

# Studies in Zechariah 01 Zechariah 1:

by John W. Bramhall

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*Zechariah is a book that reveals the glory of Jesus Christ and calls the people to repentance, promising restoration and blessing.*

**Duration:** 41:12

**Scripture:** Zechariah 1:7

**Topics:** "Repentance", "Gods Word"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between the failures of people and even prophets, and the unchanging Word of God. The eternal character of God's Word remains the same regardless of the character of the messages or messengers. The sermon references a call to repentance in six verses, highlighting the need for a change of heart and ways in seeking the Lord. The sermon also mentions the vision given to Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel chapter 2, which reveals the four great Gentile world powers and their impact on Jerusalem. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the unchangeable nature of God's Word, even as people change.

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## Transcript

Shall we turn in the word of God to the prophecy of Zechariah? By the will and the grace and the help of the Lord, we desire upon this visit to touch upon the great prophecy written by God's servant Zechariah. There are two great reasons that we should meditate upon this wonderful book that is so timely in the days in which we live. First of all, for a believer, within the confines of this great book, we have the presentation of the one we have worshipped this morning and remembered in his death.

And we find the glory of the Lord Jesus revealed in this same book of Zechariah. We shall find something in relation to his coming to the earth at his first advent. We shall also find much that tells us of his sufferings.

And we shall also find in his great climax that which reveals his coming glory. We join in the knowledge someday he will be glorified both in heaven as well as upon the earth. And then also, the second reason for the study of the book, it is so timely in our present days because we are nearing what is described in this book as being the great day of the Lord.

That great day of the Lord is the time when our Lord Jesus will begin the strange works of judgment in relation not only to Israel but also in relation to the nations of the earth. You will find the book of Zechariah

deals with God's earthly people in particular and particularly does it emphasize the city of Jerusalem again and again. And it also deals not only with the earthly people of God but it deals also with the nations that surround them.

The Lord Jesus said in Luke 21, Behold the fig tree and all the nations and all the trees for we are living in the day when we see the rise the unprecedented rise of the nation of Israel. They may have gone back into that land and country in unbelief but they are there on the divine purposes of God nearing the day of that great trial when he will refine a godly remnant and bring them through the fiery trial of the great tribulation to be the nucleus of the glorious kingdom that lies ahead. And in relation to those days our Lord Jesus will deal with the nations and then bring in consummation the glory of his blessed kingdom.

We go to chapter one immediately and may I read the first six verses first of all for this is the first division of the book of Zechariah. You have four divisions in the book of Zechariah, I name them briefly. The first six verses are an introduction where we have a call to national repentance.

Beginning in chapter one and verse seven and going down through to the end of chapter six we have a series of eight visions given specifically to the prophet Zechariah in one night. They touch upon the days in which Zechariah lived but they also touch upon the consummation of the coming again of our Lord Jesus in power and glory and the exaltation of the nation of Israel. The third division you will find in chapters seven and eight and those two chapters relate particularly and only to a question that was raised by a deputation of Jews coming from Babylon undoubtedly in respect to the keeping of a self imposed text and the prophet answers their question and brings before them some truth regarding the coming glory and the coming blessing that Jehovah would bring upon his people.

The last great section of Zechariah is chapters nine through fourteen divided into two great burdens chapters nine, ten and eleven and then the second burden twelve through fourteen. Those last sections of Zechariah deal particularly with the closing days when our Lord will deal with his earthly people and will deal with the nations around them and consummate his coming in glory and power to be the king over all the earth. Let us read the first six verses where we have the first division of this prophecy in relation to a call for national repentance.

In the eighth month in the second year of Darius came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Ido, the prophet, saying The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers therefore say thou unto them Thus saith the Lord of hosts Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts Be ye not as your fathers unto whom the former prophets of Christ saying Thus saith the Lord of hosts Turn ye now from your evil ways and from your evil doings But they did not hear nor hearken unto me, saith the Lord Your fathers, where are they?

And the prophets, do they live forever? But my words in my statutes which I commanded my prophets Did they not take hold of your fathers?

