I. Introduction to Zechariah

Zechariah is the thirty-eighth book of the Old Testament and the eleventh among the Minor Prophets.

Zechariah was a Levite, born in captivity in Babylon. He, along with Joshua, the High Priest, and Haggai, the prophet, joined Zerubbabel and 50,000 Jews as they returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple.

Since his ministry began two months after Haggai, it is possible he was stirred to service by the message of Haggai. His ministry complemented Haggai's in stirring the people with regard to completing the Temple.

Haggai addresses the people, Zechariah speaks to the leaders. Under his guidance and encouragement, the Temple would be completed.

Some key dates:

August 520 B.C. Haggai's first message

September 520 B.C. Work begins

October 520 B.C. Haggai's second message November 520 B.C. Zechariah's first message

December 520 B.C. Haggai concludes

February 519 B.C. Zechariah's eight visions

March 515 B.C. Temple completed

II. Outline of Zechariah

Zechariah is comprised of fourteen chapters that may be divided into four sections.

Section 1	Chapter 1:1-6	A Call to Return
Section 2	Chapters 1:7 - 6:8	A Series of Visions
Section 3	Chapters 6:9 – 9	A Series of Messages
Section 4	Chapters 10-14	Portraits in Prophesy

Section 1 Chapter 1:1-6 A Call to Return

Zechariah 1:3 ". . . Thus says to Lord of host: 'Return to me,' says the Lord of hosts, 'and I will return to you, . ."

After Haggai's exhortation to get to work, the people began to serve feverishly. However, God's first concern is not with the work, but with the worker. Like the church of Ephesus, it is easy to be busy without abiding.

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 warns them not to be like those who heard the call of God but refused to respond.

Section 2 Chapters 1:7 - 6:8 A Series of Visions

Zechariah will see eight different symbols; each one designed to instruct the people.

Prophetic symbolism is much like parabolic teaching. The symbolism is designed to grab our attention. Interpreters must be careful when assigning meaning. These visuals were designed to encourage the leaders to accomplish the ministry (1:16, 1:17, 2:4, 4:9, and 6:13).

Vision l Zechariah 1:7-17 Four Horsemen

These are not the same horsemen as recorded in Revelation 6. These horsemen surveyed the earth. They came back with a good report because the people had turned to the Lord.

Vision 2 Zechariah 1:18-21 Four Horns and Four Craftsmen

In verses 18-19 the horns are the nations that scattered Israel. This is perhaps a reference to the nations from Nebuchadnezzar's image (Daniel 2), Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome. Verses 20-21 speak of the craftsmen who were sent to defeat Israel's oppressors.

Vision 3 Zechariah 2:1-13 Measuring Line

Verse 2:4 speaks of the promise that Jerusalem will be rebuilt.

Verse 2:5 promises that Jerusalem will be protected by the Lord.

Vision 4 Zechariah 3:1-10 Robes of Righteousness

The setting is before the throne of God. The key players are Joshua, the High Priest, the Angel of the Lord (Jesus), Satan, the accuser of the brethren.

Joshua, the High Priest is clothed in rags, representing his sin. Satan stands ready to accuse Joshua when Jesus rebukes Satan and replaces Joshua's filthy rags with a robe of righteousness

This vision serves as a beautiful picture of the work of salvation (3:8 – a sign)

"For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Corinthians 5:21

Vision 5 Zechariah 4:1-14 The Lampstand

Vision 4 was aimed at Joshua, while Vision 5 was for Zerubbabel. This vision explains how the work of God is accomplished. A lampstand was lit with oil that came directly from the olive tree. The message was, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel:

'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts." Zechariah 4:6

Additional insights:

- The work always seems like an insurmountable mountain.
- The hands of Zerubbabel teach us that while it is a work of God, human involvement is required.
- Day of small things (Zechariah 4:10), we cannot not be discouraged by the pace in which ministry happens.
- Who are these two men? Some see Joshua and Zerubbabel accomplishing the Temple work; others see the two witnesses from Revelation 11

Vision 6 Zechariah 5:1-4 A Flying Scroll

Zechariah sees an enormous flying scroll. The size is for emphasis. The scroll has five words written on both sides. The Scroll reads:

Side 1, 'Every thief shall be expelled.'

