

# ZECHARIAH

## STUDY GUIDE

### AUTHOR & DATE

**Zechariah** identifies himself as the author of the book, and because of the lineage he names, it is likely Zechariah came from a priestly family, making him both priest and prophet. He was likely born during the exile and brought to Jerusalem while still quite young.



This helps explain why he did not speak up earlier when the temple was being neglected (536-520 B.C.) When Zechariah's prophetic career started, he was yet a young man, as evidenced in Zech. 2:4, and should encourage youth that they too can be used of God to speak spiritual truth into people's lives!

Zechariah's name, "Yahweh remembers," also speaks to the themes of messages he gives to the people. Zechariah's ministry began two months after Haggai and continued for about two years. References to Greece in chapter 9 reveal the possibility that part of the book was written later in Zechariah's life, after 480 B.C., when Greece defeated Persia as a world power. Taking this into consideration, Zechariah was written somewhere **between 520-475 B.C.**

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Following 70 years of exile, some of the Jews have been allowed to return to Jerusalem and set about rebuilding the city and temple. However, after a few years, discouragement set in and the temple construction ceased. Zechariah and his contemporary, Haggai, brought encouragement from the Lord not only to boost the morale of the Jews, but also give the mandate to complete the work of the temple.

Zechariah and Haggai both address completion of the temple, though Zechariah focuses on a broader scope of renewed faith and trust in God – the sovereign Lord who was right in judging Israel through exile, who has not forgotten His people, who will judge surrounding nations, and who will forever remember His covenant even when His people forgot. In essence, there is a call for Israel to return to her God, so He can fully bless her as He always desired to do throughout history.

For easier study, there will be additional background information given during specific chapters.

#### **For More Historical Reference**

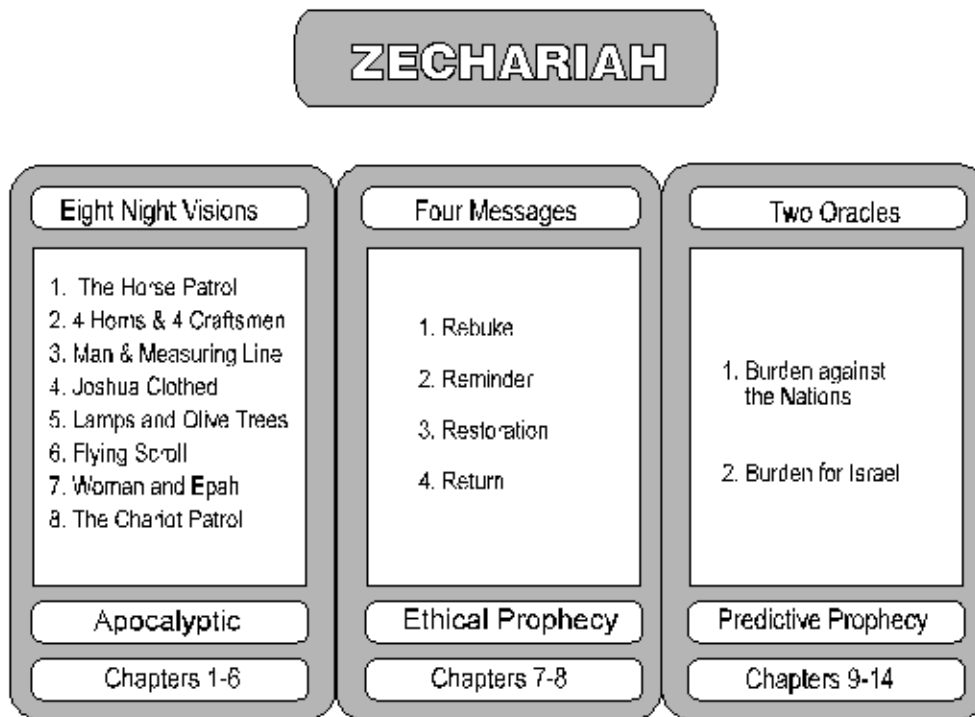
If you've not yet studied **Haggai**, you are encouraged to look at the background information given for that book first. The book of **Ezra** also provides much historical and spiritual background for the book of Zechariah. It would serve you well to skim Ezra and pay attention to what is said about the temple.

