

# Seven Bible Studies 2017

## Prophecy

### November 17: Zechariah 1-7 (Wade Stanley)

Good morning everyone.

Zechariah was a contemporary of Haggai and like Haggai was commissioned by God to stir the remnant of Judah to rebuild the temple. His ministry is chock full of apocalyptic prophecy which makes interpreting this book difficult. Quite frankly, it may be the most difficult book of prophecy to unravel. I do not know what will help you comprehend this book in one reading. So, I decided to give you my outline of the first eight chapters. Even though it is reserved for next week, I included chapter 8 since it completes what is discussed in chapter 7. I do not think that will hurt John's feelings since he has some tough material to cover in 9-14!

Happy reading everyone!

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/q0igzjagy0gyg5u/Zechariah%201-8%20for%20FB.docx?dl=0>

- I. Historical context of Zechariah
  - A. Israel in Babylonian captivity
    - 1. II Kings 21:10-14
    - 2. II Chron. 36:5-8 Jerusalem first conquered by Nebuchadnezzar in 606 B.C. during the reign of Jehoiakim
    - 3. II Kings 24:8-16 Jerusalem conquered a second time in 597 by Nebuchadnezzar during the reign of Jehoiachin
    - 4. II Kings 25 Jerusalem conquered a third time by Nebuchadnezzar and razed by Nebuzaradan in 586 – this is the destruction of the temple.
  - B. The Babylonian captivity lasted 70 years
    - 1. Jer. 25:12
    - 2. II Chron. 36:20-21
  - C. A prophet is involved in each of these successive waves
    - 1. Daniel 1:1-7 Daniel taken to Babylon during the first wave under Jehoiakim
    - 2. Ezekiel 1:1-3 Ezekiel taken to Babylon during the second wave under Jehoiachin
    - 3. Jeremiah 39 Jeremiah lives through the final conquering of Jerusalem, remains in Judah, writes Lamentations
  - D. Babylon conquered by Medo-Persia in 538
    - 1. Darius the Mede serves as viceroy of Babylon for two years (538-537)
    - 2. Cyrus begins his rule of Babylon in 536; sends first wave of captives back to Jerusalem under Jeshua and Zerubbabel.
    - 3. Construction on temple delayed during Cambyses' reign.
  - E. Darius I comes to the throne in 521
    - 1. Haggai and Zechariah appear during Darius' second year (Hag. 1:1, Zech. 1:1, Ezra 5:1)
    - 2. Darius issues decree in Ezra 6
    - 3. Temple finished in 516.
  - F. Historical events that follow the completion of the temple
    - 1. Judah remains under Persian rule until it is conquered by Greece in 331 B.C. (defeat at Gaugemela)
    - 2. Hellenization of Jews
      - a. Greek influence on the nation of Judah which eventually leads to apostasy
      - b. “The Dispersion” -- Jews scattered throughout the Mediterranean world thanks to the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities
      - c. Translation of the Hebrew scriptures into Greek (the Septuagint; approx. 250-150 B.C.)
      - d. Development of the synagogue system
    - 3. The Maccabean revolt (167-164 B.C.)
    - 4. Judea conquered by Rome in 63 B.C.
    - 5. The appearance, crucifixion, and resurrection of our Lord
    - 6. The church and its future glory
- II. 1:1-6 Introduction, call to repentance
  - A. Verse 1

1. “eighth month of the second year of Darius”
    - a. Zechariah is contemporary with Haggai – just two months following the beginning of Haggai's recorded message (Hag. 1:1)
    - b. Darius
      - i. The third king of Persia whose reign began in 521.
      - ii. Prior to his reign, Israel was prevented from working on the temple due to political interference
      - iii. Allowed Jeshua and Zerubbabel to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem (see Ezra 5-6).
  2. “the word of the Lord came”
    - a. Typical phrase indicative of prophetic inspiration
    - b. Five times in the first six verses, the message of God is highlighted by the phrase, “says the Lord”.
  3. “the son of Iddo the prophet”
    - a. Iddo, along with Zechariah, was one of the priests who returned with Zerubbabel to rebuild the temple (see Neh. 12:4,16).
    - b. Zechariah possessed the same prophetic heritage with Jeremiah and Ezekiel – he was also of priestly lineage.
- B. Verses 2-3
1. “the Lord has been very angry with your fathers”
    - a. Israel was punished for her inability to keep the covenant made with God.
      - i. By her adulterous ways, the pure light of God was obscured to the Gentile world.
      - ii. Into her hands were placed the oracles of God – she was entrusted with a great honor and failed to live up to her portion.
      - iii. Israel was given prophetic warning after warning yet continued to disobey.
    - b. A reminder of the condition Israel existed in before captivity when the fathers were turned away from God.
  2. “Return to Me...and I will return to you”
    - a. Our relationship with God is always contingent upon our willingness to turn our lives toward Him.
    - b. See James 4:8.
- C. Verses 4-6
1. “Do not be like your fathers” another reminder of their heritage.
  2. “to whom the former prophets....”
    - a. The message of the prophets prior to captivity was repent and change your ways (see II Kin. 17:13).
    - b. The fathers of these current Israelites refused their message in favor of following their own heart.
    - c. This generation of Israelites has the opportunity to reverse the trend and take heed to the word of God.
    - d. The conduct of the fathers is God's ground for appeal through Zechariah.
  3. “but they did not hear nor heed Me” They would not accept the message of

warning

4. “Yet surely My words and My statutes...”
  - a. Both the fathers and the prophets of that previous generation had long gone to their graves.
  - b. But the word of the Lord endures as a reminder and testimony of God's fidelity.
5. “Just as the Lord of hosts...”
  - a. Those who went into exile recognized their faults and consequently proclaimed God's justice.
  - b. And now, their posterity could look about them and see the effects of their rebellion in Jerusalem and its surrounding villages.
  - c. The word of God stood fulfilled by the testimony of their fathers and the surrounding destruction.