Side 2, 'Every perjurer shall be expelled.'

These are violations of the moral law of God Exodus 20:15 and 20:16. The basic message was that God will judge sin. The only escape is the cross (Romans 5:9).

Vision 7 Zechariah 5:5-11 A Giant Basket

This kind of basket normally carried grain; however this one carried a woman and had a lid. The woman is a picture of wickedness and the basket being carried away may illustrate how the Babylonian captivity cured Israel of idolatry

This became the birthplace of Pharisism; and introduced the new threat of dead orthodoxy.

Vision 8 Zechariah 6:1-8 Four Chariots

The four chariots came from between two mountains of bronze. This would indicate judgment. These chariots are different than the four horses in Revelation. The chariot horses were spiritual beings. There is a spiritual arena that we are often not aware of. In 2 Kings 6:17 Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."

Hebrews explains these spirit beings are sent by God to minister to us. They do the will of God. Here, it seems they conquer.

Section 3 Chapters 6:9 – 8 A Series of Messages

Message 1 Zechariah 6:9-15 God Speaks, He tells Zechariah to take silver and gold to make a crown and place it on the High Priest. A Priest-King is a picture of Jesus. Verses 12-13 tell of the Messiah coming to build the Temple and rule in righteousness. Today, Orthodox Jews believe the man who builds the Temple is Messiah. Daniel 9 reveals the problem they will encounter with the Antichrist.

Message 2 Zechariah 7:1-7 Two years later, God speaks again. A group of men come to the Temple to pray to the Lord with questions about fasting (7:3).

The question for us is what is fasting?

- Denying the body appetites
- Putting spiritual needs above physical needs

The men who prayed asked should we fast. God's reply is in 7:4-7 In the past did you really fast for God. What role do spiritual exercises play in your life?

- They do not replace obedience.
- A day of fasting does not replace a lifestyle of sin.
- Fasting must be accompanied by obedience.
- How is this accomplished? The answer may be found in Matthew 6, Daniel 10:3, Isaiah 58:3 and 58:5-7

Message 3 Zechariah 7:8-14 Reason for the Captivity

They refused to hear. God was speaking, but they did not want to hear what He was saying. They had stopped their ears. How does this happen to us? We do not hear God when we are not in His Word.

Message 4 Zechariah 8:1-19 Promise that Jerusalem Will Be Restored

Verse 8:1 tells us that God is zealous and will return, restore and reign. Zechariah 8:4-5 speaks of peace.

God speaks a message to the workers, "Let your hands be strong, you who have been hearing in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets, who *spoke* in the day the foundation was laid for the house of the LORD of hosts, that the temple might be built."

The message of Christ return should always stir us to more diligent work.

Zechariah 8:18-22 fasting is associated with repentance

Zechariah 8:19 feasting is associated with righteousness

Message 5 Zechariah 9 Judgment Against Nations

Zechariah 9:3 is the prophetic pronouncement on Tyre

Zechariah 9:9 tells of Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. Zechariah explains the date, the way, the response. The people praised Jesus without a true surrender.

Zechariah 9:11 "Because of the blood of your covenant"

What is true of us because of the blood. We were:

Dead in sin
 Followed the world
 Follow Christ
 Controlled by the flesh
 Under wrath
 Without Christ
 Stranger of the promises
 Without hope
 Made alive
 Follow Christ
 Led by the Spirit
 Under grace
 In Christ
 Called Friend
 Hope of Heaven

Section 4 Chapters 10-14 Portraits in Prophesy

Although we might not be as familiar with Zechariah as we are with some other biblical text, you will recognize much of the prophecies we cover. Zechariah gives a very detailed description of Christ.

Zechariah 10 Zechariah is exhorting the people to seek the Lord. Sadly, many realize their spiritual needs, but are searching in all the wrong places. They looked anywhere except the Bible. Some look elsewhere because they do not like what they find when they open the Bible.

Verse 10:2 Speaks of the people being deluded or deceived

Verse 10:4 Presents the solution: the Cornerstone. Isaiah gives further detail in Isaiah 28:16

Portrait 1 Zechariah 10:4 Christ the Cornerstone

"Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation; whoever believes will not act hastily."

