

Tapes For Growing Christians

Study Guide for
ZECHARIAH

Growing Christians Ministries
Box 5757, River Forest, IL 60305

Lesson 1

An Exhortation to Repentance and Zechariah's First Prophetic Vision Zechariah 1:1-17

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal points

1. The present status of Israel is in the valley of the times of the Gentiles.
2. The future status of Israel will be on the mountaintop of kingdom prosperity.

practical application

Return to the Lord and He will return to you.

questions

1. What is a post-exilic prophet?
2. Who were the three post-exilic prophets who prophesied in Israel?
3. Which king permitted the Jews to return to their homeland?
4. How many Jews returned to their homeland?
5. Under whose leadership did the Jews return?
6. "Do not be like your fathers...they did not hear nor heed Me," says the Lord" Zechariah 1:4. Who were these "fathers"?
7. Who is the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament?

answers

1. A prophet who prophesied after the seventy years the Jews spent in captivity in Babylon.
2. Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi
3. King Cyrus of Persia. He brought the Babylonian Empire to an end and gave a royal edict in 538 B.C., which permitted the Jews to return to their homeland.
4. About 50,000 Jews returned.
5. They returned under the leadership of Zerubbabel. You can read about this in the book of Ezra.
6. They were the generation of Jews sent into exile because of their evil ways and evil deeds.
7. The Lord Himself - specifically, the pre-incarnate Son of God.

discuss / consider

1. Re-read Zechariah 1:7-11. The vision of the horses and riders was the first of Zechariah's eight prophetic visions. The rider standing astride the red horse was the Angel of the Lord. He was in the midst of the myrtle trees in the valley. These trees represent the present status of Israel, under Gentile domination of the earth. Discuss the present status of Israel.
2. The good news comes in the second half of this vision. The Lord knows and cares about Israel, and is only allowing the Gentile nations to afflict Israel at the present time in order to bring them to the point where they will return to the Lord. And they will! The Lord will return to deliver the nation of Israel from the domination of Gentile nations. Consider the future of Israel, especially as you look at their status today.

challenge

Israel had turned away from the Lord and had gone their own way, but God still loved them. He pleaded with them and promised them if they would return to Him, He would return to them. Are you out of fellowship with the Lord? Do you know in your heart that things are not right between you and the Lord? Do you want to know the peace and joy of close fellowship with the Lord once again? You can. Return to the Lord and He will return to you.

memorize

"Return to Me," says the Lord, "and I will return to you...so they returned." Zechariah 1:3, 6

"I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy. My house shall be built in it. The Lord will again comfort Zion, and will again choose Jerusalem." Zechariah 1:16-17

Lesson 2

The Second Prophetic Vision of Zechariah - The Vision of the Horns and Craftsmen Zechariah 1:18-21

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God uses horns to discipline His people.
2. God uses craftsmen to destroy the horns.

practical application

Remember, for every horn there's a craftsman.

questions

1. What was one of the first things the Jews did when they returned from their captivity in Babylon?
2. What had happened to the temple in Jerusalem?
3. Why did the Jews quit building?
4. Whose hearts were stirred up to motivate the people?
5. What made the year 520 B.C. special?
6. How many sermons did Haggai preach and how long did it take him?
7. How many of Zechariah's visions of encouragement came after Haggai's sermons?

How long did these visions take?

answers

1. They rebuilt the altar of the Lord and restarted the sacrifices.
2. Solomon's temple had been destroyed by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. Upon their return, the Jews re-laid the foundation of the temple.
3. They became discouraged because of threats from the surrounding pagan provinces as well as pressure from the Persian government. They stopped building the temple and spent all their time building their own houses.
4. God stirred the hearts of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to rise up and motivate the people to get back to the work of rebuilding the temple of the Lord.
5. It was quite a year of prophetic ministry. All of Haggai's sermons were given during that year and this was the year that Zechariah had his prophetic visions.
6. He preached four fiery sermons in a four-month period.
7. All eight of Zechariah's visions of encouragement came after Haggai's four sermons of exhortation. All eight came on the same night.

discuss / consider

1. The second prophetic vision of Zechariah is recorded in Chapter 1:18-19. In the vision, Zechariah sees four animal horns representing the power of nations (1:21). The four horns represent Gentile powers that have attacked, dominated and scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem throughout history.

Specifically, they are the four world empires as seen in Daniel 2. In line with Daniel 2, Zechariah 1 represents the Babylonian Empire, the Persian Empire, the Greek Empire, and the Roman Empire, including the end-time phase of Rome. God used all of these powers to discipline, rebuke and purge His people Israel until the end-time when the nation of Israel returns to the Lord. Marvel at the revelation of Scripture and its confirmation throughout the Bible of God's word!

2. Regardless of the evil and sinful actions of the Gentile powers (the horns), God is able to work all things together for His good purposes. But God also holds all nations responsible for their evil actions. In the vision of the craftsmen (Zechariah 1:20-21), God uses craftsmen to destroy the horns, the four world empires. In Daniel 2 the fourth craftsman is the world empire and kingdom of our Lord Himself, which will be set up here when the Lord returns. See Daniel 2:44. Again, marvel at the revelation and confirmation of scripture!

challenge

As God used horns to discipline His people, so God may use ungodly powers in our lives. Is God using someone or something right now to discipline you? Learn the lesson that God has for you.

memorize

"The craftsmen are coming to cast out the horns of the nations that scattered the land of Judah." Zechariah 1:21

Lesson 3

The Third Prophetic Vision of Zechariah - The Vision of the Surveyor Zechariah 2:1-13

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Jerusalem will be a city of peace in the future.

