

Zechariah:



God Never Forgets

Consider It

Comprehend It

Connect It

A 3 C's Contemplative Study™
By Dr. Jack M. Jacob

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All quotations throughout this study are taken from the *New American Standard Bible (1995 Revision)* published by the Lockman Foundation of La Habra, CA.

Introduction to the Book of Zechariah

Author: The book of Zechariah identifies itself as being written by, “Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo”. There are other references to this same person in the books of Ezra, Nehemiah and even in the New Testament book of Matthew. According to Nehemiah 12:16, Zechariah was the priest who led the household of Iddo. This requires a little bit of explanation. In Old Testament times, it was not uncommon to refer to someone as the “son” of their grandfather. In this case, it is likely that Berechiah died when Zechariah was young, maybe even before Zechariah returned from exile. This would mean that Iddo raised Zechariah. This could explain the reference to Zechariah being the “son of Iddo”. Another explanation of the seemingly conflicting references is that Iddo served as the priest from their family and, since Berechiah died before being able to serve as priest, the priesthood was passed from Iddo directly to Zechariah. This could also explain the reference to Zechariah as the “son of Iddo”.

Furthermore, in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, Zechariah is mentioned as being one of two prophets who encouraged the people to rebuild the temple. The other prophet was Haggai. According to ancient records, Zechariah was the younger of the two prophets. Haggai had spoken to the people from the perspective of rebuilding the temple to end the punishment of God for not doing so. Zechariah spoke to the people of rebuilding the temple and rebuilding their worship to make that temple acceptable in God’s sight.

There are 34 men in the Bible named Zechariah. In addition to listing the genealogy of Zechariah, there are other clues that tell us about the author. He was asked advice on fasting in 7:1-3 and this would seem to indicate that he served as a priest. He also understood the role of the High Priest well enough to have been acquainted with the priesthood. He uses language of clean, unclean and forgiveness throughout the book. As this is the language of the priesthood, it would be logical to assume he served in this capacity.

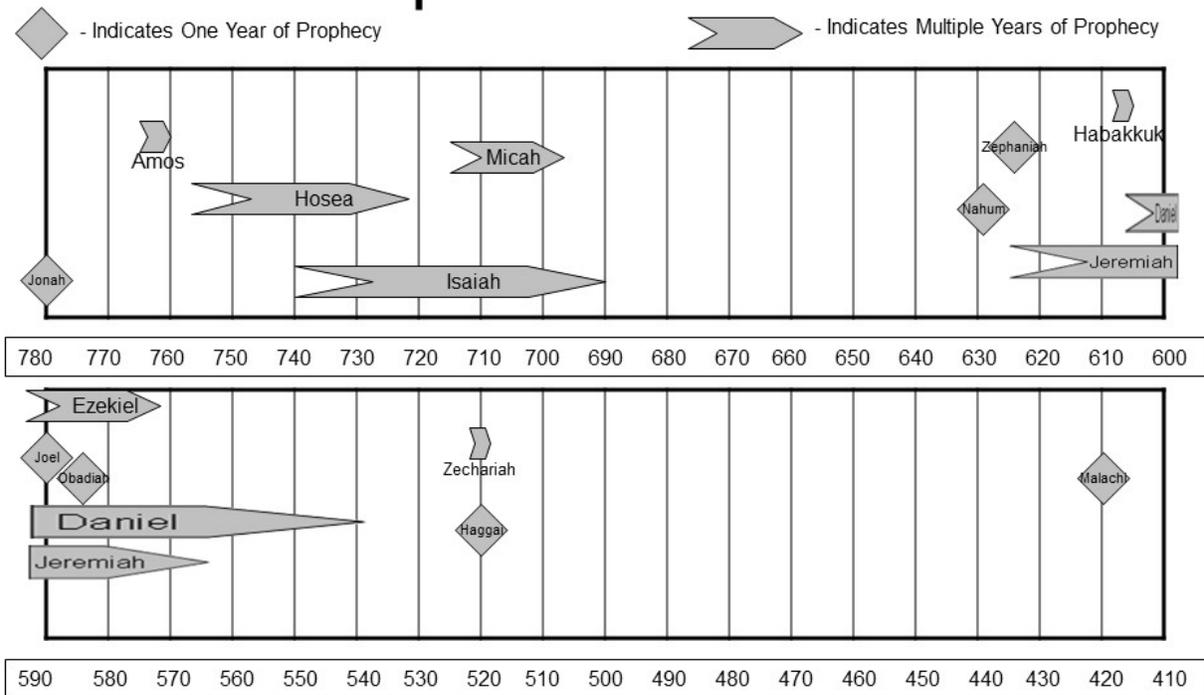
The final reference to Zechariah, son of Berechiah, is found in Matthew 23:35 in which Jesus Christ is upbraiding the Pharisees as hypocrites because they were just like their fathers that had killed Zechariah between the temple and the altar. “Zechariah” means “God Remembers”. Jesus obviously remembered this event and pointed out that the people of His day were not that different from those of Zechariah’s day.

Putting all these facts together, there is no serious reason to question whether this book is written by the person who claimed to have written it.

