

Apocalypse Now

Chapter 14

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 87



Objective: To introduce the message and ministry of the prophet Zechariah.



The LORD was very angry with your forefathers. Therefore tell the people: “This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Return to me,’ declares the LORD Almighty, ‘and I will return to you,’ says the LORD Almighty.”

—Zechariah 1:2-3

Come near to God and He will come near to you.

—James 4:8

The book of Zechariah contains eight visions the prophet saw and shared with the exiles who had returned to Jerusalem. He believed the survivors of the captivity needed a vision of an omnipotent God who would work on behalf of His people to defend them, fight for them, establish them in His promises, and give them His blessings. His primary message was that if the people returned to God, God would return to the people. Through Zechariah’s preaching, God was calling His people not just to a city or a temple but return to their spiritual “homeland” of a relationship with Him. Zechariah is one of the most important prophet books, containing more detailed prophecies of the coming Messiah than any book other than Isaiah. Zechariah prophesies that God would give His people His Spirit and bless them forever.



1. True or false? Zechariah was much younger than Haggai, but they preached at about the same time.
2. True or false? Like Haggai, Zechariah was concerned about the rebuilding of the temple.
3. True or false? The exiles who had first returned to Jerusalem had low morale and little hope.
4. True or false? Zechariah is a very unusual name in the Bible.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. What does the name “Zechariah” mean?
 - a. God judges
 - b. God remembers
 - c. God has forsaken
 - d. Full of joy
6. Which of these terms occurs 53 times in the book of Zechariah?
 - a. “The Lord Almighty”
 - b. “Not My people”
 - c. “Sins of the fathers”
 - d. “By My Spirit”

7. Which of the following words would you use to describe each prophet? (*some words may be used for both prophets*)

Haggai:

Zechariah:

Pragmatic
Visionary
Hopeful
Direct
Literary
Brief
Encouraging
Messianic
Inspiring
Easy to understand
Difficult to understand

8. How did the people in Jerusalem generally feel about the difficult situation they were in?

- a. Courageous
 - b. Optimistic
 - c. Discouraged
 - d. Angry
9. Whom does God speak to?
- a. Only prophets
 - b. Only priests
 - c. Only His armies of angels
 - d. All of His people, if they will listen

10. How were Zechariah's visions relevant to the people?
- a. They gave instructions for the architecture of the temple.
 - b. They addressed difficult problems the people faced.
 - c. They gave the people strategies for defeating their enemies.
 - d. They enabled the people to escape all of their difficulties.



Is there a problem making you discouraged? How does knowing that God is working behind the scenes help you endure difficult problems? In what ways has God encouraged you to persevere? How can you encourage others who are facing hardships?



Thank God that He speaks to His people and that He encourages us when we are discouraged. Ask Him to teach you to depend on the strength of His Spirit in everything you do. Pray that He would help you understand how He is working in your life and give you faith to trust Him until you do.



Going Deeper

1. Although Zechariah and Haggai were partners and worked together, in what ways were they different? _____

2. As with Ezra and Nehemiah, how did their differences complement and supplement one another? (“If two of us are exactly alike, one of us is unnecessary!” –Dick Woodward) _____

3. What was the preaching method and what was the literary form used by Zechariah? _____

4. What strategy did Zechariah use to call God’s people to return to a relationship with their God? _____

5. In that context, why did he refer to the Messiah as the Branch? (Consider John 14:6) _____

6. What is one of the great themes of the 14 chapters of Zechariah that makes him, as a prophet, second only to Isaiah? _____

7. What obstacle that was blocking the work of God is addressed by the prophet Zechariah? _____