2. Jerusalem will be a city for all people in the future.

practical application

“He who touches you touches the apple of His eye.” Zechariah 2:8

questions

1. What does the book of Nehemiah tell us about Zechariah?

2. Contrast the prophet Haggai with the prophet Zechariah.

3. In what common ministry did God use these prophets?

4. What is the lesson we can learn from the contrast of these prophets?

answers

1. When the Jews returned from their captivity in Babylon in 538 B.C., we know that Zechariah was among those who returned because he is mentioned in Nehemiah 12:16 as one of the priests who returned.
2. Haggai was an older prophet and probably spent most of his life in Babylon during the seventy-year captivity. Zechariah, a contemporary of Haggai, was a younger man who returned to Jerusalem in his youth.
3. To exhort and encourage and to motivate the people to finish the job of rebuilding the Lord's temple.
4. That God uses both the older generation and the younger generation to exhort and encourage His people in all areas of ministry.

discuss / consider

1. In Zechariah's third prophetic vision, in 520 B.C., he sees a surveyor measuring Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be rebuilt and become much larger than it was before. This vision was partially fulfilled when the temple was completed four years after the vision, and it would be another seventy-five years before Nehemiah returned to rebuild the wall. When will this vision be finally fulfilled? When Jerusalem becomes a city of peace and the Lord will be the glory in her midst. When will this occur? When the Lord comes back to set up His kingdom here on this earth, with Jerusalem as His headquarters. (Zechariah 2:4-5, 12)

Think of Jerusalem at peace!

2. Consider Jerusalem, a holy city, a city for all people in the future. When the Lord Jesus returns to set up His kingdom on this earth, all the believing nations of that day will be part of the glorious kingdom of Christ. There will be no so-called Palestinian problem then. Think of it!

challenge

The Lord promises to deal personally in judgment with any nation that goes against His people. God's protective care for His people is true for the nation of Israel. But it's also true for you if you are a believer. "He who touches you touches the apple of His eye." Zechariah 2:8

memorize

"Jerusalem will be inhabited as towns without walls." Zechariah 2:4-5

"He who touches you touches the apple of His eye." Zechariah 2:8

"Sing and rejoice, O Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," says the Lord." Zechariah 2:10

Lesson 4

The Fourth Prophetic Vision of Zechariah - the Vision of Joshua, the High Priest Zechariah 3:1-10

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal points

1. Israel will be restored to its position as a kingdom of priests.
2. Israel will be blessed with the presence of a perfect King and a perfect kingdom.

practical application

Are you still dressed in filthy rags?

questions

1. Outline, generally, the prophecies of Zechariah by chapters.
2. How long did it take Zechariah to have his visions?
3. Why were the visions given by God to Zechariah?
4. What is the focus or theme of the fourth vision of Zechariah?
5. Israel had lost a particular position that God intended for His people. What was this position? How had Israel lost this position?

answers

1. Eight visions - Chapters 1-6
Four messages - Chapters 7-8
Two burdens (or oracles) - Chapters 9-14
2. All eight visions came to Zechariah during one night.
3. To encourage the remnant of Jews who had returned from the seventy-year captivity in Babylon.
4. The focus is on internal cleansing. Israel will be cleansed and restored to the position that God originally intended for His people.
5. God's original intent for His people was to be a kingdom of priests. Israel lost this position because of sin and disobedience.

discuss / consider

1. Joshua, the cleansed high priest, is given a renewed commission. Remember, Joshua stands for the whole nation of Israel and the future restored nation as a kingdom of priests. Remember, too, that the brand plucked from the fire was the entire remnant who had returned from the fires of the Babylonian captivity. Consider God's great love for His people, Israel. Are you a brand plucked from the fire? Consider God's great love for His people, believers.
2. Refer to Zechariah 3:8-9. Note the three messianic titles of the Lord Jesus in these verses: "My Servant," "the BRANCH," and "the stone." Now read Isaiah 52:13; Isaiah 11:1; and Daniel 2:44-45. Then consider the wonderful blessing awaiting Israel in the future with the presence of a perfect King and a perfect Kingdom. Will you be there, too? Be sure of your salvation and eternal destiny.

challenge

Are you still dressed in filthy rags? As Joshua the high priest, representing the nation of Israel, was a brand plucked from the fire, so we who have trusted Christ are brands plucked from the fires of hell. Like Joshua when cleansed, our filthy garments are removed and the robes of Christ's righteousness are given to us. Are you a priest of the most high God, with Christ as your High Priest? See Isaiah 64:6 and 1 Peter 2:9.

memorize

"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."
Zechariah 3:1

"Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments...the Angel of the Lord said, 'Take away the filthy garments from him'...and to Joshua He said, 'See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes.'" Zechariah 3:3-4

"Behold, 'I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH...behold, the stone.'" Zechariah 3:8-9

Lesson 5

**Three More of the Eight Prophetic Visions of Zechariah: the Vision of a Golden Lamp Stand;
the Vision of the Flying Scroll; and the Vision of the Woman in the Basket
Zechariah 4:1-14 and 5:1-11**

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. At the time of the end, Israel will be a witness to the light of the world.