Date: 1:1 claims that Zechariah received this word from the Lord “In the eighth month of the second year of Darius”. There is very little serious doubt about when this would be. Darius came the throne in 522 BC, so the second year of Darius would be 520 BC. 7:1 refers to the fourth year of Darius, making this message come to Zechariah in 518 BC. For an explanation of the months listed in these verses, see the chart below explaining the correlation between the Hebrew Calendar and ours today.

Contemporary Prophets: In order to see the contemporaries of Zechariah, refer to the chart on the following page. You should see, from this chart that Zechariah and Haggai were contemporaries and spoke to the same situations: the need to rebuild the temple. This is further verified by Ezra in 5:1 and 6:14. It should be further noted that the service of Zechariah is listed with a symbol indicating one year of service, when he served for two. The form of the symbol prevents having an arrow short enough to indicate two years.

Prophetic Timeline



Permission Granted to Duplicate

Historical Situation: Because we have a definitive date for Zechariah’s prophecy, we also have a lot of data describing the situation into which he prophesied. Below is a brief history leading up to his prophecy.

Table 1.1 – Historical Events of the World in Zechariah’s Day

Year	Historical Event(s)
586 BC	Jerusalem fell to Babylon and the people were taken into captivity again.
539 BC	Cyrus II conquered Babylon without much of a fight.
539 BC	Cyrus II issued a decree that allowed all the peoples captured by Babylon to return to their lands, to rebuild their sacred buildings, and begin their worship practices again.
539 BC	Sheshbazzar led a group of less than 50,000 Jews back to Jerusalem. Many stayed in Babylon.
536 BC	Tattenai, the governor of the province, began to harass the builders of the temple because they would not allow foreigners to help. Thus, work stopped on the temple.
520 BC	On his way to fight against Egypt and increase his empire, Darius-Hystaspes stopped in Syrio-Palestine (Israel). While there, Tattenai appealed to him and they found Cyrus’ decree to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. Darius made Tattenai help finance the project.
520 BC	Haggai prophesied. Zechariah prophesied.
518 BC	Zechariah received another word from the Lord.
515 BC	The temple was completed.

It should be noted that many of the Jews remained in Babylon because of the comfort they enjoyed there. It should also be noted that those who returned to Jerusalem were quick to give up anything that was too difficult for them. This shows in their quitting work on the temple because of Tattenai and the Samaritans.

Another issue of note is that it was during the Babylonians captivity that the Israelites began speaking Aramaic instead of Hebrew. Haggai wrote in Hebrew and not in Aramaic, so it would seem he was either educated or had not gone into captivity. Neither is completely overwhelming, but also not unreasonable to expect.

Why had the work on the temple not been completed? First, because of the intimidation of Tattenai and the Samaritans. Many of the Samaritans had intermarried with the poor Israelites left in Judah. They were not allowed to help work on the temple and sought to stop its work altogether. Second, as

described in Ezra 3:12-13, many of the people were conflicted over how grand the new temple would be compared to the last temple. Lastly, the people had become discouraged from the work because it was difficult. It was into this situation that Zechariah prophesied.

Main Focus of the Book: The main focus of the book of Zechariah is simple. First, God calls the people to repentance. They had worshipped other “gods” and that had caused God to send them into exile. They had come back into the land and gone back to this false worship. God tells them to turn away from their idols and He will take care of them. He tells them of the blessings that lay in their future, if they would only repent. He also warns them of His judgment that would come on them as they forgot Him and even turned on Him when He would send His Son. Eventually, God would prevail and subdue the Earth under a forceful reign. If the people followed Him, they would have a part in that Kingdom. If not, they would find themselves fighting against God and losing badly. To sum it up...choose your side wisely! God remembers those who belong to Him and those who don't.

Outline of Zechariah

- I. Call to Repentance (1:1-6)
 - a. God's call to the prophet (1:1)
 - b. Return to Me and I will return to you (1:2-3)
 - c. Learn from your fathers (1:4-6)
- II. Eight Visions Describing God's Promised Response to Their Repentance (1:7-6:15)
 - a. Vision One: A fullness of time to judge the nations (1:7-17)
 - i. The nations will be punished (1:7-15)
 - ii. God will have compassion on Jerusalem (1:16-17)
 - b. Vision Two: The nations will destroy themselves (1:18-21)
 - i. The horns represent nations (1:18-19)
 - ii. The craftsmen represent destroyers (1:20-21)
 - c. Vision Three: God will protect Jerusalem without their help (2:1-13)
 - i. God will repopulate Jerusalem (2:1-4)
 - ii. God will establish Jerusalem's boundaries (2:5)
 - iii. God will call the exiles home (2:6-9)
 - iv. God will cause Jerusalem to rejoice (2:10)
 - v. God will bring many nations to join Jerusalem (2:11-13)
 - d. Vision Four: God will remove all sin (3:1-10)
 - i. God will send Jesus as the High Priest (3:1-2)
 - ii. God promises to forgive sin and iniquity (3:3-5)
 - iii. God will open the way to communion with Him (3:6-7)
 - iv. God will provide the way to peace with Him and others (3:8-10)

