

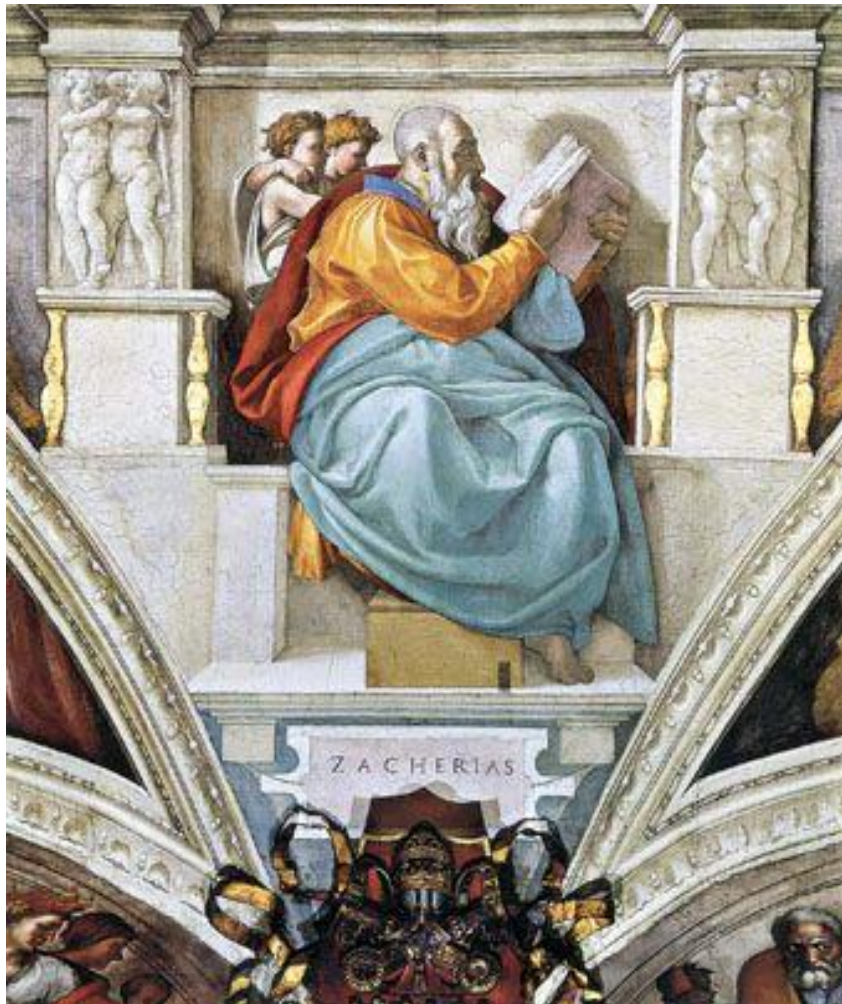
Author - STEVEN R. DOUGLAS 2017

THE HOLY BIBLE **NKJV** REFERENCE GUIDE

OLD TESTAMENT

BOOK 38

ZECHARIAH



The Prophet Zechariah by Michelangelo

SUMMARY

The author of the Book of Zechariah was the Prophet Zechariah. The Book of Zechariah was likely written in two primary segments, between 520 and 470 B.C.

Zechariah emphasized that God has used His prophets to teach, warn and correct His people. Unfortunately, they refused to listen. Their sin brought God's punishment. The book also bears evidence that even prophecy could be corrupted.

History shows that in this period prophecy fell into disfavor among the Jews, leading to the period between the Testaments when no lasting prophetic voice spoke to God's people.

The Book of Zechariah teaches that salvation may be obtained by all. The last chapter depicts peoples from all over the world coming to worship God, who desires that all people follow Him.

This is not the doctrine of universalism, that all people would be saved because it is God's nature to save. Rather, the book teaches that God desires that all people worship Him and accepts those who do, regardless of their national or political expressions.

Finally, Zechariah preached that God is sovereign over this world, any appearance to the contrary notwithstanding. His visions of the future indicate that God sees all that will happen. The depictions of God's intervention in the world teach that He will bring human events to the end He chooses.

He does not eliminate the individual's freedom to follow God or rebel but holds people responsible for the choices they make. In the last chapter, even the forces of nature respond to God's control.

Prophecies about Jesus Christ and the messianic era abound in Zechariah. From the promise that Messiah would come and dwell in our midst to the symbolism of the Branch and the Stone.

The promise of His Second Coming where they who pierced Him will look upon Him and mourn, Christ is the theme of the Book of Zechariah. Jesus is the Savior of Israel, a fountain whose blood covers the sins of all who come to Him for salvation.

God expects sincere worship and moral living of us today. Zechariah's example of breaking through national prejudice reminds us to reach out into all areas of our society.

We must extend God's invitation of salvation to people of all national origins, languages, races and cultures. That salvation is only available through the shed blood of Jesus Christ on the cross, who died in our place to atone for sin.

But if we reject that sacrifice, there is no other sacrifice through which we can be reconciled to God. There is no other name under heaven by which men are saved. There is no time to lose; today is the day of salvation.

