

## **"ZECHARIAH, WALK THRU THE BIBLE."**

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**First Christian Reformed Church, Lynden, WA**

**November 16, 2025, 6:00 pm**

**Text for Sermon: Zechariah 1:1-6; 16-17; 9:9; 12:10; 13:1**

### **Introduction.**

We come this evening to the penultimate OT prophet. Only Malachi remains.

After 70 long years of captivity in Babylon under oppressive foreign rule, God raised up the Persian empire to defeat the Babylonian empire. Under the new pagan king of Persia, Cyrus and later Darius allow God's people to start returning to Judah and Jerusalem. They are completely unaware they are pawns in God's grand redemptive purposes for Israel and the world.

Under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah, and Zerubbabel and Joshua the people return. Only about 50,000 Jews out of a few million return. But what they go back to is nothing like what they left. Their homeland is destroyed, it is no longer that Promised Land flowing with milk and honey, olive oil and pomegranates. Jerusalem, the city of God is laid waste and her walls are torn down, a symbol of shame and defeat. Their temple of worship, the house of God is completely destroyed and looted. Her former glory is gone.

To make matters worse the Samaritans have them hemmed in on the north and hate the presence of the Jews and so are constantly harassing them. The Jews were isolated and small. The people were quickly defeated, dejected, in despair. Where is their God in all this?

God then raises up two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, to accompany God's people back home. God sends messengers of hope, calling them to start again, to rebuild. The first message was delivered by Haggai and a couple of months later a second message comes from Zechariah.

Haggai encouraged the people to rebuild the temple based on making God their first priority. Zechariah encouraged the people to rebuild the temple based on the future to show the hope they have because of who God is and what God is going to do through His people.

The context is the same, but their messages are very different. God always has more to say. Their return and their rebuilding are not just about the present. God is going to rekindle hope in God's covenant with Israel, hope in the kingdom, hope in the priesthood, hope in Israel's worship, all of this grounded in the hope of a Messiah.

Zechariah is the most major of all the minor prophets. It is the longest of all the minor prophets and it is the most messianic of all the minor prophets and second only to Isaiah in messianic references and in being quoted or alluded to in the NT, over 60 times. The New Testament authors saw Jesus everywhere in Zechariah.

### **Apocalyptic Literature.**

Zechariah is also sort of an OT version of the NT book Revelation. There are many close parallels and similar symbols and figures of speech. There are four horsemen on different colored horses, a stone with seven eyes, there lampstands, olive trees, measuring lines, flying scrolls and seals with curses and judgments.

Like parts of Ezekiel, Daniel and Revelation, Zechariah has highly figurative language, and highly eschatological themes, meaning it looks to the future, and sometimes to the distant future. These are all characteristics of apocalyptic literature. God often uses apocalyptic prophecy when He wants to give prophecy about things in the distant future.

So how do we read apocalyptic literature? First, chill out, just relax and read. Don't try to analyze it and figure it out. Just let the Word come to you and happen to you and leave you in awe at the mystery and majesty of God and His ways and His thoughts. God is God.

### **Christological Hope.**

OT people were given pieces of the puzzle of God's redemptive purposes, but they did not know how to bring them together. They see the hope but they long to see what it really means. Only in the incarnation were all the pieces put together into a coherent whole and brought to life in one person.

We should be thankful we live on this side of the NT and we have the wisdom and interpretation of the apostles to help us decipher and discern the OT. Though the NT you will see in Zechariah allusions and foreshadowing's of Jesus, Palm Sunday, the crucifixion, Judas' betrayal, Satan.

Let's look more closely at these OT puzzle pieces in Zechariah and what they point to for us and beyond us.

When the Babylonians sacked Jerusalem, they destroyed the Temple and the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark was never restored or rebuilt. (No, Indian Jones did not find it.) This meant that since the destruction of Solomon's temple in 586 BC the Jews have not been able to observe the Day of Atonement according to the Law of Moses.

Without the Ark there is no mercy seat.

Without the mercy seat there can be no sprinkling of the atoning blood of the substitutionary sacrifice.

Without the sprinkling of the atoning blood on the Day of Atonement, there can be no annual covering for the guilt of sin.

Without the covering of sin by the sprinkling of the blood, there can be no forgiveness.

Without forgiveness there can be no peace with God.

Without peace with God they can have no legitimate claim to be part of the true Israel, the true people of God.

They have no king, they have no fully functioning priesthood. They are back in the land, they have rebuilt the temple, but there is no Shekinah glory that declares them as God's covenant people. God's presence was not manifested among them as before.

Without peace or hope, this prophecy becomes all the more profound when God speaks. Hear His voice with the ears of this small hopeless remnant in Jerusalem.

**Zechariah 12:10** I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.

The house of David will be raised up, with its king and kingdom. The Messiah will come and will be pierced and killed by His own people. God will cause Israel to be convicted of their sin. Israel will weep and call upon God for forgiveness.

