

## Zechariah an Introduction

### Chapter 1 Part 1

8-4-24

Zechariah 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,

Zechariah 1:2 "The LORD has been very angry with your fathers.

Zechariah 1:3 Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Return to Me," says the LORD of hosts, "and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts.

Zechariah was a Levite and a priest who wrote during the return from the Babylonian exile also known as "The Servitude of the Nation" or "The Captivity", which lasted 70 years.

Jesus mentions Zechariah in Matthew 23:35:

Matthew 23:35 that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

SEE 2 Chronicles 36:15-21

This "Captivity" began when Babylon first conquered Jerusalem, set up a vassal king, and carried away select Hebrew royalty and nobles in 606 BC (notable among these are Daniel, Hannaniah, Azariah, and Mishael). The release from the Servitude occurred on July 23rd 537 BC when Cyrus gave the right to return to the exiles in Babylon.

2 Chronicles 36:9 -23

Jehoiachin was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem three months and ten days. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD. At the turn of the year King Nebuchadnezzar summoned him and took him to Babylon, with the costly articles from the house of the LORD, and made Zedekiah, Jehoiakim's brother, king over Judah and Jerusalem. Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. He did evil in the sight of the LORD his God, and did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet, who spoke from the mouth of the LORD. And he also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear an oath by God; but he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart against turning to the LORD God of Israel. Moreover all the leaders of the priests and the people transgressed more and more, according to all the abominations of the nations, and defiled the house of the LORD which He had consecrated in Jerusalem.

And the LORD God of their fathers sent warnings to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending them, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. But they mocked the

messengers of God, despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against His people, till there was no remedy.

Therefore He brought against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak; He gave them all into his hand. And all the articles from the house of God, great and small, the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his leaders, all these he took to Babylon. Then they burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious possessions. 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, 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.

2 Chronicles 36:22 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, and also put it in writing, saying, 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. Who is among you of all His people? May the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up!

SEE Ezra 1:1-4

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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. And whoever is left in any place where he dwells, let the men of his place help him with silver and gold, with goods and livestock, besides the freewill offerings for the house of God which is in Jerusalem.

Historical accounts say that Daniel met Cyrus at the gate with the scroll of Isaiah written of him 150 years before!

See Isaiah 44:24- 45:25

Two Time Periods:

1) Servitude of the Nation- which ran between 606 and 537

2) The Desolations of Jerusalem - which also lasted 70 years, but for a different reason and a different period.

See Jeremiah 25:8-12,

"Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Because you have not heard My words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,' says the LORD, 'and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, against its inhabitants, and against these nations all around, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, a hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. And this whole land shall be a desolation and an astonishment, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. '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.

And Jeremiah 27:5-15

'I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are on the ground, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and have given it to whom it seemed proper to Me.

And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him.

So all nations shall serve him and his son and his son's son, until the time of his land comes; and then many nations and great kings shall make him serve them.

And it shall be, that the nation and kingdom which will not serve Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and which will not put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation I will punish,' says the LORD, 'with the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand.

Therefore do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers, or your sorcerers, who speak to you, saying, "You shall not serve the king of Babylon."

For they prophesy a lie to you, to remove you far from your land; and I will drive you out, and you will perish.

But the nations that bring their necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will let them remain in their own land,' says the LORD, 'and they shall till it and dwell in it.' " " "

I also spoke to Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying, "Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live!

Why will you die, you and your people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the LORD has spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon?

Therefore do not listen to the words of the prophets who speak to you, saying, 'You shall not serve the king of Babylon,' for they prophesy a lie to you; for I have not sent them," says the LORD, "yet they

prophesy a lie in My name, that I may drive you out, and that you may perish, you and the prophets who prophesy to you."

The Servitude was declared because the people refused to let the land lay on the Sabbath year for 490 years, thus God took his years back!  $490 \text{ years} / 7 \text{ years} = 70 \text{ years}$ .

This began in 606 BC with the first siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

The Desolation happened because the people refused to submit to the Servitude.

The Desolations of Jerusalem lasted from 586 BC when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city until 518 BC.

The Desolations of Jerusalem lasted from 586 when Nebuchadnezzar came and sieged the city, pulled down the walls, destroyed the temple and completely carried away all that were in Jerusalem to Babylon, until 518 BC which is approximately when the temple was completed.

