

Zechariah

Remembrance Day (pt. 1)

Look! There is a day coming, belonging to Jehovah ... and Jehovah must become King over all the earth. In that day Jehovah will prove to be one, and his name one. **ZECHARIAH 14:1,9 (NWT)**

Chapters 1,2

REMEMBER AND RETURN

(1:1-6) Is Yahweh's indignation against Israel evidence of covenant cancellation?

If men expect God to return to them in prosperity, they must return to him in penitence. The flower averted from the sun must turn toward it, to catch its genial smile ... [Thomas V. Moore Zechariah (1856) p.44]

No, "Jehovah will not forsake His people, for His great Name's sake, because it hath pleased Jehovah to make you His people" -- in which faithfulness of the God of Israel to the nation which He has chosen for His own inheritance, in spite of all its unworthiness, you may see

Can we be sure of prophets if some 'words' unfulfilled?

[1:17] And so also will the promises, which have been made to the covenant-nation, be all fulfilled, though they may be apparently delayed. Ample proofs will be given to it of the continuance of the divine election; the building of the temple will be completed; and Jerusalem will rise from its ruins. [E.W. Hengstenberg Christology of the Old Testament Vol.2 p.961]

[2:6,7] What these dangers were may be seen from the great inscription of Darius cut into the rock at Behistun, and supposed by Sir Henry Rawlinson to have been executed in the fifth year of the reign of Darius. That inscription records two great rebellions in Babylonia, and two captures of the city of Babylon, one effected by Darius in person, the other by one of his generals. The Jews in Babylon who did not listen to the prophetic warning, suffered no doubt severely in the confusions of that period; while those who returned to Palestine, and obeyed the command to flee out of Babylon, delivered their souls, that is their lives, and were not cut off in her iniquity. [C.H.H. Wright, Zechariah and His Prophecies (1879) p.38]

a picture, dear reader, of His faithfulness to you, and a pledge of your eternal safety in Christ. [David Baron, The Visions and Prophecies of Zechariah (1918) p.94]

(1:7-15) The Persian Empire is found at rest. But why does Israel not enjoy peace? (Haggai 2:5,9; compare Isaiah 32:13-28). Does the Christian church proclaim (cry thou, an order -- KJV, ASV) the message of vv. 14-17?

[1:8] He sees a grove of myrtles, a beautiful shrub, with glossy, dark green leaves, and white, star-like clusters of fragrant flowers, whose leaves exhaled their richest odor only when bruised. This was a symbol of the theocracy, the Jewish Church and nation. The Church is not a cedar, in its queenly pride, or an oak in its giant strength, but a lowly myrtle, humble, unpretending, and exhaling its sweetest graces when bruised by the weight of affliction. Such was the existing state of the theocracy, and hence the despondency of the people, who thought that so lowly a thing must be wholly overshadowed and destroyed by the proud and godless powers of the world. [Moore 46]

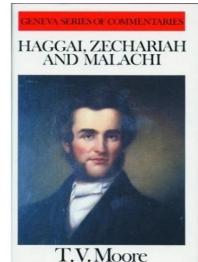
... Esther was originally called Hadassa, myrtle, on account of her loveliness. The comparison of the kingdom of God to the quiet waters of Siloah, in contrast with the roaring waters of the Euphrates, is of a similar character (see Is. 8). [E.W. Hengstenberg Christology of the Old Testament Vol.2 p.961]

(1:16-2:5) Has the Shekinah glory departed Israel forever? (10:6; Ezekiel 11:22,23; 43:1-7; Isaiah 40:5)

[1:21] It seemed as vain a fulmination of displeasure for an obscure Jew, amid the ruins of Jerusalem, to predict calamity to magnificent Babylon, as for some humble preacher in our mountains to utter threats against London or Paris. Yet this Jew uttered the word of Jehovah, and the elements of ruin, in their remotest lurking-places, heard the summons, and came up each on its mission of destruction. And now, all that remains of Babylon is a heap of desolation, whilst the Church is lengthening her cords and strengthening her stakes to fill the whole earth. Hence, all that this vision predicted has thus far been fulfilled, a guarantee of a yet ampler fulfilment in the future. [Moore 49]

It follows that the honour of the Lord was bound up in the rebuilding of the Temple. That nations had to know beyond any doubt that the God of Israel had not gone out of existence when the Israelites were removed from their land. "Then the nations will know that I the Lord sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary is in the midst of them for evermore." (Ezek. 37:28) ... In the thinking of Ezekiel there was a close link between the Temple and the covenant. [Joyce G. Baldwin, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi (TOTC, 1971) pp.19-20]

(2:6-13) While the coming of Yahweh in glory is vindication of His promises (vv.9,11), of what is covenant faithfulness a demonstration? (v.8) Note: I will

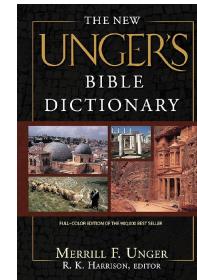


dwell (vv.10,11) is Heb. shakan, sharing the same root as shekinah and the Greek verb eskenosen in John 1:14, the Word ... tabernacled among us.