And they returned and said Like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us according to our ways and according to our doings so hath he dealt with us Division number one is the call to repentance as God speaks through the prophet Zechariah The name of Zechariah is very important to realise in its meaning it means Jehovah remembers and as we read this great book we shall certainly recognise that God has not and he never will forget his earthly people and he has remembered them but that nation of people which he remembers and which he will yet restore in its nucleus for his glory must come to him in repentance and in the days of Zechariah God declares in the opening of our chapter verse two particularly that he was

greatly displeased against Israel The Lord hath been sore displeased with

your fathers and in the original language of the text there is suggested a great expression of vehement displeasure almost to the extent of aborning his beloved people Now may I for brevity's sake just give a scripture reference if you will follow it through with your own convenience Read at your convenience the second book of Chronicles chapter thirty-six and verses fourteen through sixteen you will have in those verses fourteen, fifteen and sixteen of second Chronicles thirty-six one of the most solemn accusations that God ever wrote against his people Israel and you will recognise the reason for his great displeasure and thus Zechariah faithfully declares the displeasure of Jehovah against his people Israel but note verse three there is an offer of restoration and that offer is on the

ground of repentance for repentance is always God's condition for blessing for the prophet goes on to say therefore say thou unto them thus saith the lord of hosts turn ye unto me saith the lord of hosts and I will turn unto you saith the lord of Jehovah of hosts and the prophet came and all the prophets came in times of repentance calling upon the people to repent Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel Hosea, Joel, Amos, Malachi all the prophets they came to a people who were declined in their path of spirituality away from Jehovah they came with a message of repentance but will you note these words as you have them at the end of verse four let me just go to verse four at the end but they did not hear nor hearken unto me saith the lord and one can recognize the continuation of this ministry of

repentance when John the Baptist came preaching repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand when Jesus our lord came preaching repent for oh may we say the offer of restoration and blessing is always conditioned upon repentance look in verse four and five together and God mourns the people through the past experiences that are thus referred to for the past history of Israel has its moral as well as its spiritual lessons be ye not as your fathers unto whom the former prophets have cried saying thus saith the lord of hosts turn ye now from your evil ways and from your evil doings but they did not hear nor hearken unto me saith the lord your fathers where are they and the prophets do they live forever and those warnings of the past they come as a present application for the spiritual

condition of Israel at that time do beloved how you and I can realize this spirit of repentance this call of repentance this warning of repentance oh beloved that you and I even today might realize the condition of God's blessing for his people and for all his repentance as the ground of it but note verse six and verse six emphasizes regardless of the past history regardless of the attitude that the people of Israel had shown and manifested God's word is unchanging but my words and my statutes which I commanded my servants the prophets did they not take hold of your fathers oh God's inflexible governmental dealings will never change he acts in accordance with our deeds he acts in accordance with his character and his principles they are immutable one of the greatest rabbinical teachers

was a man by the name he was called Kinship and he was revered and still revered as one of the most highest of rabbinical teachers of the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures and though he was not pro-Christian of course yet he mentions the return in true repentance is required as God says about your fathers where are they they've gone and perhaps ironically he suggests the people say well what about the prophets have not they also gone where are they but beloved listen there is a divine principle to distinguish carefully between the people between the failures of the people and between the failures if possible of even the prophets and the immutable and the unchanging word of God the eternal character of the word of God remains ever the same no matter the character of even the messengers and

the messengers his message his word is unchangeable and God carries out his threatening as well as his promises now note the end of verse 6 like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us according to our ways and according to our doings so hath he dealt with us now let me briefly summarize this call to repentance as we have it in these six verses for there are five great principles that the prophet by the spirit declares first in verse three the condition of all God's blessings repentance the change of heart and the change of ways as they thus seek the Lord in the confession of repentance second in verse four we have the principle of this fact the evil and the peril of disobedience you cannot turn away from God in disobedience without being under the peril of his divine chastening and of