Zechariah was born in Babylon, and returned with the 50,000 Jewish exiles at the release under Cyrus. He was contemporaneous with Zerubbabel the Governor, Haggai the prophet, and Joshua the high priest.

The time of his writings coincided with the rebuilding of the temple during hard times. The message from the Lord indicated that even though they had seen Gentile rulers over them during the captivity, and would continue to see Gentile domination of the world during what is called "The times of the Gentiles" - Luke 21:24, Daniel 2, yet the ultimate promise of God's restoration of Israel and the reign of the Messiah from Jerusalem is always in view.

It is important to keep in mind "The Times of the Gentiles" effect as we go through Zechariah's history. Even though the children of Israel returned to build the Temple and later the Wall, there was something missing in their history from the time they returned to Jerusalem, and even today as they are in the land; A King!

The royal promise to the tribe of Judah was that through them would come the Royal line, the kings of Israel (Genesis 49:8-10). Only Saul of the tribe of Benjamin was a king outside of the tribe of Judah, and that is because Saul was always intended to be a fill-in until David was ready to be King (see Genesis 38 sordid tale with Judah and Tamar).

However, in Jeremiah 22:28-30 God curses the royal line of Jeconiah saying "Thus says the LORD: 'Write this man down as childless, A man who shall not prosper in his days; For none of his descendants shall prosper, Sitting on the throne of David, And ruling anymore in Judah.' "

Jeconiah's rule is covered in 2 Chron 36:9-10. He was carried away to Babylon in 597 BC where he lived out the remainder of his life.

If you catch that, God cursed the royal line! How then is the Messiah the King supposed to come seeing the bloodline is cursed?

David- Solomon/Nathan

Earlier in the same year that Zechariah received his visions (His first vision is given in 520 BC.), God sent Haggai with four sermons preached over four months to motivate the Israelites to complete the temple.

His messages were stern and strong and designed to light the fire to get the building going. It had been roughly 18 years since the decree was given by Cyrus to return and rebuild the Temple under the leadership of Ezra. Two years into the work the foundation was laid (Ezra 3:8-13, 5:16), but progress had stalled for about 16 years.

At this point God sent Haggai. He delivered his sermons, motivated the people to get back to the work at hand, and was not heard from again.

Zechariah's ministry began in the middle of Haggai's four months with a message of repentance and warning to the people not to follow in the ways of their fathers that led them into captivity.

The Night Visions of Zechariah came three months later and were given to sustain the building, and motivate the people with hope in the future.

You could say that Haggai's mission was to get off the couch and finish the work, while Zechariah's mission was to motivate complete spiritual revival from that point forward.

Unlike Haggai, Zechariah had a long ministry, (possibly 50 years) with The Prophecies of 9-14 typically dated as being given much later in Zechariah's ministry. (Leads some to imply two different authors. Dead Sea Scrolls chapters 8-9 not divided.)

Often called The Apocalypse of the Old Testament, Zechariah is one of the most Messianic of the prophets. In this book Jesus is presented as The Branch, The Stone, The Coming King, The Shepherd, and we'll see His Throne, His Temple, The Triumphal Entry, His Betrayal, His Crucifixion, and His Second Coming in Power!

The first section of the book is a series of visions, all in one night. The night visions are followed with a break, a historic event or intermission, in Chapter 7-8.

Chapters 9-11 are prophecies of the first advent, while 12-14 are prophecies of the Second Coming.

The prophecies in Zechariah are a sweeping picture of the history, in advance, of Israel and their relationship with God from the time of their release from Babylon to the end of time as we know it.

Zechariah 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,

Fun with Names:

Zechariah means Whom Yahweh Remembers

Berechiah means Yahweh Blesses

Iddo means The appointed time

Zechariah 1:2 "The LORD has been very angry with your fathers.

Zechariah 1:3 Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Return to Me," says the LORD of hosts, "and I will return to you," says the LORD of hosts.

Zechariah 1:4 "Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets preached, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds." ' But they did not hear nor heed Me," says the LORD.

Zechariah 1:5 "Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?

Zechariah 1:6 Yet surely My words and My statutes, Which I commanded My servants the prophets, Did they not overtake your fathers? "So they returned and said: 'Just as the LORD of hosts determined to do to us, According to our ways and according to our deeds, So He has dealt with us.' " " "

UNDERSTAND!

REPENT!

REMEMBER!