- e. Vision Five: God will provide His Spirit for Doing His Work (4:1-14)
 - i. God will accomplish His purposes by His Spirit (4:1-6)
 - ii. God will make the leaders great according to His definition of greatness (4:7-10)
 - iii. God will call leaders to continue the work (4:11-14)
- f. Vision Six: God will purge evildoers from the land (5:1-4)
 - i. God will expose the evil of the wicked (5:1-2)
 - ii. God will purge the evil of the wicked (5:3-4)
- g. Vision Seven: God will separate good from evil (5:5-11)
 - i. God will seal up wickedness from Jerusalem (5:5-8)
 - ii. God will remove wickedness from Jerusalem (5:9)
 - iii. God will judge wickedness in Shinar for all to see (5:10-11)
(Note: "Shinar" is Hebrew for "Babylon")
- h. Vision Eight: God's sovereignty over the nations of the world will be shown (6:1-15)
 - i. God knows all the sins of the nations (6:1-7)
 - ii. God will punish the nations for their sins (6:8)
 - iii. God will set up His throne over all the nations (6:9-15)
- III. Change Your Ways, Change Your Worship (7:1 through 8:23)
 - a. Is fasting worship? (7:1-7)
 - i. Should we fast? (7:1-3)
 - ii. Only if you fast for God (7:4-7)
 - b. Your lifestyle is your worship (7:8-14)
 - i. True worship is reflected in how you live your life (7:8-10)
 - ii. False worship is sin (7:11-14)
 - c. God's response to true worship (8:1-23)
 - i. God dwells with those that gather to worship in truth (8:1-8)
 - ii. God will bless the efforts to rebuild the temple if you live out your worship (8:9-13)
 - iii. Your moral life is an indication of the quality of your worship (8:14-17)
 - iv. God's blessing of your worship will draw others to Him (8:18-23)
- IV. Two Oracles of the Future of Israel and the World (9:1 through 14:21)
 - a. First Oracle: Oracles Concerning Israel's Rebellion (9:1 through 11:17)
 - i. God will deliver Jerusalem from nations of oppressors (9:1-8)
 - ii. God will defend Jerusalem from the revenge of the nations (9:9-17)
 - iii. God will strengthen Jerusalem (10:1-12)
 - 1. By sending rain (10:1)
 - 2. By providing the Good Shepherd (10:2-5)
 - 3. By retrieving the sheep (10:6-12)
 - iv. Jerusalem will reject the Good Shepherd (11:1-17)

1. God will show His power by shaking up the powers of their world (11:1-3)
2. Jerusalem will forget God's work and reject Him (11:4-14)
 - a. They were mistreated and God took notice (11:4-5)
 - b. God allowed them to be mistreated for a season and for a reason (11:6)
 - c. God recovered and rescued the people from three masters (11:7-8)
(Note: Syria, Assyria, Babylon)
 - d. Each time, they rebelled and God let them wander (11:9-11)
 - e. Their wandering even resulted in their rejection of God (11:12-14)
3. A false shepherd will take God's place amongst the people for a time (11:15-17)
- b. Second Oracle: God's Future Deliverance of Israel When She Repents (12:1 through 14:21)
 - i. God will deliver from the nations again (12:1-14)
 1. God will deliver Jerusalem (12:1-5)
 2. God will deliver Judah (12:6-7)
 3. God will strengthen the people through His Spirit following their repentance over their rejection of Him (12:8-14)
 - ii. God will deliver from influence of false prophets (13:1-9)
 1. God will remove guilt from worshipping false idols (13:1)
 2. God will remove the false idols (13:2)
 3. God will remove the false prophets (13:3-6)
 4. God will bring them through their sin and back to Him (13:7-9)
 - iii. God will establish His Kingdom over all the Earth (14:1-21)
 1. God's people will go through tough times (14:1-3)
 2. The Messiah will return (14:4-7)
 3. God will establish an Earthly Kingdom (14:8-15)
 4. Jerusalem will be the center of worship in the New Kingdom (14:16)
 5. Nations will be punished if they do not worship the Lord (14:17-19)
 6. Holiness will finally rule to make worship acceptable once and for all (14:20-21)

Personal Word: The people of Jerusalem had some problems very similar to the problems you and I face today. First, they were intimidated by their culture and by those who did not want them to stand on God's word. God's instruction to them, and to us today, is to stand on His word for our moral, physical, spiritual and ethical lives. To quote our Lord and Savior, "Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell." (Matthew 10:28) We must not let those who oppose us to set the tempo or the parameters for how much, when, or even if we serve God.

Additionally, the people of Zechariah's day were going through the motions of worship without their hearts being engaged. As a result, their worship really had no effect on the rest of their lives. God's message was not to think that they could worship Him on Sunday and ignore Him the rest of the week. For them to get worship right, it must affect their whole lives. It is the same for us. I don't know about you, but I would just as soon learn from their mistakes as having to make my own.

Lastly, God reassured the people of Jerusalem He is in control. He revealed some of His plans for establishing an Earthly Kingdom that is also described later in the Book of Revelation. This communicated His authority, power, wisdom, and sovereignty. This was to remind them that their commitment to God was not a short-term relationship, but was a decision with eternal ramifications. It is the same for us.

As you study this lesson, I encourage you to consider your own relationship with God. Has it grown quiet or even stale? I hope that this lesson will cause you to look upon our great God with eyes to see how majestic and mighty He truly is.

May God richly bless you as you study His Word.