And then:

**Zechariah 13:1** On that day there shall be *a fountain opened* for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.

**John 19:34, 36-37** But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. ... 36 For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken." 37 And again another Scripture says, "They will look on him whom they have pierced."

**Revelation 1:7** Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him.

This points directly to the agonizing death of Jesus, the Son of God, by crucifixion and the piercing of His side. Israel's curse will be removed, she will be cleansed of her sin and uncleanness. And God will once again dwell in her midst in great glory.

And add to this, yet another amazing promise and prophecy:

**Zechariah 3:9** I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day.

**Hebrews 9:24-26** For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. 25 Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, 26 for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, *he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*

But there is more. The former meager return of the people of God to Jerusalem, anticipates a future day.

**Zechariah 2:10-11** Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for behold, I come and I will dwell in your midst, declares the Lord. 11 *And many nations* shall join themselves to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people. And I will dwell in your midst, and you shall know that the Lord of hosts has sent me to you.

There is a coming day of the inclusion of Gentile nations on a massive scale.

**Ephesians 3:6** This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Equal members, equal heirs of salvation.

But what about the temple? Where is that latter glory Haggai spoke of that will be greater than the former glory of Solomon's temple.

Fear not, for I purpose to do you good, says the Lord.

**Zechariah 8:13–15** And as you have been a byword of cursing among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing. Fear not, ... *I have purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; fear not.*"

**Ephesians 2:19-22** You are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

**I Peter 2:5-6** You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For it stands in Scripture:

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

Are we apart of the new temple being built by God.

The future glory of His temple will far exceed the glory of the last, and it was exceedingly great.

This foreshadows a far more glorious dwelling place that will be filled with the Holy Spirit.

**I Corinthians 3:16-17** Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? 17 ... God's temple is holy, and you are that temple.

God's redeeming work on earth includes all the peoples of the earth when all the sins will be covered and removed by that cleansing fountain of the Messiah who will be the anointed King from the line of David, and the sacrificial priestly king. He will not enter the throne room once a year to make atonement, but He will remain permanently seated on the throne at the right hand of God. This great high priest and reigning King will build the temple of the Lord.

That glorious future belongs to all who humble themselves before God, and receive His atonement, His Messiah, as our great high priest and king.

**Zechariah 9:9** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!

Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is he, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

### **Implications and application.**

We forget the profound implications of what God has done to have a relationship with us, of the implications of God being our God and we being God's people.

The opening of the fountain is the most important promise because all the other benefits promised to Israel (and to us) flow from this one. Zechariah couldn't see the whole picture and how the pieces fit together, but God showed him this much: if anybody is going to be saved from sin, a new fountain must be opened.

We will be rescued and redeemed and cleansed by the sacrifice of Jesus who has become our great high priest. Because of Him, we have access to the holy of holies, to the mercy seat, to His holy presence. We are guaranteed an inheritance kept in heaven for us. We are a part of His holy temple and we have a part in building His holy temple.

I love the prophecy of Zechariah and especially the Messianic prophecies that 500 years before the Christ testify to the sovereignty of God and His faithfulness to His redemptive purposes and promises. God has been and is always working His plan for history and His glory.

We live in a time increasingly characterized by despair and hopelessness. We listen to the politicians try to capitalize on the despair and tell us how they can bring hope. We look again and again to man, to some person, to the next president or governor or pastor or leader, someone in whom we can put our trust and find hope. As Zechariah says, there's no hope in turning to our fathers, to man, only to God.

We must look to the creator and sustainer of all the earth, to the architect and master designer, to the sovereign God who has a plan and is fulfilling that plan.

Judah's future and our future depend on a king, a new King who lives and reigns on high and who is coming again.

One of the great themes of the Bible is that we are always forgetting and that God is always reminding us. We sin by forgetting, we repent by remembering. What God has promised He has done and what He has promised He will do. Truly the best is yet to come.

Zechariah deals with the past and future, looking back and looking forward. God shows us how He dealt with the past so we can know with confidence He is in complete control of the future with a plan and a purpose.

This is good news for those haunted by the past and for those anxious of the future. We must understand our past and our future in relationship with Jesus.

Have you looked at the fountain of blood and water, flowing from the one who was pierced to cleanse us from sin and uncleanness? Have you received the gift of God's grace in repentance that leads to salvation and eternal life in the kingdom of God through the King, who is the Son of David, our Emmanuel, who is God with us? If you claim for yourself the first promise, all the other promises of God are opened up to you.

Christ has dealt with all our sins and all our guilt and has paid the price and removed the penalty of all our sins.

Sometimes the point of a biblical passage isn't just to tell us what to do, but to leave us thunderstruck, awestricken at what God has done for us.

You can also rest secure about your future because you know who holds your future and that He who holds it is faithful and true. Look for a better world with "foundations, whose architect and builder is God" (Heb.11:10).