## LITERARY STYLES AND STRUCTURE

It may feel at times as though you are reading the books of Daniel or Revelation, and that is due to the fact that many portions of Zechariah describe dreams he had and messages that are **apocalyptic** in nature. In other words, it tells of supernaturally inspired dreadful events, often related to end-times.

There are also many **Messianic prophecies** contained in the book, so take your time as you read through each chapter, perhaps even reading through portions again on a different day. Allow the Lord to speak to you through this book and reveal His truths amidst the future-telling messages. Remember to put yourself in the shoes of the post-exiled Jews who would be hearing Zechariah's words of encouragement, instruction, and future hope.

The book is easily divided into two sections (Ch. 1-8 and 9-14), but here is a bit more detail.



## OBSERVATION WORDS

We are going to depart from our usual form of listing words to watch for throughout the whole book. As each chapter grouping is broken down, observation words will be included along with the chapter summary questions.

## CHAPTER 1

ZECH. 1:18-21

FOUR HORNS	FOUR CRAFTSMEN
Babylon Medo-Persia Greece Rome	Medo-Persia Greece Rome (?)

### OBSERVATION WORDS

- Lord of Hosts / Armies/ Almighty God
- Return
- I / Lord will...
- Saw / Looked / Showed

### CHAPTER 1 SUMMARY QUESTIONS

- Where do you see references, foreshadowing, or works of Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
- Write down some of the "I will / Lord will" statements. What do you learn from them?
- Describe the 2 visions of Zechariah and what the angel of the Lord reveals as their meaning.

### **JEHOVA-SABAOTH**

This Hebrew word is often translated as "Lord of Hosts" (NASB), "Lord Almighty" (NIV), or "Lord of Heaven's Armies" (NLT). Occurring more than 270 times in the Old Testament and at least 37 times in the first 8 chapters of Zechariah, it conveys an important characteristic of God. *Jehova-sabaoth* describes God's supreme power, might, warrior status, and sovereignty.

### **ANGEL OF THE LORD**

This is a title given to those angelic servants of God who are specifically tasked in furthering God's purposes among humanity. These tasks include the giving of revelations, guidance, encouragement, warnings, and the execution of judgment on those who oppose God's purposes. At times the "angel of the Lord" is separate from the Lord, as seen in Zech. 1:12-13 where the Lord directly answers the angel. Other times the "angel of the Lord" is a manifestation of Jesus, as seen in Zechariah 3:1-2.

## CHAPTER 2-3

A reminder as you read – put yourself in the place of the returned Jews who are hearing these messages for the first time. Then, apply the lesson they are learning to whatever strife you are facing in your own life.

### OBSERVATION WORDS

- Lord of Hosts/Armies / Almighty Lord
- Saw / Lifted up my eyes / Showed
- “I / Lord will...”
- Nations
- In that day

### CHAPTER 2-3 SUMMARY QUESTIONS

- Where do you see references, foreshadowing, or works of Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
- Write down some of the “I will / Lord will” statements. What do you learn from them?
- Describe the 2 visions of Zechariah and what the angel of the Lord reveals as their meaning. How does this apply to your life today?

### GOING DEEPER

#### **Chapter 2**

Haggai 2:9

Isaiah 4:5, 26:1, 60:18

Jeremiah 33:22

Revelation 21:15-17

#### **Chapter 3**

Ezra 9:15

Isaiah 11:11, 53:2, 61:10, 64:6

Jeremiah 23:5, 33:15, 50:20

Romans 11:27

Revelation 12:10

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## CHAPTER 4-5



Highly quoted, “Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the Lord of Hosts,” (Zech. 4:6) comes this section where Zechariah sees a lampstand with two olive trees. The trees are believed to represent the Priesthood (Joshua) and the Kingship (Zerubbabel), with encouragement for Zerubbabel to trust in the Lord’s empowerment (anointing oil) to accomplish all that He said He would do. The rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple will not come by man’s strength, but through the Lord’s sovereign work.

### OBSERVATION WORDS

- Lord of Hosts/Armies / Almighty Lord
- Eyes / Look / See
- “I / Lord will...”
- Nations
- In that day

### CHAPTER 4-5 SUMMARY QUESTIONS

- What are you continuing to learn about Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
  
- Describe Zechariah’s visions and the meanings behind them. What do they teach you?