Dr. Jack M. Jacob

Geography in Zechariah's Day



¹ J. J. Bimson, J. P. Kane, *The New Bible Atlas*, Intervarsity Press, Leicester, England, 1985.

Table 1.1. **Timetable of Jewish Captivity**

Jerusalem Conquered by Nebuchadnezzar 586 BC
Babylon Conquered by Cyrus II of Persia 539 BC
Cyrus II Decree to Return All Captive Peoples to Native Lands 538 BC
Sheshbazzar Leads First Group of Exiles Back to Jerusalem 538 BC
Darius Hystaspes Becomes King of Persia 522 BC
Haggai/Zechariah 520 BC
Xerxes Becomes King of Persia 486 BC
Artaxerxes I Becomes King of Persia 464 BC
Ezra Leads Second Group of Exiles Back to Jerusalem 458 BC (Ezra 7)
Nehemiah Leads Third Group of Exiles Back to Jerusalem 445 BC (Nehemiah 1-2)
Malachi Writes Last Word from God 420 BC
Silence from God 419 BC to 4 BC(?)

Table 1.2. Jewish and Babylonian Calendar
Compared to Modern Calendar

# of Month	Hebrew Name	Babylonian	Current Calendar
1	Nisan	Nisannu	March-April
2	Iyyar	Ayaru	April-May
3	Sivan	Simanu	May-June
4	Tammuz	Du'uzu	June-July
5	Av	Abu	July-August
6	Elul	Ululu	August-September
7	Tishri	Tashretu	September-October
8	Marsheshv	Arakshamna	October November
9	Kislev	Kislimu	November-
10	Tevet	Tabetu	December-January
11	Shevat	Shabatu	January-February
12	Adar	Addaru	February-March

Table 1.3. Harmony of the Chronology of Haggai and Zechariah

2nd Year of Darius, Sixth Month, First Day (Haggai 1:1)

2nd Year of Darius, Sixth Month, 24th Day (Haggai 1:15)

2nd Year of Darius, Seventh Month, 21st Day (Haggai 2:1)

2nd Year of Darius, Eighth Month (Zechariah 1:1)

2nd Year of Darius, Ninth Month, 24th Day (Haggai 2:10)

2nd Year of Darius, Ninth Month, 24th Day (Haggai 2:20)

2nd Year of Darius, Eleventh Month, 24th Day (Zechariah 1:7)

4th Year of Darius, Ninth Month, 4th Day (Zechariah 7:1)

Reading Record for Zechariah

- Chapter 1
- Chapter 2
- Chapter 3
- Chapter 4
- Chapter 5
- Chapter 6
- Chapter 7
- Chapter 8
- Chapter 9
- Chapter 10
- Chapter 11
- Chapter 12
- Chapter 13
- Chapter 14

Record Any Additional Observations Below:



Lesson One:
Sometimes, You Just Have to Have the Hard Stuff
Zechariah 1:1 through 3:10

Have you ever had to take medicine that, well, how do I say this..., is NASTY!? What I mean to say is, “Have you ever had to take medicine with a somewhat offensive taste?” That sounds better. Oh well, no matter how you ask it, the question is the same. Chances are very good that you have had to take some medicine at one time or another that was helpful, but sure didn’t taste very helpful. That is where the line comes from in Mary Poppins’ song, “Just a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down.”

In these chapters, the people of Jerusalem were called to repentance in order to receive God’s blessings. Repentance meant they would have to turn from their wicked ways, from their empty worship, and from their inactivity in rebuilding the temple. They would have to actually go to work and...CHANGE! Yes, they would have to actually change. As offensive as the message was, Zechariah had the job of telling the people that the bad stuff would lead to the good stuff.

For us today, we need to listen as Zechariah explains to the people that their lives are not acceptable to God. He reaches out to the people, at the direction of God, to tell them that they cannot get to the blessings of being God’s people until they begin to act like it. For them, it meant that they had to put God first and get busy working for Him. They had to be willing to serve God and trust God to take care of them. It is the same for us today. We need to listen to God and begin the difficult job of putting Him first. For those of us in Christ, Jesus must come first in our lives. At least, this is what we said when we surrendered to Him. We need to turn and put Him first in our affections, intentions, and activity as well as in our hearts. Only then can the promises of our future provide us with the comfort and reassurance for which they were designed.

Paul put it this way in 2 Corinthians 13:5, “Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you – unless indeed you fail the test.” As you study, test yourselves. It might not be fun or enjoyable, but it might be what you need to get well spiritually.

Have you ever had a time when you were sick, but did not know what was wrong until you went to the doctor? If so, how did it feel to hear what it would take to get better? How did you react to the news? To the treatment?