Peter quotes this verse and expounds on it in 1 Peter 2:6-8

Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture,

"Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame. Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone, and "A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed."

Peter also adds Psalm 118:22 "The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone."

Jesus explains in Luke 20 that he was the rejected cornerstone. The key point is that our lives must be built on the foundation of Jesus and His Word. Any other foundation may stand the test of time, but will not stand up to the test of eternity.

Portrait 2 Zechariah 11 Christ the Shepherd
The first six verses of Chapter 11 point to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

Zechariah then portraits a Shepherd carrying two staffs. One called 'Beauty' and the 'Bond.' These were used to feed the flock. Then 'Beauty' is broken and our attention turns to Jesus. Verses 12 and 13, "Then I said to them, 'If it is agreeable to you, give *me* my wages; and if not, refrain.' So they weighed out for my wages thirty *pieces* of silver. And the LORD said to me, 'Throw it to the potter'—that princely price they set on me. So I took the thirty *pieces* of silver and threw them into the house of the LORD for the potter.

Matthew 27:3-8 makes it clear that this is a portrait of Christ. Acts 1:18 gives further insight.

Portrait 3 Zechariah 12 Jerusalem

Moving into Chapter 12, Zechariah speaks of the attention Jerusalem will receive in the end times.

Today we see this clearly. The circumstances in Israel are not true of any other time since Christ. Although Jerusalem is an insignificant city in terms of wealth, beauty, commerce, or industry, it is the focal point receiving worldwide attention.

The Muslims claim it as theirs even though there is no mention of it in the Koran. The ascension of Mohamed is a modern teaching.

The Jews of course claim Jerusalem as theirs. It is mentioned 798 in Scripture.

This, in Zechariah 12:3 makes Jerusalem a heavy stone. He speaks of the hostility rising and yet God protects His people.

Zechariah 12:16 "whom they pierced." Zechariah wrote over 400 years before Christ, and yet, he refers to the cross.

In John's (19:36-37 gospel we read, "For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, 'Not one of His bones shall be broken. And again another Scripture says, 'They shall look on Him whom they pierced.'"

David also spoke of the cross in Psalm 22:14-18 "I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; and My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots."

As did Isaiah in Isaiah 53:4-6 "Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Portrait 4 Zechariah 13 False Prophets
Chapter 13 begins warning again of the false prophets. Verse 4 speaks of the false prophets
not wearing the traditional clothing of a prophet for fear, because they had deceived the
people.

Chapter 13:7 brings our attention back to Christ. This section of Scripture brings to mind Peter's denial of Christ as told in Mark 14:27, 29, and 31. The steps Peter took to bring himself to that place: pride, sleep, distance, enemy, warnings

Portrait 5 Zechariah 14 The Portrait Not Yet Fulfilled Zechariah 14:1-4 "Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, and your spoil will be divided in your midst. For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south."

III. Why Study Zechariah

"Encouragement and hope are the underlying themes of the prophecies of Zechariah." When the Jews returned to Jerusalem they faced the ruins of what had once been a splendid city and glorious Temple. There was much to be sad about, but Zechariah encouraged them with visions of judgment on Israel's enemies, and of the complete restoration of the city of Jerusalem. Yet the most thrilling vision of all was the prediction of a coming King – the Messiah who would bring eternal salvation and the promised eternal kingdom. This is the overarching theme of the book. The complete restoration of God's people would occur in the redeeming and delivering work of the coming Messiah

IV. Jesus in Zechariah

Jesus has a prominent role in the book of Zechariah. Both His first and second coming are mentioned. He speaks of Jesus triumphal entry into Jerusalem, arriving on a colt (9:9) and His betrayal for thirty of pieces of silver. (11:12-13), the piercing of His hands and feet (12:10), and the cleansing from sin provided by His death (13:1)

His second coming is found in verses 12:10 – 13:1, 9 also 14:3, 14:9, 16

Jesus' many names are spoken of in Zechariah; Messiah, BRANCH (3:8), Servant (3:8), Shepherd (13:7), Priest-King (6:13).