

## “Return to Me, and I will return to you” (1:1-6)

### The Life and Times of the Prophet Zechariah

#### Who Was Zechariah and When Did He Prophesy?

“Zechariah, Zachariah, Zacharias. Some 28 men bear this name in the Bible, most of them mentioned only once or twice, including the last king of Jehu’s line (2 Ki. 14:29; 15:8, 11). The best known is the prophet, who is mentioned with Haggai in Ezr. 5:1; 6:14, and whose prophecies are found in the book that bears his name. As these two prophets were enthusiasts for the rebuilding of the Temple in 520 BC, one must account for their silence during the period 536–520 BC, when the Temple building was neglected. Either their parents had brought them as infants in the return in 537 BC or they did not return until about 520 BC; in this case also they must have been infants in 537 BC, or their enthusiasm would have brought them back then. This means that Zechariah was a young man when he began to prophesy. . . . It is likely that the second part of his book belongs to his old age.” — J. S. Wright, *IVP New Bible Dictionary*

#### Why did he prophesy and What did he have to say?

“No Old Testament prophet has more prophecy concerning Christ, Israel, and the nations in so short a book. Zechariah predicts, [notice this list:] the second coming, the reign of Christ, His priesthood, His kingship, His humanity, His deity, His building of the temple of the Lord, His coming in lowliness, His bringing of permanent peace, His rejection and betrayal, His return to Israel as the crucified one, and His being smitten by the sword of the Lord.” — *Scofield Reference Bible*



#### Key Themes in Zechariah — *ESV Study Bible*

1. The need for repentance and turning to the Lord (1:1–6).
2. The necessity of sincerity in serving the Lord (ch. 7).
3. The Lord’s concern and care for the plight of his people (1:8–17; 4:10).
4. The future expansion and blessing of Jerusalem (2:4, 12; 8:1–8; 14:16).
5. The complete and permanent removal of the sin of the people (ch. 3; ch. 5).
6. The removal of false prophecy and idolatry from the land (13:2–6).
7. The centrality of the temple as the source of God’s blessing (ch. 4).
8. The Lord’s wrath at the nations that plundered Judah and Jerusalem (1:18–21; 14:3–5).
9. The return of the Divine Warrior to terrorize Israel’s foes (9:1–8).
10. The coming of the Branch, a Davidic ruler who will save his people, cleanse their sins, and establish peace (3:8; 6:9–15; 9:9–10).
11. The pouring out of God’s Spirit, resulting in repentance, and the opening of a fountain for the cleansing of sin (12:10–13:1).
12. Judgment on the wicked shepherds of God’s people and their replacement by a good shepherd (11:1–17).
13. The striking of the good shepherd and the scattering of the flock (13:7–9).
14. The final triumph of the Lord over the nations (ch. 14).

### An Overview of the Book of Zechariah

#### I. Eight Night Visions and a Sign Act (1–6)

- A. Vision one: the Lord’s hidden horsemen (1:7–17)
- B. Vision two: Judah’s oppressors oppressed (1:18–21)
- C. Vision three: Jerusalem unwalled (2:1–13)
- D. Vision four: the re-clothing of Joshua (3:1–10)
- E. Vision five: the olive trees and the lampstand (4:1–14)
- F. Vision six: the flying scroll—wickedness judged (5:1–4)
- G. Vision seven: the flying ephah—wickedness removed (5:5–11)
- H. Vision eight: the Lord’s army on the move (6:1–8)
- I. A sign-act: the crowning of Joshua (6:9–15)

#### II. Four Messages: From Fasts to Feasts (7–8)

- Questions about fasting (7:1-3)
- A. The rebuke for wrong motives (7:4-7)
  - B. The requirement of repentance (7:8-14)
  - C. The restoration of divine favor (8:1-17)
  - D. The return of divine feasts (8:18-23)

#### III. Two Burdens/Oracles (9–14)

- A. The Return of Messiah (9–11)
- B. The Reign of Messiah (12–14)

## Zechariah 1:1-6

1:1 ¶ In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of **the LORD** CAME to Zechariah the prophet the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo SAYING, 1:2 **"The LORD** was VERY ANGRY with your fathers. 1:3 "Therefore SAY to them, "Thus SAYS **the LORD of hosts**, "Return to Me," DECLARES **the LORD of hosts**, "that I may return to you," says **the LORD of hosts**. 1:4 "Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets PROCLAIMED, saying, "Thus SAYS **the LORD of hosts**, "Return now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds." But they did not listen or give heed to **Me**," DECLARES **the LORD**. 1:5 "Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets do they live forever? 1:6 "But did not My words and My statutes which I COMMANDED My servants the prophets OVERTAKE your fathers? Then they repented and said, 'As **the LORD of hosts** PURPOSED to do to us in accordance with our ways and our deeds, so He has DEALT with us.'""

## ZECHARIAH

	Call to Repentance <i>CHAPTER 1:1-6</i>	Encouragement and Motivation Visions Horses and riders Horns and craftsmen Surveyor and measuring line Joshua (the priest) and Satan Lampstand and seven lights Flying scroll and warning Woman and a basket Chariots and judgment <i>CHAPTERS 1:7-6:15</i>	Questions Fasting Failure Future of Zion <i>CHAPTERS 7-8</i>	Encouragement and Hope Predictions First "Oracle": Rejection of Messiah Preservation of Israel Deception of false prophets Second "Oracle": Israel's final victory Messiah's final victory <i>CHAPTERS 9-14</i>
<b>Time</b>	Written during the building of the temple			Written after completion of the temple
<b>Purpose</b>	To motivate those working on the temple to continue in spite of their own crop failures and financial distress. Rather than rebuking or condemning, Zechariah inspired the people to work.			To give the workers hope that there was a better day, a far more glorious day yet to come. Vivid scenes of Messiah are included. He is revealed as coming, rejected, returning, and conquering.
<b>Theme</b>	Build the temple; build your future			
<b>Key Verses</b>	4:6; 8:3; 9:9-10			
<b>Christ in Zechariah</b>	Zechariah is second only to Isaiah in its number of messianic passages. Among Zechariah's explicit references to Christ are the angel of the Lord (3:1-2); the righteous Branch (3:8; 6:12-13); the King-Priest (6:13); the cornerstone, tent peg, and bow of battle (10:4); the good shepherd who is sold for thirty pieces of silver (11:4-13); the pierced One (12:10); and the coming Judge and righteous King (14).			