### III. 1:7-17: Vision #1

#### A. Verses 7-11 The vision

1. “a man riding on a red horse”
  - a. Man apparently rode the horse and then dismounted when among the myrtle trees.
  - b. He is the same man mentioned in verse 10 who identifies the horses.
  - c. He is also identified in verse 11 as the, “Angel of the Lord, who stood among the myrtle trees”.
  - d. Behind him stand three colored horses: red, sorrel, and white.
2. “Then I said, 'My lord, what are these?' So the angel who talked with me said to me, 'I will show you what they are.'”
  - a. Accompanying Zechariah is this angelic being responsible for explaining various aspects of the visions.
  - b. This is a common practice in prophetic visions
    - i. Daniel found angelic assistance in chapters 7-12
    - ii. John was accompanied by angel throughout the vision in Revelation (1:1)
3. “stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow”
  - a. “myrtle trees” A beautiful, Oriental plant known for its pleasant fragrance.
  - b. Trees symbolic of people
    - i. Jdg. 9:7-15 parable spoken by Jotham against Abimelech uses trees as symbolic of people
    - ii. Dan. 4:1-27 Nebuchadnezzar symbolized by the great tree
    - iii. Mt. 7:17-19 false teachers and teachings compared with a tree and its fruit
    - iv. Mk. 8:24 the blind man saw, “men like trees, walking”
  - c. “in the hollow” or in a bottom – an area flooded out, perhaps like a swamp.
  - d. God's beautiful plant – his people – were placed in a lowly estate.
4. “red, sorrel, and white” Colors are prophetically significant.
  - a. “red” color of blood, symbol of war and destruction
  - b. “white” symbol of purity and/or uninhibited victory

- c. “sorrel” a mixed color
- 5. “to and fro throughout the earth,”
  - a. God has sent his messengers to watch over the affairs of the earth, particularly in the case of angels.
  - b. This symbolism is repeated in Zech. 6:4-7
  - c. Gen. 18:20-21 Angels sent to discover the state of things in Sodom and Gomorrah
- 6. “and behold, all the earth is resting quietly”
  - a. In this case, the messengers return with a report of peace among the nations.
  - b. The current ruler of Persia – Darius I, the son of Hystaspes -- rose to his throne amidst great political turmoil (Durant, OOH, pp. 354-55).
  - c. Now, with his throne established in the second year, the kingdom was enjoying a time of peace and prosperity.
  - d. Yet this period of peace will not endure -- in Haggai 2:6-8, God promises to shake the kingdoms of the earth again.
- B. Verses 12-17 A promise of Jerusalem's restoration
  - 1. “how long will you not have mercy”
    - a. The seventy years prophesied by Jeremiah in 25:11-12 were close to expiring.
      - i. Some would date the 70 years from the captivity of Judah until the fall of Babylon to Cyrus (606-536 B.C.).
      - ii. Others would date it from the destruction of the temple to the completion of its rebuilding (586-516 B.C.)
      - iii. The Angel is probably was referring to this second set of 70 years.
    - b. Now the Angel was curious when the Lord would show His mercy toward the people of Israel.
    - c. The Lord responded with “good and comforting words”, which are contained in verses 14-17.
  - 2. “I am zealous (jealous) for Jerusalem and for Zion with great zeal (jealousy)”
    - a. Here the Lord expresses His true feeling concerning the children of Israel.
    - b. This could be taken two separate ways:
      - i. God is jealous because Israel has committed adultery with the god's of other nations. (“The term jealousy implies divine love which cannot be despised and Jehovah's refusal to be supplanted in affection by another” -- Hailey's Commentary on the MP's)
      - ii. He also could be jealous for their good – she has been treated unjustly by those nations and He will avenge this injustice.
  - 3. “I am exceedingly angry with the nations at ease”
    - a. In this case, probably refers to the Chaldeans, Medes, and Persians.
    - b. These nations assisted God with the punishment of His people -- “for I was a little angry, and they helped”.
    - c. Yet, they desired evil against the nation of Israel
      - i. The Chaldeans were unmerciful and unjust (see Is. 47:6)
      - ii. The book of Esther demonstrates Persia's malicious intent against Israel

- d. Like Babylon, Medo Persia suffered demise.
  - i. Beginning with the loss to the Greeks at Marathon, Persia steadily lost battle after battle, culminating with its loss to Alexander at Gaugamela.
  - ii. The judgment of God was exercised against the nation which acted so poorly against His people.
- 4. "I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy; My house shall be built in it"
  - a. Although the refugees had returned and the construction process was underway, God guarantees its construction would be completed and His name reestablished.
  - b. This promise indicates an obedient answer to His call in verse 3 -- "Return to Me... and I will return to you".
- 5. "a surveyor's line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem"
  - a. The line was stretched over Jerusalem prior to its destruction -- II Kg. 21:13
  - b. Now, it would be stretched once more in its rebuilding – compare Jer. 31:38-40.
  - c. In this language, God is demonstrating His endorsement of the rebuilding just as He did its previous destruction.
- 6. "My cities shall spread out through prosperity"
  - a. The Lord promised in Deut. 30:5-10 to bless the people with prosperity should they demonstrate faithfulness
  - b. He renews that promise offering His people comfort and reestablishes His name in the city of Jerusalem.

