The Lord Remembers and Blesses in His Time
Zechariah 1:1-6

The book of Zechariah is the Old Testament’s equivalent to the New Testament book of Revelation; its central character is Jesus Christ; it is filled with visions worded in an apocalyptic style writing; it focuses on the wrath of God, but also on future blessings to those who repent; it reveals the true and false shepherd; it closes with the Second Coming of Christ to the earth where He destroys His enemies and sets up His kingdom.

In the Old Testament only the prophet Isaiah writes more about the Second Coming of the Messiah.

Zechariah prophesied in the 2nd year of King Darius of Persia (520 BC); he was the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet (1:1); Zechariah means “The Lord remembers;” Berechiah means “the Lord blesses;” Iddo means: “His time;” put this together and you get the hopeful message of the book: The Lord remembers and blesses in His time.

The Purpose of Zechariah’s Prophecy

The review of historical background... Eighteen years had passed since Cyrus of Persia had conquered the Babylonians and allowed the Jewish captives to return to their homeland to rebuild the temple, the walls of the city and the city of Jerusalem--- all destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon in 586 BC; 70 years had been prophesied for their captivity (Jeremiah 25:11,12; 29:10); the decree to end the captivity by Cyrus was in 536 BC, his first year of reign (Ezra 1:1-3).

Only a small remnant of 49,697 Jews returned under the leadership of Zerubbabel, the governor; they were enthusiastic and in seven months had built the altar to the temple and began offering sacrifices to God (Ezra 3).
At the beginning of the second year they laid the foundation for the temple, then work came to a halt for 16 years as local Samaritans disrupted their work (Ezra 4-6).

The restarting of the temple under the prophet Haggai... The people were apathetic and more concerned about embellishing their own homes; in 520 BC God raised up the prophet Haggai to motivate them to finish the temple.

In two short chapters Haggai has four challenging messages:
2. Be strong in spite of hard times (2:1-9).
3. Be clean (2:10-19).

The restoring of hope under the prophet Zechariah... Two months after Haggai, God raised up Zechariah (Zechariah 1:1 compare with Haggai 1:1); Zechariah's message was one of hope: “Keep on working. God has not forgotten you.”

In the first 8 chapters Zechariah wanted the people to see God as the source of comfort through it all; chapters 9-14 He wants them to know their future is fantastic if they will only obey Him.

Once the temple was completed (516 BC), Jesus tells us that Zechariah, son of Berechiah was murdered between the temple and the altar (Matthew 23:35).

The Prominent Person in Zechariah’s Prophecy

The appearance of the Messiah... He is the featured Person in the prophecy; in 1:9 Zechariah is talking to an angel; in verses 11,12 He is referred to as “the Angel of the LORD;” in 3:1 the Angel of the LORD is standing before Joshua the high priest; theologians refer to the Angel of the LORD as a Christophony, an appearance of Christ in the Old Testament; in his book, Zechariah is having a conversation with “the LORD of hosts” (7:9;
8:1, 4, 6, 9, 14, 18, 20, 23); that is a direct reference to God the Father; Zechariah says of the Angel of the LORD “that the LORD of Hosts has sent Me to you” (4:9).

**The activities of the Messiah...** The futuristic part of the book is chapters 9 through 14; Christ is the central part of Israel's future: His triumphal entry into Jerusalem (9:9); His betrayal for 30 pieces of silver (11:12); His crucifixion and the eventual salvation of the Jews who at His Second Coming will receive the Spirit of grace (12:10); His judgment on Israel where ⅔ die and the other ⅓ are tested by fire (13:8-9); the return of the Messiah where His feet stand on the Mount of Olives and He establishes His Millennial Kingdom (14:4); He will be the center of worship at the annual Feast of Tabernacles (14:16).

**The appellations of the Messiah...** He has several titles: Angel of the LORD (1:12); the Branch (3:8; 6:12); the Priest (6:12-13); the True Shepherd (11:4-14); the King (14:16).

**The assurance from the Messiah...** Zechariah is writing his prophecy to comfort Israel by assuring them that God is still on their side (1:13); therefore the theme: God remembers and God blesses in His time!

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**The Promise of Eight Blessings of Comfort for Israel**

**The comfort of eight visions...** While this book is full of symbols, it is still a very practical book about repentance, God's care for His people, and salvation; its primary purpose is to motivate the people to finish the temple so they can worship God as He has commanded; while there were hardships, Zechariah comforts them with 8 apocalyptic visions.

The vision of horses and riders (1:7-17).

The vision of horns and craftsmen (1:18-21).
The vision of the Man with the measuring line (2:1-13).

The vision of Joshua’s garments (3:1-10).

The vision of the golden lampstand and olive trees (4:1-14).

The vision of the flying scroll (5:1-4).

The vision of the women in the basket (5:5-11).

The vision of four chariots (6:1-8).

The content of the comfort... In spite of anti-Semitism the temple will be built; the judgment of God will fall on the nations that scattered Israel; Jerusalem will become a thriving city that will overflow its borders; salvation will come to Israel through the future Messiah when He changes the dirty garments of Joshua the high priest for clean garments; the governor Zerubbabel will be empowered by the Holy Spirit so he can overcome all obstacles in the rebuilding of the temple; the Word of God will go forth and become the standard by which all people will be judged; all false religion will be removed from the land and carried back to its origin of ancient Babylon; God’s judgment will go forth and blanket the whole earth.

The Prerequisite for God’s Blessings of Comfort

The problem stated... (1:2; Genesis 6:5-8; 2 Chronicles 36:15-16; 17:21; Psalm 110:5)

The plea from God... (1:3-4)

The pronouncement of judgment... (1:5-6; see John 17:3; Matthew 25:41,46; Revelation 20:11-15)

The penitence of the people... (1:6; Matthew 4:17)

   Repentance is a personal decision based on 4 things found in Zechariah 1:6:
1. The preaching of the Word of God (1:6a; Romans 10:14-15).
2. The proof that God’s Word will be fulfilled (1:6b).
3. The plan of God to carry out what He says He will do (1:6c).
4. The power of God to do what He says (1:6d).

**Repentance is a personal determination** based 7 things found in 2 Corinthians 7:9-11:
1. “Diligence”...
2. “Clearing of yourselves”
3. “Indignation”
4. “Fear”
5. “Vehement desire”
6. “Zeal”
7. “Vindication”

Make repentance a personal decision based on personal determination and you will discover God’s richest blessings. Amen!