2. At the time of the end, wickedness will be exposed and judged.

practical application

Remember, bigger and more beautiful is not necessarily better.

questions

1. Describe the events in the lives of the Jews just prior and during the time of Zechariah's visions.

2. What caused the delay in rebuilding the temple?

3. In light of this, why were the prophetic visions given to Zechariah?

4. What was the proper role of the Jews in responding to the visions?

5. What was the name of the godly governor of the Jews who had returned from captivity and would lead them in finishing the job of rebuilding the temple?

answers

1. The Jews had returned from their seventy-year captivity in Babylon, and they had started to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. However the temple still was not finished after a delay of about fifteen years.
2. The people had become discouraged when they were threatened by the enemies in the surrounding Persian provinces.
3. In order to encourage and motivate the people to finish the job of rebuilding the house of the Lord.
4. The people needed to recognize that God was in control and as long as they looked to the Lord, He would enable them to do the work of rebuilding the temple. See Zechariah 4:6.
5. Zerubbabel

discuss / consider

1. Review Doctrinal Point #1 describing the lampstand and its supply of oil. This encouraging vision taught that Israel would be restored to their God-given role as a light of testimony to the world. The lampstand is typical of Christ as the true light in both the tabernacle and the temple in the Old Testament. See Isaiah 49:6. Israel will be the means by which the testimony to the Gentiles will be carried out, even to the ends of the earth. Consider the high privilege and responsibility of God's people, the Jews to be this testimony to the world.
2. The flying scroll vision portrays the way that evil will ultimately be exposed and judged. The judgment will be swift. Through the ages, people seem to be able to hide sin and wickedness, but ultimately when the Lord returns all wickedness will be exposed and judged. Sin will not be swept under the rug. Have you brought your sins before the Lord to receive His forgiveness now?
3. In the seventh prophetic vision, Zechariah sees two women with wings. What does this mean? Wickedness, represented by the woman in the basket is now under restraint, but will eventually be removed and banished. Where organized rebellion against God began at the tower of Babel, there it will end. Wickedness will have run its full cycle. What an encouraging vision for Israel and for us as well.

challenge

"Who has despised the day of small things?" Zechariah 4:10 Bigger and more beautiful is not necessarily better. It is the attitude of heart that counts. If the Lord is in the work and it is being done for Him and by Him, that is what really counts. "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord." Zechariah 4:6 Are you involved in a small ministry? The question is not size or grandeur. The issue is your priorities and attitude of the heart. Is the Lord in the midst? Is He being honored, or are you looking to human might and power? Don't despise the day of small things.

memorize

"Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit," says the Lord." Zechariah 4:6

"Who has despised the day of small things?" Zechariah 4:10

"I saw a flying scroll... this is the curse that goes out over the face of the whole earth." Zechariah 5:2-3

"There is a woman sitting inside the basket... 'This is Wickedness!'" Zechariah 5:7-8

Lesson 6

The Eighth and Concluding Vision of Zechariah and the Crowning of Joshua the High Priest, and its Prophetic Implications Zechariah 6:1-15

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God will judge all of Israel's enemies.

2. The Lord Jesus will be both King and Priest.

practical application

Do you know your biblical temples?

questions

1. In Zechariah Chapters 1-6, there were eight prophetic visions. How long did it take for Zechariah to have these visions?

2. What do these visions reveal concerning Christ?

3. What is "apocalyptic literature"?

4. How can you distinguish between the symbolic and the literal in apocalyptic visions?

5. What does bronze symbolize in the Bible?

answers

1. They were all given to Zechariah on the same night. He was given a lot of information and insight concerning God's program for the future.
2. They reveal both the first coming of Christ and of the second coming when all evil will be judged and Christ will reign supreme.
3. Apocalyptic literature is visions of the future. It is highly symbolic in nature.
4. It is not easy. A general rule is to see if the visions have already taken place. The rest of scripture helps us distinguish the symbolic and literal.
5. Judgment. See, for example, the two mountains of bronze in this portion of scripture. They could be taken symbolically or literally. When the Lord returns, the Mount of Olives literally will be split into two mountains with a valley in between. This could be the Valley of Jehoshaphat where the Lord judges the nations. See Joel 3.

discuss / consider

1. Refer to Zechariah 6:1-8. Consider the vision of the horses and riders standing under the direction of the Lord. All the earth is at rest. God is at rest because the nations have been judged. The horses and war chariots have done their work of judgment. Revelation 16 shows that when this judgment takes place at the end of the Battle of Armageddon. This is also called the judgment of the sheep and the goats in Matthew 25:31-46. This is the same judgment of the nations prophesied in Joel 3. Marvel at the confirmation of scripture within the Bible.
2. Refer to Zechariah 6:9-15. The crown was placed on the high priest's head, anticipating and foreshadowing the coming of the Man whose name is the BRANCH, the title for the coming Messiah. The BRANCH was both priest and king, thus the uniting of the offices of king and high priest in the Messiah. The Lord Jesus is now our High Priest and now our King, but this symbolic event of Zechariah's time looks forward beyond this church age to when the Lord will return and literally reign as King over this world. Marvel at the prophecy of our Lord's second coming and His reign as King over the entire world.

challenge

Do you know your biblical temples? There are at least seven biblical temples of the Lord:

the two spiritual temples of the Holy Spirit, the believer's body (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19-20) and the church, the body of Christ; and the five literal temples of the Lord: Solomon's Temple, Zerubbabel's Temple, Herod's Temple, a Tribulation Temple, and the Millennial Temple (Ezekiel 40-48). The temple spoken of in this portion of scripture is likely the Millennial Temple, which will be built after the Lord returns. The Lord Himself will direct the building of His temple (Zechariah 6:12-13), and believing Jews and Gentiles from around the world will come and participate in building this temple. What will be your part in this building?

memorize

"Behold, four chariots were coming from between the mountains." Zechariah 6:1

"Behold, the Man whose name is the BRANCH!...He shall build the temple of the Lord...and He shall sit and rule on His throne; so He shall be a priest on His throne." Zechariah 6:12-13

"Those from afar shall come and build the temple of the Lord." Zechariah 6:15

Lesson 7

Four Messages Given to Zechariah to the Jews Who Were Rebuilding the Temple Under the Leadership of Zerubbabel Zechariah 7:1-14 and 8:1-23

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. The Lord desires righteousness rather than ritual.
2. The Lord desires compassion rather than oppression.
3. The Lord will turn problems into peace.
4. The Lord will turn fasts into feasts.

practical application

What seems like a big deal to us is only another day at the office for God.