#### IV. 1:18-21 Vision #2

##### A. "four horns"

- 1. Horns represent kingdoms or powers.
- 2. These four horns "have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem" -- the four nations which have served as oppressors and captors of God's people.
  - a. Is. 52:4
  - b. Egypt (II Kings 23:28-37)
    - i. Killed King Josiah in battle.
    - ii. Imprisoned his son Jehoahaz
    - iii. Placed Jehoiakim as the king of Israel
    - iv. Forced the nation to pay them tribute
  - c. Assyria
    - i. Carries Napthali off to captivity (II Kings 15:27-30)
    - ii. Carries the remaining 9 northern tribes off to captivity (II Kings 17)
  - d. Babylon
    - i. Carried all of Jerusalem into captivity during Jehoiachin's reign (II Kings 24)
    - ii. City of Jerusalem razed during Zedekiah's reign (II Kings 25)
  - e. Medo-Persia.
    - i. Following Cyrus, prevented the building of the temple.
    - ii. Planned a genocide of the Jewish people (book of Esther).

B. “four craftsmen”

1. These are a measure of judgment against those four horns which have scattered Judah.
  - a. The northern ten tribes were scattered among all the nations because of their adultery with idols.
  - b. Judah, in symbolic language, represents the faithful of God – the pre-eminent tribe which gives birth to the Messiah.
  - c. The Lord is demonstrating His mercy toward the faithful by exacting vengeance upon those nations which, “helped – but with evil intent” (v. 15).
2. These four craftsmen will perform the following:
  - a. They will “terrify” the four horns
  - b. They will “cast out the horns of the nations that lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter it”.
3. These four craftsmen represent the nations which succeeded each empire in power.
  - a. Egypt succeeded by Assyria
  - b. Assyria succeeded by Babylon
  - c. Babylon succeeded by Medo-Persia
  - d. Medo-Persian succeeded by Greece
  - e. See 2:8-9 for supporting information
  - f. See Joel 3:1-8

V. 2:1-13 Vision #3

A. Verses 1-5 “behold, a measuring line in his hand”

1. “measuring line”
  - a. Symbolic of a rebuilding, revitalization, restoration.
  - b. Pointing forward to the complete rebuilding of Jerusalem that occurred over the next 80-90 years – cross reference with 1:16.
2. “And there was the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, who said to him, 'Run, speak to this young man, saying..’”
  - a. The question becomes, who is the young man? The one with the measuring line or Zechariah?
  - b. The man with the measuring line seems concerned with the restoration of the physical city of Jerusalem.
  - c. Yet, the remainder of the chapter carries a very spiritual meaning with it.
3. “shall be inhabited as towns without walls”
  - a. Walls were the primary means of defense in the ancient world – a city without walls was susceptible to attack.
  - b. This prophesy by Zechariah occurred in 520 B.C.; the wall of Jerusalem was not finished until the time of Nehemiah – 444 B.C.
  - c. Yet the reason for not rebuilding the wall is interesting, “because of the multitude of men and livestock in it”.
    - i. Josephus refers to the swelling population of Jerusalem throughout the first century which necessitated the building of additional walls under Agrippa (JW, 5.4.2)

- ii. However, the swelling population of Jerusalem in the physical sense is probably not what is intended – as verse 5 alludes, Jerusalem did not need a wall because God protected her.
    - iii. It is the spiritual Jerusalem, the church, which seems to be the point (compare 2:10-11).
  - 4. “For I, says the Lord, will be a wall of fire all around her”
    - a. During those years of rebuilding, Jerusalem would dwell under the protective hand of God working through the Persian Empire was at its height during this time
      - i. In 1:11, the spirits sent out over the earth reported that, “all the earth was resting quietly”.
      - ii. God expresses His anger, “with the nations at ease” in 1:15.
      - iii. The Persian empire was at its most stable point during the reconstruction of the temple and Jerusalem.
      - iv. This stability, created by God, provided a protective environment in which an unwallled city could be rebuilt and refortified.
    - b. Yet, the Lord also points out Jerusalem does not need a wall due to His protective presence
- B. Verses 6-9 Impending judgment upon the North
  - 1. “land of the North”
    - a. Refers to the kingdom of Babylon and/or Assyria – see Jer 1:13-14, Jer 4:6, Jer 6:1
    - b. The attacks of Assyria and Babylon always came from the North.
    - c. Parallel to other passages calling His people out of Babylon – Is. 48:20, 52:11
    - d. In the spiritual sense, Babylon represents apostasy, religious confusion out of which God invites His people – see Rev. 1:4
  - 2. “for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven”
    - a. During the time of Esther, the children of Israel were scattered among the 127 provinces of the Persian Empire.
    - b. From Ethiopia to India, God's people had a presence within the empire.
  - 3. “you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon”
    - a. The daughter of Babylon signifies the people who dwell in Babylon.
    - b. This was a call to His people which dwelt among the inhabitants of Babylon.
    - c. In other words, escape the corruptive influences surrounding you and come back to the land of your God.
  - 4. “apple of His eye”
    - a. This refers to the delicate part of the eye which causes great discomfort or pain when touched.
    - b. When God's people are harmed, it brings grief and pain to Him as well.
  - 5. “I will shake My hand against them” this seemingly innocuous act forecasts the doom of these nations.
  - 6. “they shall become spoil for their servants” see notes on the “four craftsmen” of ch. 1