SUMMARY Continued

Chapter 1: The word came to Zechariah (himself the son of a prophet) in the second year of Darius. He orders his people to return to Him, and not to follow the example of their fathers.

Zechariah has a vision of a man on a red horse among myrtle trees in a ravine. Behind him were red, sorrel (off yellow) and white horses. They are a patrol, which has found that the earth is at peace. However, God is angry with the nations at ease, because they assisted in Judah's and Jerusalem's suffering.

The Lord's house will be built in Jerusalem, and comfort Zion. Zechariah has a vision of four horns, symbolizing the four nations that scattered God's people. Craftsmen are coming to terrify them and cast them out.

Chapter 2: Zechariah has a vision of a man with a measuring line, going to measure out Jerusalem. The Lord will provide a wall of fire around Jerusalem and be the glory in her midst. Exiles are exhorted to return from the north.

He who touches God's people touches the apple of his eye. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! When the Lord dwells in the midst of Jerusalem, many nations shall be drawn unto Him.

Chapter 3: Joshua the high priest stands before the Lord. Satan also stands before the Lord to oppose Joshua. The Lord rebukes Satan. Joshua's filthy garments are removed, and he is given clean garments. Joshua is told that if he walks in the Lord's ways, he will judge His house.

The Lord says he is bringing forth his servant, the branch. A stone is laid before Joshua which has seven eyes. The iniquity of the land will be removed, and everyone will invite his neighbor under his vine and under his fig tree.

Chapter 4: Zechariah has a vision of a lampstand, next to which there are two olive trees that supplied the seven lamps with oil through seven pipes. Zerubbabel will accomplish the work of rebuilding the temple through the Lord's Spirit.

Encouragement is given. The two olive trees represent the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth.

Chapter 5: Zechariah has a vision of a flying scroll, twenty cubits by ten. On it are written curses against thieves and perjurers. Wickedness is personified as a woman sitting in a basket.

An angel thrusts down the woman, and places a lead covering over the top of the basket. Two winged women take the basket to Babylon.

Chapter 6: Zechariah has a vision of four chariots coming between two mountains of bronze. They go before the Lord. Those who go toward the north country have given rest to the Lord's Spirit in the north country.

Joshua receives a crown of gold and silver. The branch shall build the temple of the Lord. The crown will be a memorial in the temple.

SUMMARY Continued

Chapter 7: In the fourth year of Darius, the people ask if they should weep and fast in the fifth month to commemorate the destruction of the first temple. The Lord rebukes the practice of fasting for being perfunctory. Justice, mercy and compassion are more important – this is why the people were scattered.

Chapter 8: The Lord says He is zealous for Zion with great zeal. The Lord will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be a thriving, safe place. More people will return from the east and the west.

Encouragement is given to finish the temple. Judah was a curse, but it shall become a blessing. The Lord is as determined to bless now as He was to punish in the past. Act righteously to one another. Feasting is now more appropriate than the appointed fasting times.

Chapter 9: Burden against the cities of Lebanon, and the Philistines (which was fulfilled by the conquests of Alexander the Great). A lowly king riding on a donkey shall come into Jerusalem. He shall speak peace to the nations. His dominion shall be from sea to sea.

The blood of the covenant will set prisoners free from the waterless pit. Judah and Ephraim are the bow and arrow to be drawn against Greece. Grain shall make the young men thrive, and new wine the young women.

Chapter 10: The Lord will grant showers of rain. The people of God will conquer, while idolaters will be led astray like sheep. The houses of both Judah and Jerusalem will be brought back. Israel will be gathered into the land from across the earth.

Chapter 11: Creation mourns because of the coming judgment. Zechariah is told to feel a flock of sheep for slaughter, as the Lord will do with his people, particularly those who are rich and complacent.

Zechariah's two staffs are called Beauty and Bonds. Zechariah dismisses three shepherds (prophets, priests and kings), and breaks the staff called Beauty. Playing the role of a shepherd, Zechariah is paid what he sarcastically calls a 'princely sum' of thirty pieces of silver, which he gives to the potter.

Zechariah breaks the staff called Bonds, to symbolize the severance of Judah and Israel. Zechariah is told to take the implements of a foolish shepherd, to indicate that the Lord will raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for those who are cut off. Woe to the worthless shepherd, who leaves the flock!

Chapter 12: Jerusalem will be protected from attack by the Lord – it will be a cup of drunkenness and a heavy stone to surrounding peoples. The feeble shall become like David, and the house of David shall be like God.

The spirit of grace and supplication will be poured on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They will look on me whom they pierced. All Jerusalem will humbly repent.

SUMMARY Continued

Chapter 13: A fountain shall cleanse sin. Idolatry and false prophets will not be tolerated. The man accused of being a false prophet insists the scars on his body are not the self-inflicted wounds often associated with false prophets, but merely the result of a brawl in his friend's house.

The Lord calls for the swords to be struck against His shepherd, who is His companion. Israel will be scattered, smitten, refined, and saved.