questions

1. Why did the Jews living in Bethel send a delegation to Jerusalem?
2. What did the fast of the fifth month commemorate?
3. Why did they ask about keeping the fast?
4. Did the priests give them an answer?
5. When will the hypocritical hearts of many of the people be different?

answers

1. To ask the priests and prophets if they should continue to keep the fast of the fifth month.
2. The destruction of Solomon's Temple by the Babylonians.
3. Because the temple was being rebuilt.
4. No, but the Lord gave Zechariah the answer.
5. In the future when Messiah's kingdom is set up.

discuss / consider

1. Zechariah's first message is one of rebuke. He rebukes the people for keeping the fasts, not because they were wrong in themselves, but because of their hypocritical attitude. They were not fasting for the Lord; they were just going through religious motions. The Lord hates religious hypocrisy, then and today. The Lord desires righteousness rather than ritual. Is your heart really in tune with the Lord? Do you really want to worship Him, or are you bored and weary with divine things? Check your heart attitude toward the Lord. See Matthew 6: 21, 33.
2. Zechariah's second message is one of repentance. Many people were just going through religious motions when they fasted, and they also were falling back into their old ways of not carrying out social justice, and not showing mercy and compassion to the poor and needy. How do you measure up? How are you showing compassion to the poor and needy?
3. Zechariah's third message is one of restoration, both for the near and the far future. The land would be prosperous and the people would be blessed instead of disciplined. All God asked of them was that they practice truth, justice, and peace. The complete fulfillment of this prophecy awaits the second coming of Christ and His millennial kingdom. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth and the Holy Mountain. This certainly isn't the situation today, but it will be! Think of Jerusalem as the City of Peace. What a glorious day that will be!
4. Zechariah's fourth message is one of rejoicing. All of the empty fasts will be turned to joyful feasts when the Messiah sets up His kingdom here on this earth. In that day, Israel will be a channel of blessing for the nations of the world. Anticipate that great day!

challenge

The promised wonderful blessings of the future will be accomplished by God in His time. This is God's way. He can do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think (Ephesians 3:20). What seems like a big deal to us is only another day at the office for God. What are you asking for? Expect great things from God!

memorize

"Execute true justice, show mercy and compassion...do not oppress others." Zechariah 7:9-10

"But they refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stopped their ears. They made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the words which the Lord had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets." Zechariah 7:11-12

"I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations...the land became desolate." Zechariah 7:14

"Behold, I will save My people and I will bring them back, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. They shall be My people and I will be their God." Zechariah 8:7-8

Lesson 8

The Beginning of Zechariah's First Prophetic Burden or Oracle: A Great Contrast Made between Alexander the Great of Greece and the Coming Messiah of Israel Zechariah 9:1-10

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Alexander the Great would come as a conquering hero.
2. Jesus the Greater would come as a humble servant.

practical application

1. Don't practice the open and point method of biblical guidance.

questions

1. Which Old Testament books were written by post-exilic prophets?
2. Why are they called minor prophets? Why are they called post-exilic?
3. Under whose leadership did the Jews return from captivity? What work did the returning Jews begin under his leadership?
4. Did this project go well?
5. Which prophets did the Lord raise up to motivate the people? Did it work?
6. In a series of prophetic visions, messages and burdens, how did Zechariah encourage the people?

answers

1. The last three - Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.
2. Because they wrote smaller books. Because they were all written after Israel's seventy-year captivity in Babylon.
3. Zerubbabel. They began to rebuild Solomon's Temple that had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.
4. At first, but then the people became discouraged and they quit building.
5. God raised up Haggai and Zechariah to minister to the people and motivate them to finish the job of rebuilding the temple. Yes, it worked. The people returned to the work of rebuilding the house of the Lord and the rebuilt temple was completed in 516 B.C.
6. He encouraged them in view of the great future that was in store for the nation of Israel.

discuss / consider

1. Read Zechariah 9:1-8. Trace the march and conquests that Alexander the Great of Greece would take in 332 B.C. There is a promise amidst these conquests that God made to the Jewish remnant that He Himself would protect them. Indeed, Alexander the Great did not conquer Jerusalem and did not destroy the temple. Alexander the Great came as a conquering hero, but it was by God's choice in order to judge the evil practices of the people. Archaeology has confirmed the destruction as predicted. Even amidst times of war, God gives a grace note to His people. Do you see God's grace note amidst the terrorism of our day?
2. Read Zechariah 9:9-10 and note the contrasts between Alexander the Great and the Lord Jesus, the Greater. Alexander the Great came riding on a mighty stallion; Jesus the Greater came riding a lowly donkey. Alexander the Great came as rich and powerful; Jesus the Greater came as poor and meek. Alexander the Great brought fear and dread; Jesus the Greater brought joy and peace. Alexander the Great came as a slayer of his foes; Jesus the Greater came as a Savior of His foes. Alexander the Great came as a foreign king; Jesus the Greater came as the rightful king, Israel's Messiah. Both Alexander and Jesus died at age thirty-three. Alexander the Great was a burned-out war hero; Jesus the Greater is Savior of the world. What a contrast! Aren't you thankful that Jesus the Greater is your Savior and Lord and coming King?

challenge

How do you make decisions? How do you look to the Lord for an answer? Beware of the open and point method. Beware of taking scripture out of context. God does use the Bible as guidance in making decisions, but use the Bible as God intended.

memorize

"The eyes of men and all the tribes of Israel are on the Lord." Zechariah 9:1

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you." Zechariah 9:9

"He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be from sea to sea." Zechariah 9:10

Lesson 9

Prophecies Concerning Both the Intertestamental Period and the Time of the End Zechariah 9:11-17

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. God did deliver Israel at the time of the Macabees.
2. God will deliver Israel at the time of the Millennium.