C. Verses 10-13 Messianic prophecy

1. "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion"
  - a. "daughter of Zion" as opposed to those who remain with the daughter of Babylon
  - b. A call to rejoicing for the prospect of the Messiah.
  - c. Similar language used in Is. 54:1, Zeph. 3:14-15, Is. 12:6 – all of which point to the Messiah.
2. "I will dwell in your midst"
  - a. Different than the promises made earlier in 2:5 -- "I will be the glory in her midst" -- which refers to the rebuilding and reoccupation of the temple.
  - b. See John 1:14
3. "Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day"
  - a. A forecast of the Gentiles' inclusion and adoption into God's family.
  - b. See Is. 2:2-4

VI. 3:1-10 Vision #4

A. Verses 1-7 Consecration of Joshua the High Priest

1. "Joshua the High Priest"
  - a. Joshua was the son of Jehozadak (or Jozadak), the high priest who went into captivity (I Chr. 6:14, Ezra 3:2).
  - b. Joshua, as the high priest, represented the people before God.
2. "Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him"
  - a. The name of Satan means: opponent, adversary.
  - b. Thus, Satan stands to oppose the people of God.
  - c. He would have much to accuse the priesthood.
    - i. They failed to distinguish between clean and unclean (Ezek. 22:26)
    - ii. They left the nation ignorant concerning the law (Hosea 4:6)
    - iii. Took advantage of the people's sin for their own gain (Hosea 4:8)
    - iv. They instructed for money (Mic. 3:11)
  - d. This is how Satan apparently conducted himself until the crucifixion of Christ (Revelation 12)
3. "The Lord rebuke you Satan"
  - a. A common response from the angelic host to Satan – Jude 9.
  - b. God is the only one fit to condemn Satan; the rest of creation should not take this role upon themselves.
4. "Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?"
  - a. God has declared His choice of Jerusalem three times in this book (1:17, 2:12, 3:2).
  - b. The nation has been placed in the fires of captivity, chastened for their conduct.
  - c. Now God is showing His mercy by allowing them to return to their land and reinstating His house among them.
5. "Joshua was clothed with filthy garments"
  - a. Emblematic of the accumulated sin of the nation, which is removed (see Jer. 50:19-20).

- b. The guilt is removed, fresh garments are placed upon the High Priest and his consecration is completed with the clean turban placed on his head.
  - c. The nation would be fully restored before God with the priesthood functioning as it should under the Old Law.
6. “thus says the Lord of hosts”
- a. “admonished”: gave warning; solemnly and earnestly charged him
  - b. Two conditions which Joshua must meet:
    - i. “If you will walk in My ways” His personal conduct as high priest
    - ii. “And if you will keep My command” His faithfulness to his duties
    - iii. Two conditions many of his predecessors failed to meet as high priest.
  - c. Three promises if those conditions are met:
    - i. “you shall judge My house” responsible for executing judgment as high priest over the nation of Israel. (Deut. 17 and 19)
    - ii. “have charge of My courts” responsible for overseeing the Lord's house
    - iii. “I will give you places to walk among these who stand here” access to God would be reinstated.
- B. Verses 8-10 Messianic prophecy
1. “Hear, O Joshua...you and your companions who sit before you”
    - a. Represents a change – a call to listen, to take note.
    - b. This message was not simply for Joshua, but rather for the entire priesthood.
  2. “for they are a wondrous sign”
    - a. This must refer to Joshua and his companions in the preceding statements.
    - b. The Levitical priesthood served to point forward to a greater priesthood.
  3. “the BRANCH”
    - a. Isaiah (4:2, 11:1-10) and Jeremiah (23:5, 33:15) both introduced the coming Branch, but always as a descendant of Judah through David – this pointed to His kingship.
    - b. But in this context, the Branch is connected with the priesthood as well – a point further emphasized in 6:9-15.
  4. “the stone”
    - a. Another reference to Jesus as we see in Ps. 118:22, Is. 28:16.
    - b. The connection between the Branch and the stone is found within the context.
      - i. God draws Joshua's attention to the prophecy -- “Hear, O Joshua”.
      - ii. Then two “For behold's”
        - a) “My Servant the Branch”
        - b) “The stone”
      - iii. The Branch was first brought to Joshua's attention, then God says He has laid the stone before Joshua.
    - c. The purpose, it would seem, is to connect the Branch and the stone to the same individual.
  5. “upon the stone are seven eyes”
    - a. These seven eyes see all which happens upon earth (4:10)
    - b. Rev. 1:4 Seven spirits before the throne of God which are depicted as lamps

(Rev. 4:5)

- c. Rev. 3:2 Jesus possesses the seven spirits
  - d. Rev. 5:6 The Lamb has seven eyes which were the seven Spirits of God.
6. "I will engrave its inscription"
7. "And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day"
- a. Must refer to the crucifixion – the iniquity of the world was paid for in a single day through the sacrifice of Christ.
  - b. This removal of iniquity would yield an environment of prosperity, peace, and safety.