his divine governmental discipline the principle remains the same and even for a child of God today obedience is the key to blessing disobedience is the key to chastening and governmental discipline but in the opening of verse six we have the unchangeable principle of God's word in its unchangeable character my words and my statutes they never change and oh beloved may I take to my heart and may you take to your heart the truth God's word never changes no matter how the people change how we need that in a changing time like this do we not what a responsibility of believers to carry out the unchanging word of God I am the Lord, I change not said the prophet Malachi and oh the joy of realizing though conditions be as they may we have the unchanging principle of the word of God to follow and

then notice the middle of verse six and even at the end of verse six we have God's governmental dealings with his people in accordance with their deeds like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us according to our ways and according to our doings so hath he dealt with us and God doesn't change in his principles but oh may I point out fifth we have in the context of this section God's immutable purposes Jehovah is determined look at the middle of the verse beginning with that expression like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us now just take those out of the context for a moment and realize that Jehovah is determined to carry out his ways and his immutable purposes in relation to his people and that will be one of the great joys of seeing in the prophecy of Zechariah and though

they have failed yet God's immutable purposes his thoughts toward them are thoughts of peace and not of evil to bring them to a determined end hallelujah for an unchanging God I change he changes not my beloved is there anyone here today who is a believer in the Lord Jesus needs to be brought back in restoration to that blessed Savior you've confessed and whom you know may I say the call to repentance how you find it in the Revelation chapters 2 and 3 repent, repent, repent, repent as the Lord spoke to the churches my beloved believer God's thoughts for you and for me are thoughts of love and peace and blessing may you and I be in relationship to him in a condition of obedience to receive him and if you are not saved oh that repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ may be

yours let us read from verse 15 7 rather let's begin reading from verse 7 and let's read through verse 13 upon the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month which is the month see that in the second year of Darius came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah the son of Berechiah the son of Ido the prophet saying I saw by night and behold a man riding upon a red horse and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom or in the valley and behind him there were red horses speckled in white then said I my oh my Lord what are these and the angel that talked with me said unto me I will show thee what these be and the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said these are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth and they answered the angel of the Lord

that stood among the myrtle trees and said we have walked to and fro through the earth and behold all the earth sitteth still and is at rest then the angel of the Lord answered and said oh Lord of hosts how long wilt

thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years and the Lord answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words so the angel that communed with me said unto me cry thou saying thus saith the Lord of hosts I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy and I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease for I was but a little displeased but they felt for with the affliction therefore thus saith the Lord I return to Jerusalem with mercy my

house shall be built in it saith the Lord of hosts and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem cry yet saying thus saith the Lord of hosts my cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad and the Lord shall comfort Zion and shall yet choose Jerusalem now this is the first vision that was given to Zechariah on that one night the vision of horses and in the opening of the vision there is a man standing seated upon a horse without doubt there in the midst of the myrtle trees and the man who is thus seen by the prophet in the myrtle trees who is he as thus we see him there in verse 8 I saw by night behold a man riding upon a red horse and he stood upon the myrtle trees that were in the valley beloved verse 11 gives you the answer to this question who the man was and who he is

for we have in verse 12 the answer then the angel of the Lord this is the one who we shall see gives answer to the others who come before him with their message and the angel of Jehovah answered the one who is standing there in verse 11 is the angel of Jehovah standing among the myrtle trees beloved this blessed one is none other than the one in the Old Testament who is the angel of Jehovah Jehovah is his name there is a very great difficulty to disassociate him from the divine personality of our beloved savior the Lord Jesus Christ for even in the rabbinical writings the rabbis are persuaded that the name Jehovah is a name that is given to one who possesses deity though they may not agree that it's the Christ of God yet in their rabbinical writings they are persuaded the name of the

angel of Jehovah is the possession of a name that belongs to deity very God and how you and I have rejoiced again and again in contemporary scriptures of the Old Testament to recognize who the angel of Jehovah is our blessed Lord is that and one can see his relationship as symbolized by the myrtle trees as he zosses upon the red horse in the low valley a valley of depression in relation to Israel a valley in that day of Zechariah when they were very low as a nation but there was the presence and there was the one who was their Jehovah concerned regarding their condition and thank God for him how faithful sometime read Jeremiah 30 verse 10 and 11 Jeremiah 31 verse 35 and 36 and you will find that this blessed Jehovah of the Old Testament will never forsake his earthly people and how

