

Laying the Foundation

Intro Material for Zechariah

Sunday Morning Fellowship 2019

WEEK 1

Trivial information on the Book of Zechariah

- There are 25 Zechariah's mentioned in all of Scripture. **Zechariah means**, "*He whom Yahweh remembers.*"
- Of the 10 OT books quoted in the OT, Zechariah is the **second most quoted prophet**, being quoted 7 times. He comes in second place to Isaiah, who is quoted 55 times. The Psalms win first place with being quoted 68 times!
- Our beloved **Martin Luther called the book of Zechariah**: "*The quintessence of Old Testament prophecy*".
- **Zechariah is the longest** of the Minor Prophet books with a total of **14** chapters.
- **Zechariah holds the record** of a prophet receiving the **most visions at once: 8 visions** in a 24-hour period! He also has an **advantage** with an "*angel of the Lord*" interpreting the visions for him & their context of the age.
- Apart from Ezekiel, **Zechariah influenced John** in his writing of Revelation more than any other prophetic book.
- **Haggai and Zechariah** were prophets at the same time – preaching to the same audience under the same historical circumstances. They are mentioned serving together in Ezra 5:1 & 6:14,
- **Zechariah teaches the need for covenant obedience** for God's people in every aspect of their living and the blessings that would follow from it if they stayed true to God's word – a *common and extremely important theme for the entire BIBLE.*

Zechariah in Old Testament History

- In the OT, the books are **divided into 5 categories**:

<i>Category</i>	<i>Books</i>	<i>#</i>
○ Pentateuch (The Law)	Genesis – Deuteronomy	5
○ The Historical Books	Joshua – Esther	12
○ Poetry and Wisdom	Job – Song of Solomon	5
○ Major Prophets	Isaiah – Daniel	5
○ Minor Prophets	Hosea – Malachi	12

- With the **history and chronology of God's people, Israel, there are several KEY events** we need to review in order for the PLACEMENT of Zechariah, the second to last book of the OT, to make sense:
 - The exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12) = **1440 BC**
 - The conquest of Canaan/period of the judges = **1100 BC**
 - King David dies in 1 Kings 2 = **960 BC**
 - After reigning for 29 years, the sin of Solomon, and his son, Rehoboam, divides the kingdom = **931 BC**
 - Israel in the North, Judah in the South
 - **1 Kings 11:1-8 & 12:16-20**

- Israel reigns with 19 wicked kings until Assyria captures and deports them (1 & 2 Kings follow them) 722 BC
 - **2 Kings 17:6**
- Judah reigns with 19 righteous kings (for the most part, far better than Israel) until Babylon captures and deports them (1 & 2 Chronicles follow them) 606 BC
 - **2 Kings 24:10, 14-17**
 - This is where the book of Daniel picks up
- The captivity lasts 70 years as Jeremiah predicted & God's people are released by Cyrus, King of Persia and Darius the Mede in Ezra 1 & 2. 538 BC
- The exiles return to Jerusalem in 3 groups:
 - Zerubbabel 538 BC
 - Ezra 458 BC
 - Nehemiah 445 BC

Zechariah the person

- Like most Biblical prophets, we aren't given much information about them. *Here's what we do know about Zechariah:*
 - **First**, Zechariah was a member of a priestly family.
 - **Second**, Zechariah was young when he became a prophet. We're never told his exact age when he starts, nor are we told when or how old he is when he dies. In **Zechariah 2:4**, he is addressed in the Hebrew as "*na-ar*", translated "*young man*." It can also mean "*boy, lad, or youth*". The same word is used by Saul for David in 1 Samuel 17:33. We're never told if he had a family or exactly how long he ministered. Most scholars agree that his ministry lasted around 4 years until the completion of the temple around **515 BC** since he makes no mention of it being finished.
 - **Third**, Zechariah's father died at an early age. Zechariah is called the "*son of Berechiah, son of Iddo*" in **Zechariah 1:1**. However, in Ezra 5:1 & 6:14, he's called "*Bar-Iddo*", meaning "*Son of Iddo*." Because of this tagline, his father had died early, unable to perform any priestly duties to pass down to Zechariah.

Zechariah the prophet

- **The book is divided into 4 sections:**
 - Introductory address and call to repentance: **1:1-6**
 - Series of 8 visions from the Lord: **1:6 – end of Ch 6**
 - Public address to the people: **Ch's 7-8**
 - Eschatological prophecy of the days to come: **Ch's 9-14**
- **The visions we're going to cover are strange, but in them, we see that:**
 - The Lord had not forgotten his people, He is the RIGHTEOUS BRANCH holding them up. He will protect them, overthrow all their enemies, and provide for them in every way – **especially by sending His Son**, who makes subtle and humble appearances through the future visions Zechariah is given as the:

- One who will be their Divine Warrior and Righteous Branch **(9:1-8)**
- One who will pour out his Spirit upon them, resulting in repentance and the cleansing of sin **(12:10-13:1)**
- One who can remove all idolatry from their hearts **(13:2-6)**
- One who will be their Shepherd king **(13:7)**
- One who will be betrayed and pierced **(11:12-13)**
- One who will subdue the nations forever **(12:8-9, Ch 14)**
- One who will establish his kingdom among men **(14:3-9)**