#### VII. 4:1-14: Vision #5

##### A. Verses 1-5 and 11-14

- 1. "...there is a lampstand of solid gold with a bowl on top of it"
  - a. Differs from the lampstand in the temple/tabernacle in three respects:
    - i. Had a bowl or reservoir on top
    - ii. Pipes fed the oil to the lamp
    - iii. The oil was provided by the two trees
  - b. The lampstand represents God's people irrespective of time: the people of God are responsible for holding up the light (Matt. 5:14-15, Php. 2:15, Rev. 1:20 ).
- 2. "on the stand seven lamps with seven pipes to the seven lamps."
  - a. The fuel for the lamps – oil – is representative of the Holy Spirit (I Sam. 16:13, Ax. 10:38)
  - b. Revelation 4:5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.
  - c. When Zechariah asks, "What are these?" in verse 4, he is referring to the lamps (v. 10).

##### B. Verses 6-10 Message to Zerubbabel

- 1. "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit"
  - a. God does not accomplish His will by human means – see Hos. 1:7.
  - b. God works through His Spirit to accomplish His will.
- 2. "O great mountain"
  - a. In prophetic language, the mountain represents a kingdom or form of government.
  - b. The government under Cambyses had opposed the rebuilding of the temple.
  - c. The interference cause by the Persian government was pompous and blasphemous, prompting the question by God, "Who are you?".
- 3. "Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain!"
  - a. Thanks to the revolt prior to the reign of Darius I, that opposing government was removed – leveled like a plain.
  - b. God accomplished this by working through His Spirit.
- 4. "And he shall bring forth the capstone"
  - a. The project would be finished despite the interference of the Persian Empire.
  - b. It was God's will that this would be accomplished.

- c. Verse 9 confirms this.
  - 5. "For who has despised the day of small things?"
    - a. To the eyes of the elders of Israel, the temple currently under construction paled in comparison to the one constructed under Solomon (see Ezra 3:12, Hag. 2:3).
    - b. Yet, this temple will see greater things in its latter days than the first ever saw in its existence (Hag. 2:9).
  - 6. "for these seven"
    - a. The aforementioned seven eyes, symbolic of the Spirit of God.
    - b. "rejoice to see the plumb line"
      - i. The plumb line is used to measure the straightness of a wall.
      - ii. God rejoices in the construction of this temple.
    - c. If God rejoices in its construction, why should the people mourn that it does not live up to the former in appearance?
- C. Verses 11-14
1. "Two olive trees are by it"
    - a. "What are these two olive trees--at the right of the lampstand and at its left?...These are the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth."
    - b. "These are the two anointed ones..."      A parallel picture is offered in Revelation 11.
      - i. They are identified as God's witnesses (see Deut. 17:6, Matt. 18:16).
      - ii. They prophesy against the earth.
      - iii. They pronounce judgment against the world.
      - iv. They stand before God.
      - v. They are invested with divine powers (shut heaven, turn water to blood, strike the earth with plagues)
    - c. Using both pictures in Zech. 4 and Rev. 11 in conjunction with the principle, "by the mouth of two or three witnesses...", the two testaments fulfill these descriptions completely.
  2. "And I further answered and said to him, 'What are these two olive branches that drip into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden oil drains?'"
    - a. Unlike the candlestick in the tabernacle which the priests had to replenish, this candlestick has a constant source of fuel.
    - b. The fuel comes through two branches that supply the Holy Spirit to the candlestick.
    - c. A branch symbolizes a person (3:8, Rom. 11:16-19)
    - d. The two branches are Zechariah and Haggai whose prophetic ministry is a part of the revelation of God and supplies the people of their time with strength from God.
  3. From the inspired word of God as revealed through these prophets flowed the Holy Spirit whose words provided the necessary encouragement and inspiration to finish the rebuilding project.

VIII.5:1-4: Vision #6

- A. "a flying scroll": represents a revelation given from God – see Ez. 2:9-3:1 and Rev. 5:1-7
- B. "Its length is twenty cubits and its width ten cubits.": The dimensions (30 feet long, 15 feet wide) correspond with the most holy place in the tabernacle and Solomon's porch in the temple (I Ki. 6:3)
- C. "This is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth"
  - 1. The "flying scroll" of great dimension – the revelation of God – contains within it a curse.
  - 2. Disagreement among translators about whether this is "the whole earth" or the "whole land"
    - a. Hebrew word refers to the entire world in 4:10, 14.
    - b. The "whole land," which would refer to the hereditary territory of Israel, is more likely because it is juxtaposed with "the land of Shinar" in verse 11.
- D. "Every thief shall be expelled" represents the condemnation of sin against one's neighbor.
- E. "Every perjurer shall be expelled" represents the condemnation of one who sins against God (as verse 4 makes plain).
- F. Verse 4: The dissemination of God's revelation will spark a time of moral reformation.