practical application

1. Will you sparkle like a jewel in the kingdom?

questions

1. Outline the book of Zechariah.
2. Why did God give a prophetic burden to Zechariah?
3. Which monarch permitted the Jews to leave Babylon to return to their homeland?
4. Although all of the Jews were permitted to leave Babylon, how did?
5. What was a waterless pit used for in ancient days?
6. How was the idea of a waterless pit applied in Zechariah's day?
7. Who were the Macabees?

answers

1. Chapters 1-6 - 8 visions
Chapters 7-8 - 4 messages
Chapters 9-14 - 2 burdens
2. To encourage the Jews who had returned from the seventy-year captivity in Babylon.
3. Cyrus, the Persian Emperor
4. About 50,000
5. They were used as prisons.
6. Joseph was put into a waterless pit, but he was preserved and finally set free. Like Joseph, the Jews were prisoners in Babylon, preserved and then set free.
7. During a period of Seleucid (Syrian) domination of Israel, Antiochus IV, a ruthless king, came to the throne. He killed thousands of Jews and desecrated the temple, and he attempted to Hellenize all of Israel. It was at this time that a number of godly Jews rose up in opposition and resistance to this ungodly violence. They were led by a priestly family, one of whom won the name, the hammerer or a macabee. Thus, these godly intertestamental Jews became known as the Macabees. They were able to regain a measure of independence.

discuss / consider

1. After the death of Alexander the Great, the Greek Empire subdivided into several kingdoms. Two of these kingdoms became very significant in reference to Israel - the Seleucid Kingdom (Syria, to the north of Israel) and the Ptolemaic Kingdom (Egypt, to the south of Israel). During the intertestamental period, there was conflict between these two kingdoms. Because Israel was in the middle she was always under the domination of one of these kingdoms. Read Daniel Chapter 11 for some of the details of the wars and political interactions during this time. At this time the Macabees rose up against the domination of the Seleucids and Antiochus IV, and God delivered Israel. The Jews still celebrate this historic event as a special festival known as Hanukah. The Jews would have known of Daniel's prophecies and the fact that the Greek Empire would follow the Persian Empire. Thus, Zechariah's prophecy of Israel's victory over the coming Greeks would be very encouraging. God loves to encourage people with His word - then and today. Do you know God's word well enough to receive encouragement for the future?
2. The victories of the Macabees over the Greeks foreshadow and anticipate the final conflict, victory, and restoration of Israel to come in the future. In "that day," the Lord will defend His people and save them to bring them into His Millennial Kingdom. Review the time-line following the Rapture to understand when "that day" will come.

challenge

1. Read Zechariah 9:16. The godly are promised that they will be like jewels in a crown lifted like a banner over His land. In context, this is a promise to the faithful Jews who have come out of the Tribulation and have entered the Millennial Kingdom of Christ. It can, however, be applied to faithful believers today. Will you be one of the faithful who will sparkle as a jewel in the kingdom of Christ? See 2 Timothy 2:11-13 and Romans 8:17.

memorize

"I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit. Return to the stronghold, you prisoners of hope." Zechariah 9:11-12

"I have raised up your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece." Zechariah 9:13-15

"The Lord their God will save them in that day. They shall be like the jewels of a crown." Zechariah 9:16

Lesson 10

Predictions of Both the Coming Messiah and the Return of Israel Zechariah 10:1-12

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Israel will be delivered from her enemies and dependant on her Messiah.
2. Israel will be regathered to the land and restored to the Lord.

practical application

1. Have you responded to God's whistle?

questions

1. At what point in Old Testament history did Zechariah prophesy?
2. Zechariah was one of the captives who return from Babylon. How do we know this?
3. About how old was Zechariah when he returned from Babylon?
4. What is a prophet's role?
5. What was God's purpose in speaking to the people through the prophet Zechariah?
6. How does Romans 15:4 relate to Zechariah's prophecies?
7. Why is it important to keep Israel distinct from the Church?

answers

1. He ministered to God's people Israel after their return from the Babylonian captivity.
2. From the records in Nehemiah chapter 12.
3. He was probably only a teenager.
4. To speak forth God's word. When God's word is spoken, it is both convicting and comforting; it is both exhorting and encouraging.
5. To encourage God's people Israel because of their bright future.
6. As believers we can draw spiritual lessons and applications from Zechariah, even though his messages were addressed to Israel.
7. Prophecies to Israel will be literally fulfilled to the Jewish people in the future. These prophecies are not to be spiritualized away from Israel to the Church.

discuss / consider

1. Before the Lord returns set up His kingdom on this earth, there will be once again idolatry in the nation of Israel. In His Olivet Discourse, Jesus said that during the Tribulation Period, the anti-Christ will set up an image in the temple. The prophet Daniel called him "the abomination of desolation" (Daniel 11:31). Revelation chapter 13 makes it clear that both Jews and Gentiles will worship this image. The false shepherds and leaders (Zechariah 10:3) refer primarily to those operating under the false messiah or the anti-Christ of the last days. At this time all nations will be gathered against Israel for war (Zechariah 12:3). What a dreadful and discouraging scene! Then comes the good news! The Lord will visit His flock and there will be a spiritual restoration of the nation Israel. Many will believe in the Messiah whom they once rejected. Then the Lord will return and lead His redeemed people in victory over all evil and enemy forces. What an encouraging and glorious scene!
2. Note the four titles that are given to our Lord as Messiah in Zechariah 10:4. Consider the meaning of each title.
3. Read Zechariah 10:6-12. These are promises made to the Jewish people and they are still valid today. Like a shepherd, the Lord will whistle for His flock, and the Jews will return from the far countries of this world. The best part is that Israel will be restored to the Lord. What a great prophecy! The return of the Jews to Israel today is now in unbelief, but in the future it will be in faith.

challenge

In context, God's whistle is for the return of Israel to the land and to the Lord. But it has application for us. Is God whistling for you to come and receive His free gift of salvation in Christ, or to come back to Him if you have wandered away? Don't delay!

memorize

"The Lord will visit His (wandering) flock." Zechariah 10:3

"I will bring them back because I have mercy on them...I am the Lord their God." Zechariah 10:6

"I will whistle for them and gather them and redeem them." Zechariah 10:8

"I will sow them among the peoples, and they shall remember Me in far countries...and they shall return." Zechariah 10:9

Lesson 11

**Zechariah Prophecies Three Significant Events to Come in Israel's Future: The Rejection of the Messiah, the Destruction of Rome, and the Coming of the Anti-Christ
Zechariah 11:1-17**

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. Unbelieving Israel rejected the true Shepherd.