### GOING DEEPER

#### Chapter 4

Exodus 25:31	Hosea 1:7
Nehemiah 9:20	Luke 20:17
Psalms 118:22	Revelation 1:12, 4:5
Isaiah 11:2-4	

#### Chapter 5

Leviticus 19:11-12
Isaiah 24:6, 48:1
Jeremiah 5:2
Daniel 1:2
Revelation 17:1-8, 20:11-15



This chapter has familiar references to previous visions of Zechariah. For example, the first vision (1:8-17) had colored horses, and so does the eighth vision in this chapter. Likewise, in chapter 3 we learned of a coming Branch, but we learn even more detail now.

While many people associate the four chariots mentioned in chapter 6 with the four horns in Daniel 7, a better comparison may be to the four horses in Revelation 6 as well as the four winds described in Zechariah 2:6 – agents of God’s judgment.

You are so highly encouraged to read the “Going Deeper” verses that they are being moved up so you can gain greater understanding of this chapter of Scripture! When it comes to prophecy – especially double prophecy where there is a near and end-times fulfillment – it is necessary to get a full grasp of the Word of God lest we fall into misunderstanding.

### GOING DEEPER

Ezra 7:11-26, 8:21-32  
Psalm 68, 110  
Isaiah 9:7, 11:10, 43:6, 49:5-6, 56:6-8,  
58:10-14, 60:10, 66:15-16  
Jeremiah 7:23, 28:1-6  
Ezekiel 5:13,  
Daniel 7:2, 11:4  
Amos 9:11  
Matthew 24:31  
Revelation 7:1-3, 14:14, 19:12

### COLORED HORSES

The colors of the horses also hold symbolic meaning throughout Scripture.

**Red** – War, Bloodshed

**Black** – Judgment

**White** – Victory

**Dappled** – Death, Pestilence

### OBSERVATION WORDS

- Lord of Hosts/Armies / Almighty Lord
- Saw / Lifted up my eyes / Showed
- Branch
- Temple

There is much debate about the “bronze mountains” mentioned in Zechariah’s vision. Tying to the book of Daniel and his use of “bronze descriptions (Dan. 2:32, 10:6), many believe Zechariah is referring to emblems of strength. Because this passage certainly recognizes the Lord’s reign over creation, this is fitting.

Others try to identify the mountains: Mt. Zaphon (north) [Exodus 14:2] long associated with Baal worship, and a sacred mountain in Canaanite mythology and Mt. Teman (south) [Jer. 49:20, Amos 1:12, Zech. 9:14], again associated with idol worship. This could then represent the Lord’s victory against all forms of idolatry, but especially Baalism. Still others believe the mountains to be Mt. Zion and the Mt. of Olives, thereby placing this setting near Jerusalem. The fact that Zechariah mentions these as “bronze mountains” could suggest that they are not meant to be identified, or that Zechariah’s first vision was at night and this one was early morning.

Ultimately, care should be taken in providing too much meaning to these mountains. Clearly the passage focuses on the roles of the horses and chariots, who patrol the earth & carry out God’s judgment.

#### CHAPTER 6 SUMMARY QUESTIONS

- Describe Zechariah’s vision in 6:1-8.
  
- What similarities do you see in Zech. 1:8-17?
  
- Compare the vision of Zech. 6:1-8 to Revelation 6:1-8.
  
- Describe Zechariah’s “word of the Lord” in 6:9-15.
  
- How does this compare to Zech. 3:7-10?

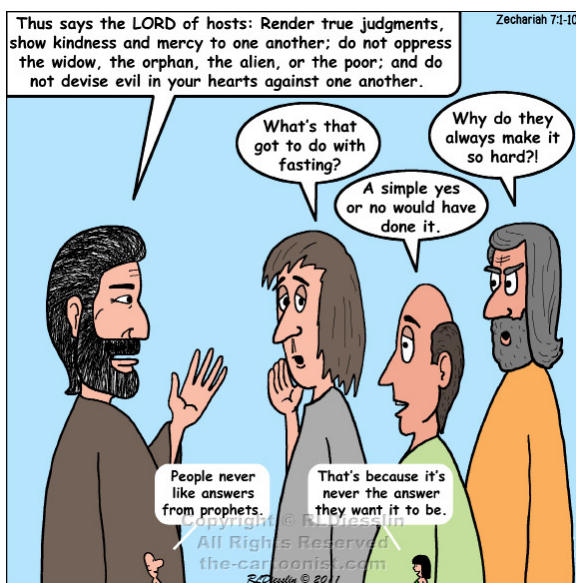
## THE MERGING OF KING AND PRIEST

During that time, high priests and kings wore crowns, but of differing natures. The scene laid out in Zechariah is a coronation scene for a high priest, but with a kingly natured crown. The ornateness of the crown described would be for a king.