Chapter 14: The day of the Lord is coming, when Jerusalem will be attacked. Half of the city will be taken off in captivity, but the remnant shall not be cut off. The Lord will fight against the nations that attack.

The Mount of Olives will be split in two, allowing escape. Living waters shall flow from Jerusalem, which will be safely inhabited. The enemies of Jerusalem and their livestock will be stricken with plague. All nations shall come to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles.

Plague and no rain will be the punishment for those families who do not attend. Holiness to the Lord shall be engraved on the bells of the horses, and every pot in Jerusalem shall become like the bowls before the altar. The profane becomes holy.

NKJV SELECTED SCRIPTURE

- 3:1** Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him.
- 3:2** *And the Lord said to Satan, The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?*
- 8:16** *These are the things you shall do: Speak each man the truth to his neighbor; Give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and peace;*
- 8:17** *Let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor; And do not love a false oath. For all these are things that I hate, Says the Lord.*

BIBLE TIMELINE

520 BC

The Word of the LORD to Zechariah

Zechariah 1 - 14

CHARACTER Definitions

ZECHARIAH - Grandson of the priest Iddo, Zechariah prophesied to the people of Judah after they returned from their seventy years of exile in Babylon. Zechariah's grandfather returned from Babylon, his young grandson in tow, with the first group of Israelites allowed back, in 538 BC under the decree of Cyrus, king of Persia.

CHARACTERS Continued

Because of his family lineage, Zechariah was a priest in addition to a prophet. He, therefore, would have had an intimate familiarity with the worship practices of the Jews, even if he had never served in a completed temple.

As a young man at the time of his first prophecies, his life more than likely extended into the reign of Xerxes I (485–465 BC), the king best known in the Bible for making Esther the queen of Persia.

Zechariah, a young man, especially when compared to his contemporary Haggai, came alongside the older prophet to deliver messages from the Lord to the Jewish remnant recently returned from Babylon.

While Haggai's overall message had more of a cautionary tone to it (pointing out the Jews' sin and self-focus), Zechariah emphasized a tone of encouragement to the struggling Israelites trying to rebuild their temple.

Zechariah's dated visions and messages in chapters 1–8 all take place in the same general time period as Haggai's, beginning in October–November 520 BC with a call for the people of Judah to repent.

He then received eight visions on the restless night of February 15, 519 BC, followed by four messages that he preached on December 7, 518 BC.

Though his final messages in chapters 9–14 go undated, the mention of Greece in 9:13 suggests the prophecies came much later in his life, presumably sometime in the 480s BC, before Ezra (458 BC) and Nehemiah (444 BC) arrived to again revitalize the Jewish people.

The book of Zechariah contains the clearest and the largest number of messianic (about the Messiah) passages among the Minor Prophets. In that respect, it's possible to think of the book of Zechariah as a kind of miniature book of Isaiah.

Zechariah pictures Christ in both His first coming and His second coming. Jesus will come, according to Zechariah, as Savior, Judge, and ultimately, as the righteous King ruling His people from Jerusalem.

Meaning "Yahweh remembers", Zechariah's name was appropriate to the purpose of his prophecies. His book brims over with the hope that God would remember His promises to His people, even after all the time they spent outside the land.

The prophet used a simple structure of eight visions, four messages, and two oracles to anticipate the completion of the temple and, ultimately, the future reign of the Messiah from Jerusalem.

Like many of the prophets, Zechariah saw isolated snapshots of the future; therefore, certain events that seem to occur one right after the other in Zechariah's prophecy actually often have generations or even millennia between them.

For a people newly returned from exile, Zechariah provided specific prophecy about their immediate and distant future—no doubt a great encouragement.

CHARACTERS Continued

Their nation would still be judged for sin, but they would also be cleansed and restored, and God would rebuild His people.

Zechariah concluded his book by looking into the distant future, first at the rejection of the Messiah by Israel, and then at His eventual reign when Israel will finally be delivered.

Have you struggled with discouragement? Read Zechariah. While the book contains its share of judgments on the people of Judah and beyond, it overflows with hope in the future reign of the Lord over His people.

It's easy to get caught up in the oftentimes depressing events of day-to-day life, to lose our perspective and live as people without hope. The book of Zechariah serves as a correction for that tendency in our lives. We have a hope that is sure. How refreshing!

MAP REFERENCES

Zechariah 14 Map
The Burden (Oracle) and Final Deliverance of Israel

"On that day life-giving waters will flow out from Jerusalem, half toward the Dead Sea and half toward the Mediterranean, flowing continuously in both summer and winter. And the LORD will be king over all the earth. On that day there will be one LORD — His name alone will be worshiped. All the land from Geba, north of Judah, to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem, will become one vast plain. But Jerusalem will be raised up in its original place and will be inhabited all the way from the Benjamin Gate over to the site of the old gate, then to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses. And Jerusalem will be filled, safe at last, never again to be cursed and destroyed."
Zechariah 14:8-11

The topography of Jesus' global capital city, Jerusalem, will be drastically changed.

Manfred E. Kohler, Th.D. MK