2. Unbelieving Israel will accept a false shepherd.

practical application

Don't despise dramatic presentations.

questions

1. Review Zechariah's prophecies:

a. chapters 1-6 - eight prophetic _____

b. chapters 7-8 - four prophetic _____

c. chapters 9-14 - two prophetic _____

2. What was the Lord's purpose in giving Zechariah his first prophetic burden?

3. Why had the blessing been delayed?

4. Why did God allow the Roman armies to sweep in from the north, overrun the country, and destroy the temple?

5. What did the Lord tell Zechariah to do in Zechariah 11:4-17?

6. What were the two staffs called, and what did they represent?

7. What would happen to these two staffs?

answers

1.

- a. visions
- b. messages
- c. burdens (or oracles)

2. To lift up and deliver the people. In context, it explains why all the blessing was predicted in Chapter 10.

3. Because the true Shepherd of Israel was rejected by the people

4. Because the Messiah was rejected, and before the blessing can come, Israel must undergo the discipline of God.

5. He told him to act out the part of two shepherds. First, the part of the good and true Shepherd (11:4-14) and then the part of the foolish or false shepherd (11:15-17).

6. One was called "Beauty" (or Favor), which represents the covenant of God to protect the people. The other staff was called "Bonds" (or Union), which represents unity within the people.

7. Both staffs would be broken.

discuss / consider

1. The leaders of Israel were not caring for the sheep (remember the Scribes and Pharisees). These were the unfaithful rulers and false shepherds of the nation. In Zechariah's role play, the two staffs were broken, showing that God's protection was being removed so that the Romans would be free to sweep in against Jerusalem, and any unity in Israel would be impossible. There would be world-wide dispersion. God holds spiritual leaders of a nation responsible for the care of the flock. What about the false and unfaithful shepherds today? God still holds spiritual leaders responsible for the care of the flock. They will know God's judgment.

2. The anti-Christ will be accepted by the nation Israel. The good news is that this false shepherd will be conquered and removed. When the Lord comes He will cut down and eliminate the anti-Christ of the last days. See 2 Thessalonians 2:

8. Not all the Jewish people will turn to the anti-Christ, and not all Gentiles will receive the mark of the beast. There will be 144,000 Jewish evangelists of the Tribulation Period who will lead many Jews to saving faith in the true Messiah who is returning to set up His kingdom. See Revelation 7. Could you make a time chart of the last days?

challenge

God called Zechariah to make a dramatic presentation to illustrate the truth He wanted to convey to the people. Dramatic presentations can be very effective. God chose to use this method not only with Zechariah, but also with Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Re-think your position if you dislike dramatic presentations. Many people can be reached with truths of scripture by this method.

memorize

"I took for myself two staffs: the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bonds." Zechariah 11:7

"So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them into the house of the Lord for the potter." Zechariah 11:13

Lesson 12

The Beginning of Zechariah's Second Prophetic Burden, Which He Was to Lift Up and Proclaim to the People Zechariah 12:1-14

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. In that day, Israel will be delivered from all her enemies.
2. In that day, Israel will look on their Messiah, whom they pierced.

practical application

Have you mourned the death of Christ by yourself?

questions

1. What was the historical context when the book of Zechariah was written? To whom was it written? Why was it written?
2. Who was the governor at that time?
3. The prophecy of Zechariah was encouraging in two points. What were they?
4. Why the delay in the fulfillment of some of the prophecies in Zechariah?
5. What is the next event on God's timetable? When will it take place?
6. What event will come after the next event on God's timetable? And the next event after this?
7. What does "in that day" refer to?

answers

1. The people of Israel had returned from their seventy-year captivity in Babylon. This burden of Zechariah was given to encourage them and to motivate them to finish the job of rebuilding the temple.
2. Zerubbabel
3. It predicted the completion of the rebuilt temple and it looked forward to the glorious future of Israel under the kingship of the Messiah.
4. Because the Messiah was rejected by Israel when the Lord came the first time. Some of the prophecies await fulfillment until the Lord comes a second time.
5. The Rapture of the Church. It is imminent; it could take place at any time.
6. The Rapture of the Church will be followed by the Tribulation Period of seven years, followed by the return of the Lord to this earth to set up His earthly kingdom, which will extend for 1,000 years (called the Millennium).
7. The end times

discuss / consider

1. In the end times, all nations will be gathered against Israel, whose capital is Jerusalem. In light of current events, it's easy to see how this could come about in the near future. However, the Lord has the last word, and the key to Israel's deliverance will be the Lord Himself. The nations are no match for the Lord, who will defend Israel and deliver the land of Judah and the city of Jerusalem from all her enemies. This is the time in the prophecy of Daniel chapter 2 when the image of Gentile power is crushed to powder and blown away. Then the dynasty of David will be re-established and the Lord Jesus will reign. Jerusalem will finally be a city of true peace. What a great day that will be!