IX. 5:5-11: Vision #7

- A. "basket": the interpreting angel says, "This (the basket) is their resemblance throughout the earth"
  - 1. Vision 7 seems to tie back to vision 6
  - 2. The basket and its contents represent the condemned in verses 3-4
- B. "a woman sitting inside the basket": immoral women were often used by the prophets to represent the wickedness of Judah (Isaiah 1:21), Israel (2:5), and of the cities of Samaria and Judah (Ezekiel 23)
- C. "two women...wings like the wings of a stork": God's instruments to remove wickedness from the land
- D. "To build a house for it in the land of Shinar"
  - 1. Shinar is the ancient name of Babylon
  - 2. Allusion to Babylon as the symbolic seat of wickedness for the world
  - 3. Wickedness would be removed from Judah and it would be taken to its "rightful place"

X. 6:1-8: Vision #8

- A. Verses 1-8 The vision
  - 1. "four chariots"
    - a. Four "spirits of heaven" -- spirits of influence
      - i. Also called four winds (see Jer. 49:36, Dan. 7:2)
      - ii. Colors
        - a) "red horses" -- blood, carnage, war
        - b) "black horses" -- death
        - c) "white horses" -- absolute victory

- d) “dappled horses” -- ?
    - iii. Compare with Ezekiel 14:21 and 5:16-17
  - b. Identify with the horses of the first chapter and the eyes of Jehovah that walk or observe “to and fro throughout the earth”.
  - c. They are sent throughout the earth to scatter, destroy, or stir depending upon the will of God.
2. “two mountains...of bronze”
  - a. Mountains refer to government, the color bronze symbolizes the Greek empire as identified in Daniel 2.
  - b. Two mountains of bronze mean two Greek governments.
    - i. The four spirits who have “their station before the Lord of all the earth” came from between the two mountains.
    - ii. They are sent to a “north country” and a “south country”.
    - iii. Must refer to the Selucids and Ptolemies.
  - c. White and black sent to the North country – the Selucids.
    - i. This portion tried to oppress and destroy the nation of Israel.
    - ii. It was eventually conquered and brought to ruin by Rome (see 2:8-9).
  - d. Dapple horses sent to the South country – the Ptolemies.
  - e. Compare and contrast with Daniel 11.
3. “have given rest to My Spirit”
  - a. Once God has dealt justly with unrighteousness, He can be at peace.
  - b. See Ez. 5:13 and 16:42
- XI. 6:9-15 Joshua crowned
- A. “receive the gift” -- the “silver and gold” which are then crafted into an elaborate crown.
    - 1. These were not separate crowns, rather one crown intertwined from two elements.
    - 2. The marriage between two precious elements symbolizes the combining of two precious offices.
  - B. “and set it on the head of Joshua...the high priest”
    - 1. Here we have the marriage of religious and civil government.
    - 2. This must be symbolic of Jesus Christ – the “High Priest” of our confession as well as our Lord.
    - 3. The symbolic identity of Joshua is confirmed by verse 12, “Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH!”
  - C. Five remarks are made concerning the Man, the BRANCH:
    - 1. “From His place He shall branch out”
      - a. He would grow up as a “root out of dry ground” (Is. 53:2).
      - b. The house of David was in a state of decay (Amos 9:11)
    - 2. “He shall build the temple of the Lord”
      - a. They were in the midst of building a temple as Zechariah prophesied; this temple would be completed by Zerubbabel (see 4:9).
      - b. This was different temple as born out by Eph. 2:21, I Pet. 2:5, Heb. 3:6.
    - 3. “He shall bear the glory”

- a. “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9)
    - b. “Who being the brightness of His glory” (Heb. 1:3)
  - 4. “He shall be a priest on His throne”
    - a. Under the Old Law, the priesthood and civil authority were kept separate.
    - b. However, this man would be the antitype of Melchizedek – a man in whom was vested both civil and religious authority.
  - 5. “And the counsel of peace shall be between them both.”
    - a. There would be no conflict between the office of Priest and King.
    - b. Through His role as High Priest, He is able to bring about peace between man and God.
    - c. Through His role as King, He provides peace within His kingdom.
  - D. “Even those from afar shall come and build the temple of the Lord”: those Jews who were dispersed as well as Gentiles
- XII. 7:1 – 8:23            Questions about fasting; learn from the fathers; restoration of Jerusalem
- A. 7:1-7                Fasting
- 1. Verses 1-3
    - a. “fourth year of King Darius” approx. 518 B.C., 2 years before temple completion
    - b. “Should I weep in the fifth month and fast as I have done for so many years?”
      - i. Under the Old Law, only the Day of Atonement required a fast.
      - ii. According to Jewish tradition, while in captivity, the children of Israel established certain days of fasting for the purpose of remembering their demise.
        - a) Fourth Month, Ninth Day:            Nebuchadnezzar conquers Jerusalem (Jer. 39:2, 52:6-7)
        - b) Fifth Month, Tenth Day: Temple and City of Jerusalem destroyed by fire (Jer. 52:12-13)
        - c) Seventh Month, Third Day:            Murder of Gedaliah and flight to Egypt (Jer. 41)
        - d) Tenth Month, Tenth Day: Siege of Jerusalem begins (Jer. 39:1)
      - iii. Now that the captivity has ceased, they wonder, "Should we continue these established traditions?"
  - 2. Verses 4-7
    - a. “did you really fast for Me – for Me?”
      - i. The only fast mandated by God occurred on the Day of Atonement when they were to afflict their souls (Is. 58:5).
      - ii. So their sacrifice of food was not out of service to God, but rather self-pity for their condition.
      - iii. Fasting is not a tool used to garner God's favor, nor will they continue to curry it through empty offerings.
    - b. “Should you not have obeyed the words which the Lord proclaimed”
      - i. Once again, obedience means more to the Lord than sacrifice.
      - ii. If their fathers had listened to the voice of God rather than following their