Consider It

1. When did God call Zechariah? (1:1-6)
2. What was God's message to Zechariah? (1:1-6)
3. How did the fathers respond when God called out to them? (1:1-6)
4. How did the fathers eventually respond to God's calling? (1:1-6)
5. When did Zechariah receive his first vision from God? (1:7-17)
6. What did Zechariah see in his first vision? (1:7-17)
7. Who were the men on horseback? (1:7-17)
8. What report did the men on horseback bring? (1:7-17)
9. How long had God judged Israel for her sin? (1:7-17)
10. How did God respond to the angel's question? (1:7-17)

11. Why did God say He was angry with the nations? (1:7-17)
12. How did God promise to treat Jerusalem? (1:7-17)
13. What did Zechariah see next? (1:18-21)
14. What did the horns represent? (1:18-21)
15. What did the craftsmen represent? (1:18-21)
16. What was the third vision Zechariah saw? (2:1-5)
17. What was the angel about to do? (2:1-5)
18. What message did the second angel deliver? (2:1-5)
19. Why was Jerusalem to be inhabited without walls? (2:1-5)
20. How was Jerusalem to be protected without walls? (2:1-5)

21. To whom did the angel cry out? (2:6-13)
22. How did God promise to provide for the needs of His people? (2:6-13)
23. What reason did God give for the people rejoicing? (2:6-13)
24. How would the rest of the world react to this? (2:6-13)
25. In his next vision, Zechariah sees Joshua before the Lord. What position did Joshua hold? (3:1-5)
26. What was happening to Joshua as he was praying to God? (3:1-5)
27. Who rebuked Satan? (3:1-5)
28. How was Joshua clothed? (3:1-5)
29. How did God explain Joshua's clothing? (3:1-5)
30. What condition did God put on Joshua's position? (3:6-7)

31. What privileges would the position provide Joshua? (3:6-7)

32. What other blessings did God promise? (3:8-10)

Comprehend It

1. Compare the dates of Zechariah 1:1, 1:7 and 7:1 to Haggai's dates in 1:1, 1:15, 2:1, 2:10, 2:20). Put these dates in order.

2. What sins had the fathers of Jerusalem committed?

3. How much time was between 1:6 and 1:7?

4. Why is this important?

5. What does it mean that horsemen patrolled the earth?

6. Why would God, who knows everything, need angels to patrol the earth?

7. What did God mean by "the rest of the earth is peaceful and quiet"?

8. Did God change His mind about Jerusalem when the angel asked in 1:12? Why or why not?

9. Did God have a right to be angry with the nations? Why or why not?
10. Who are the nations with whom God was angry?
11. Does it matter that the nations were not His people? Why or why not?
12. Who were the four horns specifically?
13. What was God promising through the first vision?
14. Why did God send an angel to stop the first angel from measuring Jerusalem?
15. If the people had already returned from exile, why was God calling them out of Babylon?
16. How many people had returned from exile? How many had left 70 years earlier? Approximately how many could have been left considering births and deaths in exile?
17. Describe another time in the Old Testament when God brought Israel of captivity with the riches of their captors.

18. How would you interpret God's promise of deliverance if you were an Israelite?
19. Have nations ever come and asked to be included in Jerusalem? If not, what might this mean?
20. What is the job of the High Priest?
21. Who talked to Satan to rebuke him? Why is this important?
22. What did Joshua's clothing represent?
23. Why did God specifically mention changing Joshua's turban separately from the rest of his clothing?
24. Who was the Branch that God promised to send?
25. Has Jerusalem ever known the peace God described in 3:10? If not, what might this mean?

Connect It

1. Why did God tell the people to return to Him?

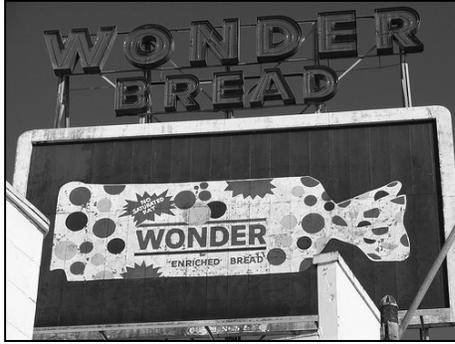
2. How did He promise to respond?
3. What does this tell you about how God treats our sin when WE repent?
4. Is there any Bible verse, with which you are familiar, that describes God's action toward our sin when we repent? If so, list it below.
5. Are you struggling with accepting God's forgiveness? If so, how do these verses apply to YOUR situation?
6. God said His word overtook the people. In other words, Moses warned, "...your sin will find you out." (Numbers 32:23). What does this mean?
7. Is there any sin in your life that you are trying to hide from God? If there is, how might this apply to that situation?
8. God promised some benefits that the repentance of the people would bring. Can you think of any benefits to confession and repentance today?
9. What are the drawbacks to refusing to repent?
10. God waited 70 years to deliver Judah from Babylon and then many of them did not even return. Why would this be?

11. Have you ever questioned God's power or goodness due to circumstances? If so, describe it.
12. How does this scripture help you to understand God's intentions?
13. God promised to destroy the horns. What does this tell you about God?
14. What do the craftsmen tell you about God?
15. What is the overall message of the horns and the craftsmen?
16. What was Satan trying to do to Joshua?
17. How did Joshua respond?
18. How do you react to the accusations and activities of the Adversary?
19. God promises immediate events and far future events. What immediate promises in these verses apply to you today?
20. For what future promises are you still waiting?

21. What are we to be doing as we wait for these promises to come about?

22. Are you doing this? If not, what needs to change?

23. What else needs to change in your walk with Christ as a result of studying these passages?



Lesson Two:
The Best Is Yet to Come!
Zechariah 4:1 through 6:15

Have you ever had to wait for something for a long time? I sure have. I remember once, when I was younger, we were supposed to tour the Wonder Bread factory. I could not wait because a friend of mine told me that we could “sample” all of the bread we could eat. I was also curious about how the bread was made because it seemed like every time my grandmother would make bread; she would yell at me about running in the house and making her bread fall.