precious to realize his concern even in the days of Zechariah as Zechariah is given the vision but then as you have in verse 8 behind him there were red horses speckled white all of them having riders without doubt and the angel of the prophet asked what are they? who are they? and the angel answers that he is speaking to him and says these in verse 10 these are they whom the Lord has sent to walk to and from through the earth and we have the report of these angels in verse 11 they give a report to the angel of Jehovah that stands among the myrtle trees saying we have walked to and from through the earth and behold all the earth sitteth still and is at rest oh may I give the suggestion here we have those who for Jehovah thus investigate the conditions of the earth and report to him after

the situation and in the days of Zechariah nominally speaking the earth was at rest there was no wars being waged to any extent and the Babylonian kingdom had disappeared the Medo-Persian kingdom was in existence and there was no uprising among the nations at that particular time and to the angel of Jehovah in the vision of Zechariah the angels who have been investigating to and fro upon the earth

representing Jehovah they report that everything is at the present time the earth sitteth still and is at rest but now I want you to know as you begin in verse 12 and read on as we did through verse 17 you have the expression of the longing of the heart of the angel of Jehovah for it is the longing heart of Jehovah the Lord of hosts then the angel of the Lord the angel of Jehovah answered and

said O Lord of hosts how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah against which thou hast had indignation these three score and ten years beloved may I suggest these words how long they come from the heart of Jehovah himself the longing of his heart for his people Israel the longing of his heart for the city of Jerusalem the longing that they would be delivered even as they had just been brought through the seventy years of Babylonian captivity how long how long how long when you read in the book of Revelation chapter 6 you read of those who have been will be martyred and beneath the altar their souls cry out how long go Lord holy and true as they cry for vengeance upon those who have shed the blood of his people and my beloved may I say with all earnestness

there's never a heart as great as the heart of Jehovah himself in longing for the restoration of his people how long how long and yet he gives the answer the Lord answered the angel that talked with me he gave him good words words of consolation words of encouragement and as they communed the angel of Jehovah says I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy my beloved I wish that the nations around knew the jealousy of Jehovah for his people and for Israel and for Jerusalem read on in verse 15 I'm very sore displeased at the nations that are at ease I was but a little displeased with my people but they furthered the affliction and beloved do we not confess that the nations that have been instrumental to bring retribution and divine retribution and chastening upon Israel

those very nations have exceeded what God desired to be accomplished and they furthered and forwarded the affliction but now note Jehovah says I'm determined therefore thus saith the Lord I'm returned to Jerusalem with mercy my house shall be built in it saith the Lord of hosts and a line saith the Lord and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem cry yet saying thus saith the Lord of hosts my cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion and shall yet choose Jerusalem my beloved this prophecy goes further than the days of Zechariah this prophecy goes to the extent and the ultimate extent when the Lord will return to Jerusalem and build His house my house shall be built in it and in that day a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem

and the continuation of this prophecy will be found as we get into chapter 2 God willing tonight as Jerusalem shall be blessed in a coming day of glory and the first vision that Zechariah is given is to see the angel of Jehovah upon the red horse very typical the color red as we recognize that he must come forth to conquer and there will be much blood shedding when in the day of his return in glory and power he punishes the nations of the earth as well as purifying the nation of Israel but he has purpose to build his house and to glorify that nation of Israel and to restore Jerusalem and thus bring it where its blessings shall be extended throughout all the land of the cities to comfort Zion but now let's look at the second vision before closing beginning at verse 18 and reading through

verse 21 vision 2 is a vision of the horns, the four horns and the craftsmen or carpenters then lifted I up mine eyes and saw and behold four horns and I said unto the angel that talked with me what be these and he answered me these are the horns or the powers for the horn is always symbolical in the meaning of the Hebrew word power these are the powers which have scattered Judah Israel and Jerusalem and the Lord showed me four carpenters or craftsmen then said I what come these to do and he spake saying these are the horns or the powers which have scattered Judah so that no man did lift up his head but these

