

Zechariah 1

Zechariah begins with 8 visions that run through 6:15. The visions are about what God was doing for the nation of Israel. As with most revelations, there is an obvious immediate fulfillment, and yet, some of the descriptions have an ultimate fulfillment in the Messiah. The vision is delivered by two angels that guide Zechariah through these visions in one night. The book takes place during the period of restoration when Cyrus sent the Israelites back to Israel to rebuild their temple and the city of Jerusalem.

1 October/November of 520 B.C. There is a lot of commentary on just who this Zechariah is since the ancestry doesn't line up with any other Zechariah in Scripture, however, whenever we read "son of", we can read "descendent of" which clears up the confusion. Zechariah means "the Lord remembered". It was a common name. His father Iddo was a Levite priest.

2 The background for the whole story is that Israel had failed to live up to the covenant and had turned to idolatry. That is why they ended up in exile. It isn't a good idea to make God jealous. Exodus 34:14

3 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. This seems contrary to the fact that none do good. No one seeks God. Actually, God is always present. We can't escape His presence, but when we respond to Him, His presence seems to be more real and immanent. It was a repeated message in that day. (Malachi 3:7; Micah 7:19) If God feels distant, it isn't because He left you, but that you left Him. You can turn that around in an instant. Come home! How gracious of God to leave it up to us and yet always be ready to receive us regardless of what we have done. Of course, repentance is required as we will see in verse 6.

4-5 Don't be like your forefathers. (2Chronicles 36:16) Life is brief. (James 4:14) Only what is done through God will truly last. Their forefathers died in the desert because they wouldn't listen or pay attention to the word of God through the prophets. Even the prophets are gone from this life. We need to keep eternity in mind today.

6 Though we are mortal, the Word endures and still speaks. (Isaiah 40:8) The people confessed God's judgments were righteous and deserved. We will reap what we have sown.

7 The visions begin on February 15, 519 B.C. with the Lord's hidden horsemen.

8 red=dark chestnut; sorrel = lighter brown These horses are concealed among Myrtles (an evergreen) in a ravine.

9-12 God's special ops that quickly report on the entire earth. Nothing is hidden from God. (Ecclesiastes 12:14) The earth is at rest. That is contrary to Isaiah 57:20-21. Israel is the people not at rest. The world is out of order. Because of the captivity of God's people, there was no need for Satan to attack mankind. The angel seems to be interceding for Israel. Some of the "angel of the Lord" passages refer to Jesus. (Exodus 3:2-4) This could be the case here, as He ever lives to intercede for us. Hebrews 7:25

13-14 The intercession results in a shift in the heavenly attitude toward the people of God. His jealous love is aroused and that means things are about to change for the better. How is God's jealousy different from man's? Is He jealous for us? (2Corinthians 11:2) How should that affect our behavior?

15 The captors went beyond what God had called them to do in judging Israel. Now His wrath is turned toward them. When given rest they sin even further. Blessing should draw us to God (Romans 2:4) , but the sinful nature of man uses the peace to rebel even further.

16 The Lord brings mercy! The house of the LORD will be built. The LORD comforts His people. (Psalm 146:5-6) We may stray and face the consequences of our sin, but God is always waiting for us to return that He might be merciful toward us.

17 When the people return to God, He returns to them, and prosperity follows.

18-19 The horns represent Judah's oppressors, Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians and Greeks.

20-21 Genesis 12:3 is still in effect even though Israel was experiencing the consequences of their sin. (Leviticus 26:33) The craftsmen are sent by God as enemies of the horns that oppressed Israel.