The trip was to be a reward for a combination of behaviors desired by my elementary school. First, you had to be there at least 90% of the time; not many absences were allowed. Second, you had to have turned in 90% of your homework. Third, you must have turned in your science project. Finally, you had to have a passing grade. The catch...this had to be done for the entire semester. When you are in fifth grade, a semester can be an eternity. Every day, the teacher would threaten all of us with not being able to go if we did not “straighten up”. It took forever! I am fairly sure I was in the first semester of fifth grade for at least fifteen years.

The day finally came to go on the trip and... It was better than I imagined! We ate fresh bread with honey, jelly, butter, peanut butter, and even with syrup. We got to see the bread being made. We were not yelled at one single time. The bread did not fall. It was a wonderful day.

In these chapters, God continued sending visions to Zechariah to tell the people to hang on to Him and trust Him with their future. He promised that their future would be better than sliced bread (sorry, I could not resist). He promised they would be cared for, delivered, and protected. He promised to bless them and to bless their leaders, but they had to wait patiently and faithfully for the deliverance to come. They had to trust Him enough to follow Him, obey Him, and tell others about Him. The blessings would come.

Describe a time when you had to wait for something for a long time.

Did that something prove to be as exciting as you had thought? Why or why not?

Consider It

1. What did Zechariah see in this vision? (4:1-7)
2. How did the angel first respond to Zechariah's question? (4:1-7)
3. How did God say Zerubbabel was to do the work to which God called him? (4:1-7)
4. What work was Zerubbabel called to do? (4:8-9)
5. How were the people responding to that work? (4:10-14) (See also Haggai 2:3, Ezra 3:12)
6. How was God responding to the work being done? (4:10-14)
7. What were the two olive branches on either side of the lamp stand? (4:10-14)
8. Describe Zechariah's next vision. (5:1-4)
9. If a cubit equals 18 inches (1 ½ feet), how big was the scroll? (5:1-4)
10. What was written on the scroll? (5:1-4)

11. What was the purpose of the scroll? (5:1-4)
12. What was inside the ephah? (5:5-11)
13. What did the contents of the ephah represent? (5:5-11)
14. What were the women with wings doing with the ephah? (5:5-11)
15. From where had the four horsemen come? (6:1-8)
16. Where were the horsemen going? (6:1-8)
17. What were the horsemen going to do there? (6:1-8)
18. How did God react to their activity? (6:1-8)
19. What did the crown represent that Zechariah was to put on Joshua?
(6:9-15)
20. Where was Zechariah to get the gold and silver for the crown? (6:9-15)

21. Was Joshua to sit on the throne AND be the High Priest? If not, what might this mean? (6:9-15)
22. Who would build the temple of the future? (6:9-15)

Comprehend It

1. Why did the angel continuously act as if Zechariah should have known what his visions meant?
2. What was God telling Zerubbabel to continue?
3. Why had that work stopped?
4. What did the lamp stand represent?
5. Who were the two anointed ones standing by the Lord?
6. What did God's message to Zerubbabel mean?
7. What is the significance of God having written the names of the thieves and liars on each side of the scroll?
8. Why did God use normal, everyday items in visions to Zechariah?

9. According to Matthew 13:10-17, why did God do this?
10. What is an ephah?
11. Why did God use a woman to represent wickedness?
12. What did it mean that God put a lid on the ephah?
13. Who were the two women that came to carry the ephah? (Hint: See Revelation 9)
14. What would Shinar do with the ephah? (Note: Shinar is Hebrew for Babylon)
15. Using a Bible Dictionary, what else happened on the plains of Shinar?
16. What do the horsemen accomplish in Revelation 6:1-8?
17. Using the map in the introduction of the study, what was the country to the north? The south?
18. What did God mean by saying the riders had appeased His wrath in 6:8?

19. Who is the “Branch” and what was He to do?
20. Why did God have Zechariah get an offering from Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah?
21. Of what was the crown to remind the people?
22. Who are the people who would come to build the temple?
23. Has this building of the temple happened? If so, when? If not, what might this mean?

Connect It

1. God reminded Zechariah and Zerubbabel that they would accomplish all He had for them to do, but not by might or power, but by His Spirit. What did He mean?
2. How does that apply to the task of the church today? (See Matthew 16:18 & 28:19-20)
3. Do you ever struggle with living out this truth? Why or why not?
4. In what area are you struggling right now?

5. What did God provide to Zerubbabel to help with this task?
6. Do we have these same things today? Why or why not?
7. What other scrolls or books do we read about where God has recorded names?
8. What is this intended to communicate?
9. Which of these books or scrolls is the most important? Why?
10. How does the vision of the ephah show God's sovereignty?
11. If God could seal up wickedness and send it away, then why did He allow it to remain open up to this point?
12. How does this help you understand God's activity today?
13. Does the vision of the ephah mean God is chauvinistic? Why or why not?
14. God was showing He would have His way in the end through the vision of the horsemen. What would that have meant to the following:
 - a. Zechariah

- b. The people

 - c. Zerubbabel

 - d. Joshua
-
15. How does this apply to your life?

