

Lesson #38

PREPARATION FOR LESSON: read the book of Zechariah**BACKGROUND**

Author and Date: Written by Zechariah in Jerusalem from 520 - 480 BC; he has a 40 year ministry.

His name means *God remembers*.

He is from the tribe of Levi and a family of priests Neh. 12:1, 4, 12, 16

Theme: God remembers and reveals His plan for His people, the Jews

Purposes: To encourage the people in rebuilding the Temple and rebuilding their spiritual lives.

To reveal God's plans for His people in the immediate and distant future.

To show the Jews how to recognize their Messiah when He comes.

Scripture Background: Ezra 5 - 6; Haggai

OUTLINE

- I. Messages during temple construction 1-8 520-518 BC
 - God's Warning: do not play games with God.
 - God's Answers
 1. Dreams - God remembers His promises to them.
 2. Drama - He will give them a future king
 3. Instruction - Fast over disobedience - not about past tragedies
- II. Messages after temple construction 9-14 500-480 BC
 - Immediate future of Jews 9-11
 - Distant future of Jews 12-14

HISTORICAL SETTING: 500's BC Ezra 1-6; Haggai

536 BC Cyrus gives the Jews permission to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their temple

Only about 50,000 return under a Jewish man named Zerubbabel. After getting settled in the outlying area, they come to Jerusalem, build the altar of sacrifices and lay the foundation of the Temple. But then, for various reasons, they stop building and nothing more is done for 15 years.

520 BC Because of this delay, God speaks thru the prophet Haggai. In 3 weeks the people repent and start building.

Darius I (Darius the Gt.) is now king 522-486 BC

The people wonder if God remembers His promises. God sends Zechariah; his name means *God remembers*.

DEVELOPED OUTLINE:**During Temple Construction**

Warning 520 BC If God's people obey Him, they will have His strength, presence and help. But they should not play games with God. They should commit themselves to genuine obedience.

8 Dreams 519 BC

1. Horses and riders 1:8

2. 4 horns/4 smiths 1:18 (2:1)

3. Man measuring Jerusalem 2:1 (2:5)

4. Joshua with clean vestments 3:1-4

5. Menorah with 2 olive trees 4:2-3

6. Scroll moving across sky 5:1, 3

7. Basket with woman 5:6-11

8. 4 chariots/horses 6:1, 7

God is telling His people He remembers and will keep His promises.

Regarding their independence: He knows Persia is still in power but eventually

He will destroy their enemies and restore Jerusalem.

Regarding their ministry: He assures them their sin is forgiven; He will use them as a nation to reveal His light to the nations. Joshua and Zerubbabel are the 2 leaders who will help them. Zerubbabel will lead them in completing the temple, not by military might nor political power, but by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jews who refuse to obey God's laws will be punished.

Regarding their future: One day Jerusalem will be holy and all who tried to destroy the Jews will be judged.

Drama 518 BC

Zechariah makes 2 garlands, combines them into one crown and puts it on the head of Joshua, the high priest. He then removes it and puts it in the Temple. Putting the crown on Joshua's head means their future King will be high priest and King combined. Putting the crown in the Temple for safe-keeping means this promise is secure, but will not happen immediately. The name *Joshua* in Hebrew is *Yeshua*. The name *Jesus* in Hebrew is *Yeshua*. Right now Jesus is our high priest. In the future He will be King in a literal, physical kingdom.

Instruction

Fasting is not about remembering tragedies of the past. Fasting is about changing our lives in the present. God is concerned about our conduct. When there is continued disobedience, fasting is the time to consider our life. We are giving the Holy Spirit time and opportunity to produce the desire and will to repent. It is a way to say the spiritual is more important than the physical.



DEVELOPED OUTLINE *continued***After Temple Construction**

God's Plan for their **immediate** future **500 BC to 30 AD** Chapters 9-11

God will judge Gentile nations who want to harm them, using Gentile leaders. 9

God will judge Jewish false shepherds who want to harm them and give His people a true Shepherd. 10

Jewish leadership will reject their true Shepherd. 11

God's Plan for their **distant** future Chapters 12-14

God will destroy all of the Jews' enemies. 12

Jews as a nation will recognize and accept their Messiah. 13

Tragically - at the time of Satan's kingdom, Satan's man will kill two-thirds of the Jews.

One-third will survive. As an entire group, they will repent and accept Jesus as their Messiah.

All surviving Jews will be saved and ask Jesus to come/save them from Satan's man and his armies.

Jesus will respond by returning to this earth to save them and set up His kingdom 14

PREDICTIONS ABOUT JESUS: so the Jews can recognize their Messiah when He comes**3 Names** to show what He is like

Servant; Branch descendent of David 3:8

Cornerstone 10:4 because Jesus is perfect and reliable, the weight of our faith and trust in Him is secure

His First Coming as Savior Zechariah gives these details 500 years before Jesus is born.

- Enters Jerusalem on a donkey 9:9; sold by Judas for 30 pieces of silver (token price) 11:12-13

- God the Father involved in His death; is humanity and deity; when taken prisoner, the apostles flee 13:7

His Second Coming as King

- He will forgive all their national sin 3:9; will rule as King in His physical kingdom 6:13; 9:10

- He will be recognized by Israel as their Messiah 12:10

- When He arrives at the Mt. of Olives, there will be major geographical changes 14:4-5

APPLICATION: Lessons for us**Key to Israel's future as a people and nation**

Thruout the book, God the Father is aware, Jewish religious leaders will reject their Messiah when He comes the first time. Yet thruout the book, He also states the Jews, as a people and nation, will accept their Messiah in the distant future. He guarantees they will have a King and be in His Kingdom. These promises for the distant future are not made with **if's** but with **when's**. Therefore we can be sure God is not finished with the Jews; they are still part of His plan. He will remember and keep **all** of His promises.

Key to our lives in the present - the key to spiritual success

We would like to change the corruption and godless culture in the world around us.

We think...if we got more believers elected to office; more money for political influence, we could change laws.

We would like to change our churches to be more effective in reaching out to people.

If only we had more exciting music or programs, a bigger church, we would make an impact on the community.

We would like to change our friends and family, to believe in Jesus, to believe correctly and live within God's boundaries.

If we could learn right arguments. be more persuasive, keep nagging, they would be convinced.

We would like to change our lives, to be more successful in ministry.

If we just had more spiritual gifts, more confidence or the right connections, we could be more effective.

We have all tried these methods. Some can bring human success, but it will not last.

Spiritual success can only come thru the Holy Spirit. It is **His** power - influence - work and conviction.

It is only as we are led by Holy Spirit, that we will see results.

Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord

