

Welcome to the book of Zechariah!

We have chosen 4:6 as a key verse for Zechariah that reflects the theme "Lord of Hosts." With the nation's return to God there was a need to reestablish priorities. For many years Israel had been citizens of nations who did not worship the Lord God. It was fitting to refocus the supremacy of the Lord of Hosts; God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph!

ZECHARIAH

Lord of Hosts

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| <p>EIGHT NIGHT VISIONS 1:1-6,9</p> | <p>HOLY PROPHECIES 6:12-13; 14:20</p> |
| <p>1-6</p> | <p>6-14</p> |

"Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit." 4:6

Also note the passages listed within the overview chart above. How does each passage relate to the corresponding section title? What do you learn about the Lord of Hosts as you consider these first encounters in the book of Zechariah? Haggai is the building prophet and Zechariah is the return prophet. It was his goal to motivate the returning remnant for the right reason: to return to the life and land of the Lord of Hosts! Because Zechariah was of the family of Aaron (priesthood), he was unique in that he was a prophet-priest. Here was the voice of the prophet proclaiming not only return but personal purity. His vision prophesies (1-8) are dated, and his direct prophesies are focused toward Alexander the Great, the Greek Empire, the Maccabean struggle (see Between the Testaments), and the Coming Messiah. Ezra is companion reading to the prophet Zechariah (Ezra 5:1).

Open your heart as you read!

We have also been called from the nations to inhabit the household of God! Have you forsaken the gods of the culture where you were raised and put them away in honor of the Lord of Hosts?!

This is also one of the most "wild" prophesies because of the vivid and somewhat off-the-wall visions given to Zephaniah. This prophet gives us keys to finding a repentant heart in any circumstance and century!



Zechariah Chapter Chart

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The following questions can help you as you summarize and title your chapters. Choose key verses that reflect the spiritual message of the chapters.

CHAPTER 1

What does the Lord of Hosts reveal as the reason for the Captivity?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 2

What aspect(s) of God's nature are revealed by this vision?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 3

Who were the promises and conditions directed toward (note verse 7)?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 4

What is the significance of Zechariah being moved by the angel?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 5

What part does the land of Shinar play in this prophecy? Where is it?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 6

Why was the reminder of verse 14 given?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 7

Who was the focus of the fasts that are mentioned?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 8

What are the reminders about being blessed even when you are in a minority?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 9

Note the focus on the King of Humility. What is the spiritual connection?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 10

What is absent from this prophecy that is distinct from chapters 1-9?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 11

Who does the shepherd of the flock represent? What and why?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 12

Why was Judah to be rescued first?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 13

Why is this specific condemnation of the prophets given?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CHAPTER 14

Why do you think that the feast of booths is mentioned?

TITLE _____ KEY VERSE _____

CONCLUSION:

Why did Zechariah prophesy to the returning remnant? What was his contribution to their spiritual welfare? What do Zechariah's visions teach you about your own relationship with God?

The Lord of Hosts is an awesome God, great and mighty in power and holy in essence! May our vision of Him be an accurate representation of THE LAMB OF GOD, WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!



NIGHT VISIONS

“As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, ‘My Lord, what will be the outcome of these events?’ And he said, ‘Go your way, Daniel, for the meaning of the words of prophecy is concealed and sealed until the end time. None of the wicked shall understand these words, but those who are wise shall in the last days understand.’” (Daniel 12:8-10) After reading Zechariah’s visions, maybe you feel a little like Daniel, because you read them but could not understand them. The following study guide is designed to give you some hints on how to interpret or understand visions in the prophetic writings.

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:

1. Let’s pretend you are a 20th Century prophet in America and your name is Zeke. You have a vision one night of a giant turkey in the sky “gobbling down” a bunch of whoppers from Burgler King. In fact, this turkey “stuffs” himself with whoppers. Your assignment is to draw a picture of this vision to share with the rest of the class and give several possible interpretations of such a vision.