 16. The Branch would have both offices of High Priest and King. Who has fulfilled that prophecy?

 17. How does this help you to understand His place in your heart and life?

 18. Does anything need to change in your heart or life to rightly surrender to God in these capacities?

 19. What do you plan to do to surrender more fully?



Lesson Three: Going Through the Motions Zechariah 7:1 through 8:23

No story has captured the spirit of hypocrisy like the following story I encountered in a book of illustrations.

“Shahaji Bavasahib, Maharajah of the native State of Kolhapur, India, was a proud Indian potentate in the daytime and a highway robber at

night. Kolhapur is situated within the Dekkan division of Bombay and has an area of 3,217 square miles with a population of about a million. The exalted autocrat would don the disguise of a bandit each night and lead a murderous masked gang against his own subjects, plundering and looting their possessions. At intervals he would raid his own state treasury and purloin its contents as well as the crown jewels. The latter would invariably turn up in distant pawnshops where the government would periodically redeem them at state expense. The maharajah would cap his hypocrisy by issuing mandates against the looters and offering a prize for their capture.”²

Can you imagine anything more contemptible than someone pretending to be honorable and a defender of the people only to turn out to be the very bandit who was guilty of attacking and plundering them? Can you imagine how the people felt when they found out? Can you imagine how the Maharajah's superiors felt when they found out?

Before we react too harshly to Shahaji Bavasahib, consider the following questions:

- What makes his hypocrisy worse than when we pretend to be devout at church and then live like the world outside of the church?
- What is it about pretending that can be entertaining in one setting and offensive in another?
- Why should Mr. Bavasahib have acted differently?

In these chapters, the people of Jerusalem were called to give an account of their empty religious practices which had become so rote that they no longer even understood why they did them in the first place. God told them to change their ways and then they would be prepared for the blessings He wished to shower upon them.

²Tan, P. L. (1996, c1979). *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations: A treasury of illustrations, anecdotes, facts and quotations for pastors, teachers, and Christian workers*. Garland TX: Bible Communications.

Have you ever found yourself reading a book, newspaper, or magazine only to realize you had no idea what you had just read?

How did that happen?

How did you fix it?

Consider it

1. When did this vision come to Zechariah? (7:1-7)
2. From whence did the messengers come? (7:1-7)
3. What was the purpose of the trip? (7:1-7)
4. What did they ask of Zechariah? (7:1-7)
5. How did Zechariah respond to their questions? (7:1-7)
6. How did God want the people to worship Him? (7:8-14)
7. How had the people responded to God in the past? (7:8-14)
8. How were the people responding to Him in the present? (7:8-14)

9. How did God respond to the people? (7:8-14)
10. When they repented, how did God promise to respond to them? (8:1-8)
11. What reputation would the city have when the people worshipped properly? (8:1-8)
12. What other benefit did God promise? (8:1-8)
13. What objection did God anticipate the people would make? (8:1-8)
14. How did He respond? (8:1-8)
15. How did God say He would accomplish this? (8:1-8)
16. How were the people to show they had put their trust in God? (8:9-17)
17. How did God promise to respond to their trust? (8:9-17)
18. What reassurance did God give the people concerning their future? (8:9-17)

19. How were the people to worship God after He reversed their situation? (8:9-17)

20. What would be the answer to their question about fasting, after this occurred? (8:18-23)

21. How would the surrounding nations respond to God's activity? (8:18-23)

Comprehend It

1. How long had it been since God had last spoken to Zechariah?

2. From Haggai, what had been taking place during this time?

3. According to Ezra 6:15, when was the temple finished?

4. How long did the people work to complete the temple under Zechariah?

5. According to 2 Kings 25, why would the people have fasted in the fifth month?

6. Why had the people been fasting in the seventh month?

7. Having looked at this, what was the real question they were asking?

8. If that was the question, what was the answer?

9. Did the people see the correlation of worship with the rest of their lives? Why or why not?

10. How had God spoken to the people about this in the past?

11. Why did they react before as they had?

12. What did their lifestyle reflect disobedience to God?

13. How did God promise to make things different?

14. Reading through Ezra, Nehemiah, and even Malachi, did this ever happen? If so, when? If not, what might this mean?

15. What did the people struggle with concerning God's promises?

16. Why did God provide a reminder of the rest of their history?

17. What was God's goal in giving them these promises?

18. What does this tell you about what was happening?
19. What was God saying in 8:14-15?
20. During the fasts of the 4th, 5th, 7th, and 10th months, what were the people commemorating?
21. What were they forgetting?
22. Have people flocked to become part of Jerusalem yet? If so, when? If not, what might this mean?

Connect It

1. The people were going through the motions of religion without meaning. Do people do this today? Why or why not?
2. Do you ever find yourself guilty of this? If so, how?
3. What can lead a person to meaningless worship?
4. What can you do to avoid this in the future?

5. On whom did God say their religious actions were focused?
6. What does this mean?
7. Why SHOULD Christians worship or serve the Lord?
8. Is this always the case? Why or why not?
9. How would you know the difference?
10. How did God react to worship with the wrong focus?
11. What does this wrong focus produce in our lives?
12. Could the state of our churches today be caused by this? Why or why not?
13. What effect did God say true worship and holiness would have on the rest of the world?
14. Is this happening in your nation? Why or why not?