- own hearts, there would be no need for fasting.
        - iii. The lesson then for these people would not be maintaining the empty traditions of their fathers, but rather to learn from their mistakes.
  - B. 7:8-14 Lessons from the fathers
    - 1. Verses 8-10 What the Lord truly values
      - a. These principles are well founded in the Old Law
        - i. Ex. 22:21-26
        - ii. Deuteronomy 10:17-19 For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality nor takes a bribe. (18) He administers justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing. (19) Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.
      - b. “everyone to his brother”
        - i. “Execute true justice”
        - ii. “Show mercy and compassion”
        - iii. See Mic. 6:8, Hos. 12:6
      - c. “Do not oppress”
        - i. “the widow or the fatherless”
        - ii. “the alien or the poor”
        - iii. See Is. 1:17, 23
      - d. “Let none of you plan evil in his heart against his brother” -- see Mic. 2:1, 3
    - 2. Verses 11-14
      - a. “But they” (their fathers)
        - i. “refused to heed” they were given the same instructions as these people just received; their fathers refused to comply.
        - ii. “shrugged their shoulders” they turned their shoulder to God and ignored Him – see Neh. 9:29.
        - iii. “and stopped their ears” see Is. 6:9-10
      - b. “they made their hearts like flint”
        - i. The summative result of these acts was a hardened, stubborn, rebellious heart – see Ez. 3:9
        - ii. Note that both the law and the words of the prophets were given by His Spirit – see Neh. 9:30.
      - c. “just as He proclaimed and they would not hear, so they called out and I would not listen”
        - i. The people did not heed what the Lord had to say.
        - ii. So, in return, the Lord took no heed when they tried to speak with Him.
- C. 8:1-23 Promise of restoration
  - 1. Verses 1-8 A vision of the restored
    - a. “Lord of hosts”
      - i. This phrase occurs in Zechariah 46 times – 15 times in the 8th chapter alone.
      - ii. “hosts” refers to a great multitude or army.

- iii. This phrase would inspire the reader's confidence in the restoration and preservation power of God.
  - b. “zealous for Zion with great zeal”
    - i. The Lord is anxiously committed to the restoration of the Hebrew nation and, in particular, the reconstitution of Jerusalem.
    - ii. This zeal is reiterated with the additional articulation of the Lord's fervor – His burning love for His people.
  - c. “I will return to Zion”
    - i. “and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem”
      - a) True, that God would reestablish His presence once the temple was finished.
      - b) Yet this seems to point forward to an even greater time, where the complete fulfillment would take place in the kingdom of His Son.
    - ii. “Jerusalem shall be called”
      - a) The name Jerusalem means “foundation of peace”.
      - b) Now the Lord will be expanding her name to include the following descriptive phrases:
        - 1) “City of Truth”
        - 2) “The Mountain of the Lord of hosts”
        - 3) “The Holy Mountain”
  - d. “in the streets of Jerusalem”
    - i. “Old men and old women shall again sit”
      - a) Those who by reason of age are feeble -- “each one with his staff in his hand because of great age”.
      - b) During this time, the very aged would be able to live and prosper in peace.
    - ii. “shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets”
      - a) The normal activities of children would be restored.
      - b) See Lam. 2:11, 19
    - iii. This picture indicates peace and prosperity.
      - a) In times of war, famine, and distress, often the very old and the very young will be the first to die due to weakness.
      - b) In this time, Jerusalem will dwell in a completely safe condition.
  - e. “If it is marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people...”
    - i. At this time, the remnant must think such a vision is completely beyond possibility.
    - ii. Yet, what seems “marvelous” -- to be beyond one's power – was in fact quite simple in the eyes of God.
    - iii. Such a restoration remains easy for the Lord to accomplish, despite how impossible it may seem to our eyes.
  - f. “Behold I will save My people...”
    - i. The people of God would be drawn from all directions.
    - ii. The state of affairs prior to the captivity would be restored.

- iii. “They shall be My people...”
      - a) God would once again identify the Israelites while they would again claim Him.
      - b) This relationship would be founded upon, “truth and righteousness”.
- 2. Verses 9-13 A call to work
  - a. “Let your hands be strong”
    - i. Based on the information given in 7:1, Zerubbabel laid the foundation 18 years ago and the construction resumed two years previous.
    - ii. The Lord is encouraging those who have heard the teachings of Haggai and Zechariah to continue applying themselves to the task at hand.
    - iii. The Lord has given them much reason to joyously finish the task.
  - b. “For before these days”
    - i. This refers to time period following the remnant's return, the laying of the foundation, and the first phase of temple construction.
    - ii. During that time, there was no blessing because the people were not working.
  - c. “But now I will not treat the remnant of this people as in the former days”
    - i. Peace in the land was always God's reward for those who follow His will (see Lev. 26:3-6).
    - ii. Though the nation once was disdained for its position, it would now be highly regarded (see Mic. 5:7)
    - iii. The promise of blessing closes with an admonishment, “let your hands be strong”; in other words, get to work!
- 3. Verses 14-17 God's favor comes through obedience
  - a. “Just as I determined...”
    - i. Despite multiple warnings, the fathers provoked the wrath of God because of their disobedience.
    - ii. With the same determination, God will now show favor upon their children as they seek to restore Jerusalem.
  - b. “These are the things you shall do”
    - i. “Speak each man the truth to his neighbor”
    - ii. “Give judgment in you gates for truth, justice, and peace”
    - iii. “Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor”
    - iv. “And do not love a false oath”
    - v. As we find in 7:9-10, these were all failures of the fathers.
- 4. Verses 18-23 Mourning turns to joy
  - a. “the fast of the....” The fasts Israel has adopted in order to commemorate these terrible events in their history.
  - b. “shall be joy and gladness and cheerful feasts”
    - i. What once were solemn, morbid occasions would be transformed into moments of rejoicing.
    - ii. There was no sense in commemorating events that represented Judah's chastening.

