

ZECHARIAH: AN OVERVIEW

(6:12-13 A Righteous Branch)

S.R. Zechariah 6:12 - 13

3 – 5 – 2023

Intro. Zechariah is the longest book among the minor prophets.

Haggai began his prophesying in the sixth month of the second year of Darius I, and closed it in the ninth month. Zechariah began in the eighth month of the same year (1:1). He may have continued his prophesying for many years, but that is not revealed in the text. The book of Zechariah may be thought of as a sequel to Haggai.

“When Haggai and Zechariah are compared, one concludes that among those who returned from Babylon there were some who were completely dedicated to the Lord, and others whose total commitment was sorely lacking. Haggai moved the dedicated ones to begin work on the temple immediately; Zechariah called upon this second class to repent and join in the work. ‘In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius’ would correspond to our October/November in the year 520 B.C. This would have been two months after Haggai had begun prophesying to the people, and a week or two after Haggai’s second address. The rainy season was now at hand and possibly work had begun to lag.” (A Commentary on the Minor Prophets, Hailey p. 323)

I. THE PROPHET

- A. His name means: “whom Jehovah remembers”. This was a popular name among the Jews (at least 27 men bear this name in Scripture).
- B. The son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo (1:1).
- C. He was of priestly descent - returned to Jerusalem from Babylon (536 B.C.); Neh. 12:4,16
- D. He was a contemporary of Haggai (Ezra 5:1; 6:14)

II. OCCASION FOR THE PROPHECY

- A. 586 B.C. - Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Babylonians
- B. 539 B.C. - Babylon fell to the Persians (cf. Daniel 5)
- C. 538 B.C. - Cyrus issued a decree that the various exiles could return to their own lands and rebuild (2 Chron. 36:22 - 23; Ezra 1:1-4)
- D. 536 B.C. - first return under Zerubbabel completed
 - 1. Over 150 years earlier, Isaiah had prophesied that Jehovah would raise up Cyrus (His servant) who would allow a remnant to return (Isa. 44:24-28; 45:1-7).
 - 2. Upon their return to Jerusalem, the Jews erected the altar of sacrifice to the Lord and laid the foundation of the temple. At this point the work ceased. (Use A Beka Posters from period of Ezra and Nehemiah to illustrate.)
 - 3. In the second year of Darius I = Darius Hystaspes, 522 - 486 B.C., (not to be confused with Darius the Mede of Dan. 5:31), Haggai and Zechariah were called to refocus the attention of the Jews to complete the work which had been started sixteen years earlier.
- E. 520 B.C. - The temple project was resumed (Ezra 6:14, 15) and completed in four years.

III. CONTENTS OF THE BOOK - THREE PARTS:

- A. Eight Symbolic Visions (Chs. 1 - 6). Each vision is for the purpose of encouraging the Jews to complete the temple - accomplish the work God wanted them to do - repent and obediently return to God.
- B. God calls on Jews and the surrounding peoples to return to Him in anticipation of future peace and prosperity. (Chs. 7 - 8)
- C. Nations of men versus the Kingdom of God (Messianic Foreshadowing)
 - 1. Destruction of heathen powers over Israel (Chs. 9 - 11)
 - 2. The future of the people of Jehovah - Victory (Chs. 12 - 14)

IV. STYLE OF THE BOOK (Most like the book of Revelation of all Old Test. books)

- A. Visions - several appear in the book as a means of divine communication.
- B. Angelic mediation occupies an important place in his message. They appear twenty one times in twenty verses. Angels are especially active communicators in the first six chapters.
- C. Apocalyptic symbolism is apparent throughout this prophet's writings.
 - 1. Notice similarities in symbolism with the book of Revelation:
 - a. Four horsemen (Zech. 6:1-8; Rev. 6:1-8)
 - b. Two olive trees (Zech. 4:3ff; Rev. 11:4)
 - c. Candlestick or lampstand (Zech. 4:2-10; Rev. 1:12)
- D. Messianic Prophecies: "There are more prophecies of Christ in Zechariah than any other prophetic book except Isaiah." The Messiah is presented as "the Branch" or "Sprout" of David, a servant of Jehovah. He comes as a king, lowly in spirit, providing salvation for the people. He comes as a shepherd rejected, sold for the price of a wounded slave, and finally pierced for the sheep who would then be scattered. But He redeems a remnant, and through Him the divine sovereignty of Jehovah is restored." (ibid, Hailey p. 319)
- E. Messianic Prophecies and their Fulfillment:

Prophecy of Christ	Fulfillment	
Servant	Zech. 3:8	Mark 10:45
Branch	Isa. 11:1; 53:2; Zech. 3:8; 6:12	Rev. 5:5
King - Priest	Zech. 6:13	Heb. 6:20 - 7:1
Lowly King	Zech. 9:9-10	Mt. 21:4-5
Betrayed	Zech. 11:12-13	Mt. 27:9
Hands Pierced	Zech. 12:10	Jn. 19:37
Cleansing Fountain	Zech. 13:1	Rev. 1:5
Humanity and Deity	Zech. 6:12; 13:7	John 1:1; 8:40
Smitten Shepherd	Zech. 13: 7-9	Mt. 26:31; Mk. 14:27

- F. The prophet sees and emphasizes the truth that ultimate triumph is dependent upon relying upon God and the submission by His people to His divine will.