2. To see the crucial nature and understand the meaning of key words in a vision from a prophet’s perspective, write down in a sentence the possible meaning of “tree”.

- a. From a boy’s point of view
- b. From a woodsman’s point of view
- c. From a botanist’s point of view
- d. From Christ’s point of view

3. Zechariah’s eight-night visions (recorded in the first six chapters of his book) provide a real challenge for Bible interpreters. Some of the symbols are explained to Zechariah, many are not. For a clue to the central theme of the visions, read the first and last paragraphs which bracket the section (1:1-6; 6:9-15). This approach will often help you understand other visions throughout Scripture as well.

4. One crucial element in understanding visions is to locate key words or phrases. You must determine several things in words:

- a. Determine if a word has one meaning or many.
- b. Determine how the many meanings may be related.
- c. Determine from the content of a passage which meaning is most likely one the author intended.

You will notice a distinct change in emphasis in Zechariah 5-6. All of Zechariah’s visions in the first four chapters revolved around Israel...her temple, future, and Messiah. What phrase is frequently repeated in Chapters 5-6 to demonstrate a new focus?

5. A final way to interpret visions is to draw or sketch a picture of what was seen or read. This would be helpful with Ezekiel’s “wheels” vision, King Nebuchadnezzar’s “statue and stone” vision, and Zechariah’s “flying roll” - “woman” - “chariots” and “horns” visions. Why not try and sketch what you envision how one of these visions to have looked.

1 Samuel 3:1 says “And word from the Lord was rare in those days, visions were infrequent.” While you probably don’t have too many visions of the kind Zechariah did or are not called upon to interpret a vision as Daniel did, God can give you another kind of vision.

Zechariah’s writing had as its goal the motivating of God’s people to rebuild the temple so that it would be ready when the Messiah comes to fill it with His glory. That was his vision for the people. What vision do you have for yourself? Why not dedicate yourself to allowing God’s Spirit to fill the temple of your body for His glory!

LORD OF HOSTS

This title for God occurs nearly 300 times in the Old Testament, primarily in the prophetic books (247 times), and is particularly frequent in Haggai (14 times), Zechariah (53 times), and Malachi (24 times).

The word “hosts” is used of stars, angels, the nation of Israel, and the armies of other nations. The significance of the word here is that God is the sovereign Lord and Master of the universe (stars, angels, nations). To the prophets this was not an abstract doctrine but a dynamic force. The prophet Zechariah saw God gathering all the hosts under His sovereign control for God’s glory.

It should also be noted that Zechariah lived in a day when Israel had lost its army, its power, and its leadership. When he spoke of the sovereign Lord of Hosts, such a name would not be a threatening or intimidating factor in their lives but an encouraging one in light of their weakened state. As we consider the sovereign Lord of Hosts in our study, don’t allow God’s sovereignty over your life to threaten you - but let it thrill you!

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:

1. Why do you think so many Christians have difficulty with the sovereignty of God but seemingly have little difficulty with the doctrine of the God-Man, Trinity, or origin of sin?
2. Often we become imbalanced in our views when it comes to divine sovereignty and human responsibility. When it comes to sharing our faith, what could be a natural outcome of those who are hung up on human responsibility? On hyper views of sovereignty?
3. Write a brief paragraph of several sentences explaining the tension between God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility.

Divine Sovereignty:

Human Responsibility:

4. What are some practical benefits of God’s sovereignty when it comes to: Sharing your faith, fate and luck, weaknesses or bad habits, uncertainty about major decisions, and security and comfort?

5. As you read about the sovereign Lord of Hosts in 1:3-6, what does this passage suggest to be a primary problem in our relationship to the Lord of Hosts?

Through the Scriptures the Holy Spirit has told us there are some things hard to understand, but this does not mean that they are impossible to comprehend! God has designed spiritual life to include faith, and this will never change. Be careful about subjecting God to our limited human logic as you try to understand His ways. Remember, “His thoughts are not our thoughts, and our thoughts are not His thoughts...as high as the heavens are above the earth, so are His ways above our ways!”