- iii. If God changed how He viewed the people and the land, then why should the people not change how they viewed their own position?
- iv. The difference becomes the change from, “look what we lost” to “look what we have”.
- v. What will truly please God will be their love of “truth and peace”.
- c. “the inhabitants of one city shall go to another”
  - i. There would be common encouragement among the people to attend to the matters of the Lord's house.
  - ii. The people would be eager and earnest to serve the Lord.
- d. “ten men from every language...shall grasp the sleeve of a Jewish man”
  - i. Because of their disbursement among the nations, the Jews would be the gateway for nations to come to God.
  - ii. We see in Cornelius, the Gentiles in Antioch of Pisidia, and other places that the Gentile world was profoundly affected by the spread of Judaism beyond the borders of Israel.
  - iii. In this is the complete fulfillment of the statement in verse 13 – the change from a curse among the nations to a blessing.

2:17-22)

## Comment:

Butch O'Neal:  
Thank you, Wade!

## Comment:

Ginger Hermon:  
Yes, this was difficult! I felt like I was reading the OT Revelation. If we do the 7 Bible Study next year I'd like to have prophecy earlier in the week or on Saturday. Friday night is tough for me; I need my mind to be more fresh. 😊 Thanks for your notes, Wade. I got 100% more from the reading because of it. Thanks for a full day of edifying the brethren. Prayerfully the Iowa College Bible Study went well.

## November 24: Zechariah 8-14 (John Morris)

Reading for November 24, 2017  
ZECHARIAH 8-14

Happy Day-After-Thanksgiving!

Below are a few comments on chapter 8, a brief introduction to chapters 9-14, and then a note about the attached PDF.

### CHAPTER 8

God assures the nation that He is still zealous for Zion, and that He will return to Jerusalem in the future (recall His departure in Ezek. 10:18-19 and 11:22-23), as will the people. The city will again thrive in days to come (vss. 4-5). So will the nation's agriculture (vs. 12). Interestingly, God foretells of a time when not only the Jews, but the Gentiles also, will seek the LORD in Jerusalem (vss. 20-23). This may find its ultimate fulfillment in the church, though it is noteworthy that the Gentiles were seeking God in Jerusalem prior to the Lord's coming (Jn. 12:1, 20; Ac. 8:27); the temple at Jerusalem even had a "court of the Gentiles."

### CHAPTERS 9-14

Here are some of the most difficult chapters in the entire Old Testament. Utterly fascinating, but unquestionably challenging. Chapters 1-8 had three dated sections, but these have no dates, so it's unknown when Zechariah received them. And whereas the content of chapters 1-8 bore upon the immediate interests of the people of Zechariah's time, chapters 9-14 have a much wider range, dealing extensively with things relevant to the age of the Messiah, and for people of all times. Interestingly, chapters 9-14 are the most quoted section of the prophets in the gospel narratives concerning Jesus' suffering and death.

If interested, you can check out the PDF containing my notes on Zechariah 9-14. Time was not going to permit a post of satisfactory length on these chapters, and I didn't want to give them short shrift, so decided to go this route. The notes are cumbersome, admittedly, and in need of revision (the hard copy is riddled with accumulated additions, etc.), but I hope they can be useful, nonetheless.

The LORD bless and keep you, and give you peace.

**Please click the link below for the 40-page PDF file.**

[https://lookaside.fbsbx.com/file/Zechariah%209-14.pdf?token=AWynLSHIWEfo2GM290DzBllmkXxkciwCvs1VcE4SNrhRTPHqwj-G0M11MYZ\\_GGUmY5XRenKoy4y3Z-tzHFU87Ykr3yLuhxOwQNRdxjuBkxerOAcTjtNQALJmPpfFbeVyb6WRHcboNuoUYfPaTSjZxu5wb36y7Y9BoGz\\_w1X3dR6T0mJVwbEsf8RnUZ5SVB47uu11hB4VNNGyZFnVpHLxWIOc](https://lookaside.fbsbx.com/file/Zechariah%209-14.pdf?token=AWynLSHIWEfo2GM290DzBllmkXxkciwCvs1VcE4SNrhRTPHqwj-G0M11MYZ_GGUmY5XRenKoy4y3Z-tzHFU87Ykr3yLuhxOwQNRdxjuBkxerOAcTjtNQALJmPpfFbeVyb6WRHcboNuoUYfPaTSjZxu5wb36y7Y9BoGz_w1X3dR6T0mJVwbEsf8RnUZ5SVB47uu11hB4VNNGyZFnVpHLxWIOc)

## Comments:

Steven Wright:

Thanks John! 2. ESV- "mixed people" I like this one best. I try to stay away from the use of the term "race" and I avoid the other related divisive/derisive man-made terms also. "I will sow them among the peoples"

1. This idea expressed in Hos. 1:11; 2:23- "I will sow her for Myself in the earth"

2. NOTE

a. God is gathering them together (vs. 8), and yet...

b. He is also sowing them "among the peoples and they shall remember Me in far countries" and some of them went to North America.

## Comments:

Butch O'Neal:

Thank you, John!

## Comments:

Ginger Hermon:

Thank you, John! Prior to this year I had very little study in prophecy. Your notes have helped so much!