Some are of the opinion that Zechariah was told to crown Joshua, the high priest, rather than Zerubbabel because crowning their governor would offend the ruling Persians. While that may be true, a more reasonable explanation is that the Lord specifically wishes to prophesy the merging of two roles: king and priest. Both times the "Branch" is mentioned (3:8, 6:12), it is specifically to Joshua. Joshua is to be a symbol of the coming combined High Priest and King who will "be a priest on His throne" where the offices of king and priest will coincide with peace, not fight against each other (6:13). This stands in stark opposite of the separation of king and priest in 2 Chronicles 26:16-21 where King Uzziah burned incense in the temple, a job meant only for the priests. Yet through Christ, the ultimate King and Priest, we too can "have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is His flesh." (Hebrews 10:19)

Can you imagine being Joshua? A crown fit for a king is laid on your head, and you are then told that this crown isn't actually for you. One is coming who will fulfill the role of King and Priest, and the temple will be built by many who are far off. Yet Joshua's role as high priest is still significant, as this coronation also represents a renewal of worship among God's people, chastened through years of exile.

## CHAPTER 7-8



It's probably wrong to laugh at this cartoon when such an important concept is being delivered to the people through Zechariah. Yet didn't Jesus do the same kind of thing when the Pharisees approached him with questions? Rather than answer the question directly as it was posed, He got to the heart of the matter.

Zechariah's response to the delegation from Bethel is like that of Jesus. He didn't answer their questions in the way they thought he might. Instead, he addresses failings of current ways and points to future worship.

A tradition was established of fasting to mourn Jerusalem's fall on designated days throughout the year. Now that the temple was being rebuilt, the question came forth whether or not the time of fasting and mourning was over. Zechariah's answer actually carries into chapter 8 as well, so we'll spend the next two days on the Lord's response to the question.

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### OBSERVATION WORDS

- Lord of Hosts/Armies / Almighty Lord
- Hearing / Listen and not listening
- Nations
- Peoples
- Return
- Remnant
- Temple
- In those days

### CHAPTER 7-8 SUMMARY

- What are you learning about Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
- What did God want from the people?
- What positive things are there for the remnant?
- Read Genesis 12:1-3. What similarities and differences do you see?

### GOING DEEPER

#### **Chapter 7**

Exodus 22:22  
Proverbs 1:24-28  
Isaiah 1:11-20; 58:1-14; 60:15  
Jeremiah 7:3-7; 7:26; 11:10; 12:10;  
14:12; 17:23  
Ezekiel 18:5-9, 45:7-9  
Micah 2:1; 6:8

#### **Chapter 8**

Psalm 126; 30:10-12  
Proverbs 6:16-19; 12:17-19  
Isaiah 2:2-3; 12:1-6; 60:3-12  
Jeremiah 3:17; 16:19-21; 30:19-20;  
31:12-13  
Haggai 2:4, 15-29  
Luke 1:67-79  
Revelation 7:9

## CHAPTER 9-11



We enter into a new section of Zechariah today. This second section is FILLED with Messianic and apocalyptic prophecies. Some of what Zechariah has already spoken seems to reappear, but in greater detail. I think you will find your hope increasing as you read the rest of this book.

The big picture on this page is from the Luther Bible. Read through Chapter 9, do your observations, and then study this picture. You will probably find it quite interesting!

### OBSERVATION WORDS

- Lord of Hosts/Armies / Almighty Lord
- Burden
- "I / Lord will..."
- King
- Redeemed

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### INTERESTING FACTS

None of the prophecies in chapters 9-14 are dated, opposite from the first section of the book, and leads us to believe that the second half of the book was written after a passage of time.

Zechariah is quoted more than any other prophet in the passion narratives within the Gospels.

Often, Zechariah is referred to as the most Messianic books of the whole Old Testament.

In the book of Revelation, Zechariah is quoted the second most of any prophets. Only Ezekiel is quoted more.