2. During the Tribulation Period, there will be a great spiritual awakening among the Jewish people. (Refer Romans chapter 11 in this connection.) The groundwork for this awakening is taking place even today. God is at work. During the Tribulation, the 144,000 Jewish evangelists of Revelation chapter 7 will preach the gospel of the coming kingdom and the return of the Messiah. Many will turn to the Lord at that time. Then the Lord will return, and Israel will look on her Messiah whom they pierced (Zechariah 12:10). This is more than the prediction of the piercing that would take place at the crucifixion of Christ. It is that, but this prophecy looks on to the Second Coming of Christ, when believing Israel will mourn with great mourning when they see the Lord. What a moment it will be when Jesus returns and Israel receives Him as their Messiah, the Messiah they once rejected!

challenge

Mourning for the Messiah is on an individual basis (Zechariah 12:12-14). Salvation is always an individual matter, and no one can repent for you. Have you come to the place in your life where you realize that the Lord Jesus died for your sins personally? Have you mourned the death of Christ by yourself?

memorize

"In that day the Lord will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem...I will destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." Zechariah 12:8-9

"In that day they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him." Zechariah 12:10

Lesson 13

A Continuation of Zechariah's Second Prophetic Burden (Oracle): It Is About the Future National Cleansing of Israel Zechariah 13:1-9

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. In that day a fountain will be opened for Israel.
2. In that day idolatry will be cut off from Israel.
3. In that day salvation will come to one third of Israel.

practical application

Have you been to the cleansing fountain?

questions

1. Approximately how many quotations from this minor prophet are in the New Testament?
2. Zechariah predicts more about the _____ than any of the other prophets, with the exception of Isaiah.
3. What is meant by "that day?" What does it include?
4. What is the fountain of Zechariah 13:1?
5. To whom is the water from the cleansing fountain available?
6. Will idolatry return to Israel in the future?
7. Who strikes the shepherd? See Zechariah 13:7.

answers

1. About forty
2. Messiah
3. "That day" refers to the end times after the Rapture of the Church. It includes the coming Tribulation Period as well as the Millennial Kingdom of our Lord on this earth.
4. The fountain is the work of Christ on the cross in dying for the sins of the world.
5. The water from that cleansing fountain is available for anyone.
6. Yes, but finally all of this idolatry will be cut off and removed from the land.
7. God Himself strikes the Shepherd. See Isaiah 53:4-12. Here is the heart of the gospel. See John 3:16.

discuss / consider

1. Refer to Zechariah 1:1. A fountain shall be opened, not created or made or come into being for sin, but opened. The fountain is already there, but in that day, it will be opened for Israel and the benefits will become available. This fountain is the work of Christ on the cross in dying for the sins of the world. That work is finished; it has been accomplished. But right now Israel is blind to this fountain. A veil lies over their heart, but in a coming day that veil will be taken away. The fountain will be opened and they will see the fountain of the pierced Messiah, the fountain that was there all the time. Question: Are you blind to this fountain, or are drinking at it?
2. Read Zechariah 13:2, Revelation 9:20-21. Consider the idolatry of Israel that is yet to come. Remember, however, that in "that day" all of this idolatry will be cut off and removed from the land. In the meantime, how about the idolatry in your life?
3. "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd," says the Lord" Zechariah 13:7. As a result of Israel's rejection of the Messiah, the Lord was crucified and the flock was scattered. The crucified Lord is the means by which national cleansing will be available for Israel. Have you understood John 3:16 personally?

challenge

The fountain will be opened to Israel in the future, but it's available for anyone now. This is the fountain of cleansing from sin, established at Calvary. Coming to the fountain means coming to Christ as an individual and acknowledging that you are a sinner in need of cleansing. Have you been to that fountain?

memorize

"In that day a fountain shall be opened...for sin and for uncleanness." Zechariah 13:1

"Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered." Zechariah 13:7

"They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people;' and each one will say, 'The Lord is my God.'"
Zechariah 13:9

Lesson 14

A Vivid Description of the Return of the Lord to This Earth Zechariah 14:1-11

background notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. In that day the Lord will return to the Mount of Olives.
2. In that day there will be topographical changes and cosmic disturbances.

practical application

The Lord can bring about great changes for you in a short time.

questions

1. Name three things that will happen when the Lord Jesus returns to earth.
2. What kind of background is necessary for understanding the book of Zechariah?
3. Can you give three reasons why is the book of Zechariah difficult to understand?
4. What is the age called that we are in now?
5. Briefly outline future events.
6. Is it okay to spiritualize Old Testament Israel and interpret it as the New Testament Church?

answers

1. He will deliver His people; He will judge the nations; and He will bring peace to this earth.
2. It is important to know some Old Testament history.
3.
 - a. because of a lack of knowledge of Old Testament history
 - b. because Zechariah contains a lot of apocalyptic literature
 - c. because it contains many prophecies that are not yet fulfilled
4. The Church age
5.
 - a. The Rapture: the Church age will end with the Rapture, when the Lord returns for His bride, the Church
 - b. The Great Tribulation: then comes the seven-year Tribulation Period. The second half of this seven-year period is called the Great Tribulation. Near the end of the Great Tribulation will come the well-known battle of Armageddon
 - c. The Return of the Lord: the Great Tribulation will end with the return of the Lord to this earth. When the Lord returns, He will deliver His people; He will judge the nations; and He will set up His worldwide kingdom with Jerusalem as its capital. This time is known as the Millennium, because the kingdom of Christ will last for 1000 years
 - d. The New Heavens and the New Earth and the Eternal State: these follow the Millennium.
6. No. Israel is Israel throughout the Bible. Old Testament prophecies certainly use figurative language, but we are not given the liberty to spiritualize or allegorize Israel away to the Church.

discuss / consider

1. Read Zechariah 14:3-4. All nations will be gathered against Jerusalem, and when it seems that all hope is lost, the Lord will return. He will return to the literal Mount of Olives. At that time He will deliver His people (that is, the believing remnant in Jerusalem who are still living and have not been martyred. Read Acts 1:11. The Lord left at His ascension from the Mount of Olives. He will return to the Mount of Olives. Read Zechariah 14:5. Who are the holy ones who will come with the Lord? Probably angels and saints (believers). Remember, we of the Church leave this earth at the Rapture to be with the Lord during the Tribulation Period. Then we're coming back with the Lord to reign with Him in His earthly Millennial Kingdom. See 1 Thessalonians 3:13. Doesn't the anticipation of this thrill your soul?