After glory ... probably means to vindicate and to display the glory of God. [Baron 73] The sender is Jehovah, and the person sent is not the prophet, but the angel of the Lord ... The Lord comes to her in His angel, in whom are His name (Ex.23:21) and His face (Ex.33:14), i.e. the angel of His face (Isa.63:9), who reveals His nature, to dwell in the midst of her. This dwelling of Jehovah, or of His angel, in the midst of Zion, is essentially different from the dwelling of Jehovah in the Most Holy Place of His temple. It commences with the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, and is completed by His return in glory (John 1:14 and Rev.21:3). Then will many, or powerful, nations attach themselves to Jehovah, and become His people (cf. 8:20,21; Isa.14:1). [C.F. Keil, The Minor Prophets Vol.2 pp.247-249]

God's word and promises toward Israel will be thereby vindicated, demonstrating God's truthfulness and faithfulness. God's love toward His people will be proved. His power displayed, His wisdom proclaimed, and His whole infinitely holy and gracious character revealed. His glory is inseparably linked with the fortunes of His people. He cannot be glorified as long as His people are disgraced and persecuted by their enemies ... [Merrill F. Unger, Zechariah: Prophet of Messiah's Glory (1963) p.50]

God's love is popularly thought to be a revelation first made in the New Testament, but this is far from the truth. It is implicit from the beginning, and especially from the time of the covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3; 17:1-8). [Baldwin 222]



Chapters 3-6

REDEEMING THE WHOLE CREATION

(3:1-10) Why can there be no PARADISE (blessing, nations, Gen.12:2,3) until Israel is restored to its land and saved? (Gen.12:1,7,8) Will that salvation take 1000 years?

[3:2] In the words, "the Lord said, the Lord rebuke thee," a distinction is made between the Lord and his Angel; and, at the same time, the latter is placed on an equality with the former, in respect of divine wrath and glory. [Hengstenberg 974]

[3:9] The expression "in one day,"... implies that the atonement to be made by the Messiah will not be constantly repeated, like that made by the typical priesthood, but completed in one single action. [Hengstenberg 982]

(4:9) How does Jehovah vindicate his witness Zechariah? (see also 2:9,11; 6:15; Isaiah 41:22,23; 44:24-26)

Zerubbabel will certainly finish the work, and the fulfilment of this prophecy will provide further vindication of the prophet's authority. [Baldwin 122]

(6:11-13) Will Branch -- the King Messiah (the 'seed') -- be man or spirit? (14:4; Acts 17:31)

The consent of the ancient Jews in interpreting "the Branch" of the Messiah is very remarkable ... R. Nachman observes on the force of the word man, "Man (in Num. 1:4), is not said here but of the Messiah the Son of David, as is said, 'Behold the Man, Whose name is the Branch,' Jonathan paraphrases, The Man Messiah, and so it is said, 'A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.'" ... [E.B. Pusey, The Minor Prophets Vol.8 p. 138]



Chapters 1 to 6

REVIEWING the 8 NIGHT VISIONS

1. The riders among the myrtle trees – Israel might feel cast off, unprotected among the nations, vulnerable even in her own land. Yet invisible armies are assigned to assist her.
2. 4 horns, 4 craftsmen – The Gentile powers may appear invulnerable, but again invisible helpers are assigned to 'fray' (i.e. diminish) their power. Empire does not impress Yahweh.
3. The measuring line – Yahweh will come in glory to Jerusalem, which will no longer need protection from the Gentile nations. The mysterious "angel of YHWH" assures Jerusalem that his presence will finally make God's resting place a "holy land", the only time this phrase occurs in Scripture.
4. Joshua installed as High Priest & Ruler – That Yahweh "has chosen Jerusalem" is repeated. The High Priest, official representative of Israel, is cleansed and installed. Here he is mysteriously connected with "the Branch", a reference to the throne of David, and to the Stone rejected but also "Head of the corner". All these details shadow how Yahweh will remove the iniquity of the land in a single day, so that the paradise earlier predicted by Isaiah can finally be brought about.
5. The Lampstand – The role of the Spirit in the accomplishment of these kingdom promises is emphasized – "Not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit". That even the "hosts" of Yahweh are not vital to this future eschaton is suggested. The 2 anointed ones show up again in the first KINGDOM passage in the Revelation (chapter 11).
6. The flying scroll – The Word of God goes out to the nations, who are judged according to its contents.
7. Woman in the ephah – Wickedness is removed to the land of Shinar (has Babylon already been destroyed?).
8. 4 chariots – Compare & contrast with the 4 horsemen of chapter 1. Does this "patrol" connote the final war & universal peace – and the fulfilment of the 2nd & 3rd petitions of the Lord's prayer? The "quieting" of Yahweh's Spirit may refer to the decisive judgments of the day of His wrath.