#### GOING DEEPER (ch. 9)

Psalm 110:1-3  
Jeremiah 16:19, 23:5-6, 31:12-14, 49:23-27  
Isaiah 9:6-7, 31:4-5, 60:12-18, 61:7, 62:3  
Ezekiel 26:3-5, 28:1-25,  
Amos 1:6-8  
Zephaniah 3:14-15  
Matthew 21:1-11

#### GOING DEEPER (ch. 10)

Isaiah 30:23, 54:4-8  
Jeremiah 23:32, 25:34-36, 27:9-10, 30:20,  
33:22, 50:19  
Ezekiel 6:8-10, 34:1-12, 36:11  
Joel 2:23-27  
Micah 4:5  
Matthew 9:36  
Mark 6:34  
Luke 20:17  
Ephesians 2:20, 5:5-13  
1 Peter 2:6-10  
Revelation 7:9  
John 12:14-16

#### GOING DEEPER (ch. 11)

Genesis 37:28  
Exodus 21:32  
Psalm 89:38-45, 90:13-17, 133:1-3  
Isaiah 6:10-12, 9:18-21  
Jeremiah 23:1-8, 25:34-36  
Ezekiel 34:2-6, 37:16-23  
Matthew 23:13-37, 26:15, 27:3-10  
Acts 1:18-19  
John 12:14-16

#### The Three Shepherds Removed

No one really knows whether or not this is referring to actual people. It is possible the description is to convey the Lord's keen awareness of the flock's status and replaced shepherds frequently in a short amount of time, as any responsible and good flock owner would do. It could also imply an element of completeness – that the Lord would completely remove all unworthy leadership that frustrated His efforts.

## CHAPTER 9-10 SUMMARY

- What are you learning about Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
- What is the progression in Zechariah's burden? In other words, what point is being made when it starts, what are they to do, and what will happen? What can you learn from this for your own life?
- What are some of the "I will" statements that stand out to you?

## CHAPTER 12-13

### OBSERVATION WORDS

- Lord of Hosts/Armies / Almighty Lord
- Burden
- "I / Lord will..."
- "In that day..."
- People
- Nations

### CHAPTER 12-13 SUMMARY

- What are you learning about Jesus and the Holy Spirit?
- Describe what will happen "in that day."

### **GOING DEEPER**

Joshua 23:10  
Psalm 34:15-18, 50:17  
Isaiah 10:17-18, 42:1-5, 48:10,  
51:22-23, 53:4-6, 57:16  
Jeremiah 6:15, 17:13, 23:14-15,  
29:11-13, 30:8-11  
Daniel 2:32-45  
Ezekiel 34:23-24, 36:25-29,  
38:1-39:29  
Hosea 2:23  
Joel 2:28-9, 3:1-21  
Amos 9:11-12  
Obadiah 16  
Malachi 3:3-4  
Matthew 21:44, 26:30-35  
Mark 14:27  
John 19:31-37  
Revelation 1:7-8



**OVERALL SUMMARY QUESTIONS**

- What is something the Lord taught you through this book? How will you apply this to your life?
  
- Use the chart below to make note of what visions are in each chapter.

Chapter	Vision(s) & Messages (words)
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

- The phrase “Lord of Hosts” or “Lord Almighty” is used frequently throughout the book. What do you learn about the Lord through this description?
  
- What do you learn of this coming “Branch”? What all will He be and do? What else do you learn about Jesus through this book? How is He referenced and foreshadowed?

- What do you learn about the Holy Spirit? How is He referenced and foreshadowed?
- How do the lessons from Zechariah affect your witness in the world around you?
- What items of prayer do you see needed after studying this book?

**KEY WORD:**

**KEY VERSE:**

**KEY CHAPTER:**

### FINAL THOUGHTS

You've worked your way through a book that is FULL of content! I hope you took the challenge of the "Going Deeper" boxes and looked up the multitude of verses that coincide with the book of Zechariah. Hopefully you're gaining even greater knowledge and wisdom in God's Word!

There's a lot to understand in Zechariah. Don't be worried about not grasping it all, as the Holy Spirit will continue to reveal the truths of all you read over the last two weeks. In essence, you've done the work of "spiritual canning," or preserving the Word of God in your heart. As needed, the Spirit will pull it off the shelf and open it up to you at just the perfect time.