2. Read Zechariah 14:4-5. The Mount of Olives will be split in two. When the Lord Jesus returns to the Mount of Olives there will be a great earthquake, and a large valley will be formed between the two halves of the mountain. This valley will become the means of escape for the believing remnant trapped in Jerusalem. Jerusalem will become the highest point and the focal point of the whole area. There will be fresh subterranean waters flowing out from Jerusalem both toward the Dead Sea in the East and the Mediterranean Sea in the West. These waters will make the Judean wilderness a very fertile area. See Zechariah 14:8 and Ezekiel 47. Beyond the earthquake and the topographical changes, there will also be cosmic disturbances. Read about these in Zechariah 14:6-7 and Matthew 24:29-30. Stand in awe at the prospect of this time!

challenge

The Lord can bring about great changes in a short time. Maybe you are in circumstances where it looks like there is no way out; it's a losing situation from the world's perspective. The Lord can bring about great changes for you in a short time. Put your trust in Him and commit the situation to Him. Read Zechariah 14 again and be encouraged.

memorize

"In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, and the Mount of Olives shall be split in two." Zechariah 14:4

"Thus the Lord my God will come, and all the saints with You." Zechariah 14:5

"In that day, living waters shall flow from Jerusalem...and the Lord shall be King over all the earth." Zechariah 14:8-9

Lesson 15

The Conclusion of Zechariah's Second Burden (Oracle): More about the End Times, both the Tribulation Period and the Millennial Kingdom of Christ Zechariah 14:12-21

background notes

1.

2.

3.

doctrinal / teaching points

1. In that day, the Lord will strike the nations with panic and plague.

2. In that day, the Feast of Tabernacles will be celebrated as never before.

practical application

Remember, your present situation is not your permanent state.

questions

1. In Zechariah's second prophetic burden, what was the bad news and what was the good news?

2. Review again, the simple time line of the future.

3. When is the time of the bad news? When is the time of the good news?

4. Read Zechariah 14:16. Who is the "everyone" here?

5. Everyone who enters the Millennial Kingdom of Christ on this earth will be a believer. During these 1000 years will everyone be a believer?

6. What is Satan's role at the end of the Millennium?

7. What is the Great White Throne Judgment? What happens after that?

answers

1. The bad news was of that there would be panic and plague on the nations. The good news was that great blessing would come with the future celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles.
2. The Rapture of the Church, when believers met the Lord in the air will come at any time; then the seven-year Tribulation Period; then the Millennial Kingdom of Christ set up here on this earth for 1000 years.
3. Bad news - the Tribulation Period; good news - the Millennium.
4. "Everyone" refers to the living believers that come out of the Great Tribulation and enter the Millennial Kingdom of Christ. These are the sheep of the nations that passed the test of the Lord's judgment of the nations, the judgment of the sheep and the goats. See Matthew 25:31-34.
5. No, many people will be born during this period, but not everyone who is born will become a believer.
6. Satan will deceive and rally together the unbelievers of the Millennium from the nations and they will go up to Jerusalem to make war against the land.
7. The Great White Throne Judgment is when God judges all unbelievers. Then God will set up the new heavens and the new earth for the eternal state.

discuss / consider

1. The Lord will strike the armies of the nations who are gathered against Jerusalem with panic and plague. Recall in Judges chapters 7-8, how the Lord used panic and confusion in the days of Gideon when He defeated the Midianites. The Lord chooses His methods for every occasion to defeat the enemy. When His time comes, He will win a great victory for Jerusalem.
2. Ezekiel Chapters 45-46 tell us that biblical feasts will be celebrated during the Millennium. The Feast of Tabernacles is emphasized in Zechariah 14:16 because it is the only one typically fulfilled in the Kingdom age. Review the seven biblical feasts that God gave to Israel and their fulfillment:
 - a. Passover, the first biblical feast, typically fulfilled with the death of Christ
 - b. Feast of Unleavened Bread, typically fulfilled in the separation and communion of saints
 - c. Feast of Firstfruits, typically fulfilled with the resurrection of Christ
 - d. Feast of Pentecost, typically fulfilled with the coming of the Holy Spirit
 - e. Feast of Trumpets will be typically fulfilled with the regathering of Israel to the land
 - f. Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) will be typically fulfilled with the national repentance and cleansing of Israel
 - g. Feast of Tabernacles will be typically fulfilled in the kingdom itself.

Note that the first four feasts were all typically fulfilled with the first coming of Christ, and the last three feasts will be typically fulfilled with the second coming of Christ. In that day, everything in Jerusalem will be cleansed and dedicated to the Lord. Israel will truly be the Holy Land. And this wonderful condition will ripple out around the world because the Lord's kingdom is universal. Allelujah!

challenge

Would you want to live in your present situation forever? Regardless of how good or how bad it is, it is not your permanent state. As a believer, you will be part of all the future blessings of Christ's kingdom here on this earth. You will reign with Christ in His kingdom. Are you excited about this prospect?

memorize

"In that day a great panic from the Lord will be among them." Zechariah 14:13

"Everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King...and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles." Zechariah 14:16

"In that day, 'HOLINESS TO THE LORD' shall be engraved on the bells of the horses." Zechariah 14:20