



Overview

The Book of Zechariah is the eleventh book of the Minor Prophets and is attributed to the prophet Zechariah, who lived during the post-exilic period in ancient Judah. The book consists of 14 chapters and is written in a poetic and visionary style.

The historical context of Zechariah revolves around the return of the Jewish exiles from Babylonian captivity to Jerusalem in the late 6th century BCE. The prophet Zechariah played a crucial role in encouraging and guiding the returned exiles in the process of rebuilding the Temple and the city of Jerusalem.

The Book of Zechariah can be divided into two main sections:

Chapters 1-8: In these chapters, Zechariah delivers a series of eight visions that provide spiritual encouragement and hope to the people of Judah. These visions use rich symbolism and imagery to convey divine messages concerning the restoration of Jerusalem, the destruction of the enemies of God's people, and the coming Messianic age. Zechariah urges the people to repent of their sins and return to God so that they may experience His blessings and protection.

Chapters 9-14: This section contains messages about future events and prophecies, some of which are Messianic in nature. Zechariah speaks about the triumphal entry of a humble and righteous king into Jerusalem, who will bring salvation and peace. These passages are seen as pointing to the coming of Jesus Christ, the Messiah.

Overall, the Book of Zechariah emphasizes themes of repentance, restoration, redemption, and the hope of a future Messianic age. It highlights God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises and encourages the people to remain faithful to Him amidst challenging circumstances.

The prophecies and messages found in Zechariah have had significant historical and theological implications, serving as a source of inspiration and guidance for generations of Jews and Christians alike. The book's combination of historical context, apocalyptic visions, and Messianic prophecies makes it a fascinating and important part of the biblical canon.

Reading Plan

Day 1: Chapters 1-3. Pay attention to the call to repentance and the vision of the horsemen among the myrtle trees; the promise of God's protection and the future glory of Jerusalem; and the vision of Joshua the high priest.

Day 2: Chapters 4-6. Consider the vision of the golden lampstand and the encouragement to Zerubbabel regarding the rebuilding of the temple. Contemplate the visions of the flying scroll and the woman in the basket, and their messages of judgment.

Day 3: Chapters 7-9. Reflect on the people's inquiry about fasting and the message of true obedience and justice. Pay attention to the promises of restoration, blessings, and the return of God's favor to Jerusalem.

Day 4: Chapters 10-14. Focus on the promises of the future restoration, the role of the Shepherd-King, and God's care for His people.

Bible Study

Day 1 - Zechariah 1

- Why do you think God calls His people to repentance? How does repentance bring about transformation in our lives?
- Consider the significance of the visions of the horsemen among the myrtle trees and the four horns and four craftsmen. What do these visions teach us about God's sovereignty and protection over His people?

Day 2 - Zechariah 3 + 4

- In Zechariah 3, the high priest Joshua is standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan is there to accuse him. How does this scene portray the concept of redemption and God's grace in the midst of our failures?
- How does the vision of the high priest's filthy garments being replaced with clean ones symbolize the forgiveness and righteousness offered through Jesus Christ?
- The vision of the golden lampstand with two olive trees on either side speaks of God's Spirit empowering His people. How can we ensure that we remain filled with the oil of the Spirit and shine God's light in our lives?

Day 3 - Zechariah 8 + 9

- In Zechariah 8, the prophet speaks of the restoration of Jerusalem and the blessings that will come upon God's people. How can we apply these promises of restoration to our lives, even in difficult circumstances?
- Zechariah 9 contains prophecies about the coming of the King and His kingdom. How does this chapter point to Jesus Christ as the ultimate fulfillment of these prophecies?
- Reflect on the characteristics of the coming King described in Zechariah 9:9-10. How does Jesus exemplify these qualities, and how can we follow His example in our lives?

Day 4 - Zechariah 12-14

- What are your thoughts and emotions when considering the finality of God's judgment and the hope of His eternal kingdom?
- How can the promise of God "pouring out a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy" (Zechariah 12:10) impact our prayers and intercession for others?
- In Zechariah 14, we see a vivid picture of the Lord's reign over all the earth. What practical implications does this vision have for how we live as citizens of God's kingdom in the present age?

Key Themes

Restoration of Jerusalem + Temple

The prophet encourages the people to return to the Lord, assuring them that God is merciful and will forgive their sins. He motivates the leaders, especially Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the high priest, to complete the construction of the Temple despite challenges and opposition.

The Coming Messiah

Zechariah prophesies about the coming Messiah and His role in the future redemption of Israel and all humanity. He speaks of the King who comes humbly on a donkey, which was fulfilled in Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The prophet also predicts the Messiah's rejection, His betrayal for thirty pieces of silver, and the eventual recognition and mourning for Him as the One they pierced.

God's Covenant Faithfulness

The book of Zechariah consistently highlights God's faithfulness to His covenant with Israel. Despite their disobedience and exile, God promises to restore and bless His people if they turn back to Him in repentance and faith. The prophet encourages the people to trust in God's promises and rely on His unfailing love and guidance.

The Remnant and God's Protection

Zechariah speaks about the remnant of faithful believers who will be protected and saved by God during times of trial and adversity. He portrays God as a strong defender of His people and warns of the judgment that will come upon those who oppose them.