.

B. Teaching to Live Righteously 7:1-8:23

Fasting 7:5, 8:18; Is. 58:6-9, Obedience 7:7-10, 8:16-17 & Hope 8:1-5, 13, 21-23 Put the Lord at the center, obey Him and know a new day is coming.

Part Two Ch. 9-14 God's Redemption through the Messiah

A. The Coming and Rejection of the Messiah Ch. 9-11 Prophecy is prewritten history and we hear of the coming of Alexander the Great, who is identified in Daniel 7 & 8 as a winged leopard (7:6) and a fighting he goat:9-10. Zechariah speaks of a

coming king 8:9-10 who saves his people from the ultimate enemy so that they can never be defeated because of sin, nor be separated from the blessing of eternal life in a promised land where Jesus reigns as the almighty and undefeated king. They will no longer be "prisoners of hope" and you will be restored 9:12. *9:16; 10:4, 8. The bad shepherds will be defeated 11:15-16.

B. The Return and Reign of the Messiah Ch. 12-14

A new day of deliverance for Judah is coming. 12:1:8 It shall come from the one whom they pierced 12:10.

"In that day"... 12:3, 4,6,8,9,11; 13:1,2,4 the battle will be fought and won and a people will call on the name of the Lord.

14:1 The Day of the Lord is coming. A battle will ensue 14:3-4, like in Rev. 19-20, and the nations will be defeated and the LORD who looked over the earth in 1:10 shall reign over all the earth 14:9. See the promises of a new day 14:16-17,20-21, a day of Holiness and victory.