craftsmen these carpenters are come to pray or to destroy then and to cast out the horns of the Gentiles which lifted up their horn or their power over the land of Judah to

scattering the horns again we say symbolic of power and strength you have it referred to in Amos 6 13 you find the psalmist referring the same word the horns to power in Psalm 75 verses 4 and 5 as well as in Psalm 92 and verse 10 and these horns represent the ruling powers of the world may I just give you one link which I trust you can follow through yourself the great vision that Nebuchadnezzar was given in Daniel chapter 2 where the four great Gentile world powers are revealed the Babylonian world power the Medo-Persian world power the Grecian kingdom and ultimately the Roman kingdom these we know from Daniel 2 Daniel 7, Daniel 8 as well as other contemporary scriptures they represent the four outstanding Gentile world powers down to the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ yes even

the rabbinical writer Ezekiel she said these are four great monarchies and their purpose was to tread down Jerusalem and it began with Nebuchadnezzar it continued on and it will yet continue on to the end but then there are four carpenters one after the other arriving to destroy the powers and the subsequent powers that destroyed the preceding monarchies the Babylonian power was destroyed by the Medo-Persian the Medo-Persian power was destroyed by the Grecian the Grecian power was destroyed by the Romans and the last great power the revived Roman empire will be destroyed by the Lord Jesus Christ the Father man when in all of its final and terrible form the revived Roman empire will be upon the earth and our Lord Jesus will destroy it in its final stage and Kimchi the Hebrew expositor says

even in his Hebrew interpretation of Zechariah each kingdom shall be as a carpenter to cut up the kingdom that preceded it and you have the same truth in Daniel 2 you have the same truth in Daniel chapter 7 you know may I say one of the most mysterious things to me as a believer in the Lord Jesus is how among some of the godly people of this present time there are those who will not follow the teaching that there will be an ultimate restoration of Israel when the Lord Jesus Christ comes and cuts off the Gentile world power.

Beloved you and I are living on the threshold when the nations of the earth are coming to their final scene of judgment and when the Lord Jesus will bring as promised in this chapter the restoration of Israel and the remnant of his earthly people into the time of their elevation and exaltation with Christ in glory for God has never yet taken his heart and his eyes away from the city of Jerusalem and from Zion and vision 2 declares that he will yet bring to fruition though in the days of Zechariah and may I emphasize when you read Daniel when you read these prophets that succeeded after the Babylonian captivity as well as during the captivity Jeremiah, Ezekiel and their contemporaries those prophets recognized that away from Israel God had taken the government of the earth and he had entrusted it in its world power in the hands of the Gentiles and until the times of the Gentiles will be fulfilled, the Gentiles dominate in governmental capacity and power over the earth but ultimately the destruction of its Gentile power is consummated and the last consummation will be when in the revived form of the Roman Empire our Lord Jesus will come from heaven and the last great national or international gathering of nations against God's earthly people for their destruction gathered around Jerusalem which we shall see and what these prophecies all lead to whatever vision you look at what these prophecies all lead to is the consummation that God will yet in his determined purpose bring his people as a remnant to himself and set upon the throne of the earthly kingdom his own king yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion is the decree of the Lord may the Lord help to illuminate our hearts and our minds but beloved look prophecy is not mere information prophecy has a moral value and a spiritual value for you and for me it shines as a light upon the darkness of this present scene and the moral and the spiritual darkness of this present scene is so great that you

and I can only realize and should deeply realize it there is only one answer to all the problems the world faces and whether it be the church, whether it be Israel whether it be the nations the answer to all the problems is the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ all that you and I may say Lord Jesus come, has come soon, shall we pray blessed Father we bow in thy presence we thank thee that thou art the writer of future history writing it just as clear and lucid as if it were past history and we've been able to breathe in this morning some of the prophecies that thou hast given to thy servant Zechariah all touching upon the conditions of his day but ultimately pointing to the final condition of glory when our Lord Jesus comes may every true believer say in his and her heart even so come Lord Jesus and then if there be one who knows not thee Lord Jesus may the Holy Spirit convict them in repentance and faith to come to the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved for his name's sake Amen

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