15. Is this happening in your church? Why or why not?

16. Is this happening in your life? Why or why not?

17. What encouragement do you draw from God's description of the future?

18. What do you plan to do differently because of reading and studying these chapters of Zechariah?



Lesson Four: Biting the Hand That Feeds You Zechariah 9:1 through 11:14

Normally, dogs are loving, dependable, and loyal to their masters. People who love dogs tell me that some dogs are so loyal to their masters that there have been some recorded instances of dogs starving themselves to death rather than eat from the hand of a stranger. Sometimes, however, dogs can behave strangely. They even attack their owners and bite the very hand that feeds them.

Oddly, dogs are not the only ones that exhibit this behavior. What teenager has not had some sort of disagreement with their parents, only to say something in anger they did not mean? Or how about the husband and wife who, in the heat of an argument, say something hurtful to each other that affects them in a sensitive area?

Sadly, behavior can go much further than just verbal attacks.

In Maryland, in 1999, a 15-year-old boy turned himself in and described for authorities how he had taken a gun and shot his parents and two younger brothers. Nicholas Browning said he had gotten angry at his father because he was not “getting along” with him. What can make a person, or even an animal, turn on the very people who are trying to help them? What can make people attack the very ones they should be loving? Good questions! I am not sure there is a single answer.

In these lessons, God told the people of Jerusalem that they were doing this very thing. God described the lengths He was going to go through to free them from their enemies. He was going to punish their enemies. God was going to extend their kingdom. He was going to restore their land and population. How did they repay Him? By valuing Him and His work at only thirty pieces of silver. This is an obvious reference to Jesus being betrayed to the Jewish authorities by Judas Iscariot.

What about you? Have you ever attacked someone you loved? I don't mean physically, but have you intentionally hurt them? If so, why?

How did you make things right later?

What did you learn from the situation?

Consider It

1. Why was God going to destroy the land of Hadrach and Hamath? (9:1-8)
2. Who else did the burden of the Lord concern? (9:1-8)
3. What offense had Tyre and Sidon committed? (9:1-8)
4. How was God going to punish Tyre and Sidon? (9:1-8)
5. How would the Philistines (Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron) respond to God's judgment of Tyre and Sidon? (9:1-8)
6. What punishments were going to be given to the Philistines? (9:1-8)
7. What was God accomplishing through the judgment of Philistia? (9:1-8)
8. How was God going to bring about the judgment of Philistia? (9:9-11)
9. How far would the king of Israel's domain extend? (9:9-11)
10. How was the king described? (9:9-11)

11. What would be the mark of the king's reign? (9:9-11)
12. Why was God going to do this for Jerusalem? (9:12-17)
13. In what way did God say Jerusalem would be victorious? (9:12-17)
14. For what blessing did God tell the people to ask? (10:1)
15. What were the past leaders of Jerusalem doing to anger God? (10:2-5)
16. Why was God angry about this? (10:2-5)
17. How was God going to restore them to the land? (10:6-12)
18. What would cause God to act towards His people? (10:6-12)
19. What event did God use to help them understand how He would deliver them? (10:6-12)
20. How was God going to treat the nations who had conquered Israel in the past? (11:1-3)

21. How were the leaders of Jerusalem treating their own people? (11:4-14)
22. How did God deal with the leaders for their sins? (11:4-14)
23. How did Zechariah respond to God's instructions? (11:4-14)
24. What were the names of Zechariah's staffs? (11:4-14)
25. How did God respond to the distress of the people? (11:4-14)
26. How did the people respond to the shepherd? (11:4-14)
27. How did the people respond to breaking of the staff Favor? (11:4-14)
28. How much did the people decide the shepherd's work was worth? (11:4-14)
29. What did the shepherd do with the payment? (11:4-14)
30. What did God do in response to their rejection of the shepherd? (11:15-17)

Comprehend It

1. Locate the following places on the map on page 11:
 - a. Damascus
 - b. Hamath
 - c. Tyre
 - d. Sidon
 - e. Ashkelon
 - f. Gaza
 - g. Ekron
2. What do you notice about these places?
3. What was God telling Israel through His description of judgment of the nations?
4. Has verse 9:9 happened yet? 9:10? Why or why not?
5. What is the message of this passage?
6. What covenant is God referring to when He talks about rescuing the people from their oppressors?
7. Has God fought for Israel and brought about the restoration He described in 9:11-17? If so, when? If not, what might this mean?
8. What type of climate is Israel?
9. Does this match God's description of them in 10:1?

10. Where else can you read a description of Israel like 10:2b?
11. How did God plan to use His people in the future?
12. Who was the House of Judah? The House of Joseph?
13. Has God fulfilled His word to Judah? To Joseph? If so, when? If not, what might this mean?
14. All throughout these chapters, God was referring to prophecies that would begin soon and be fulfilled in the distant future (which we only know from living in the distant future). What future event would result in all the Jews returning to Israel from all over the world?
15. Why is this significant?
16. What did God say would happen to them as they were gathering?
17. What did God mean by describing Jerusalem as a sheep doomed to slaughter?
18. From your knowledge of the rest of the Old Testament, did other nations treat Israel as Zechariah describes? Why or why not?

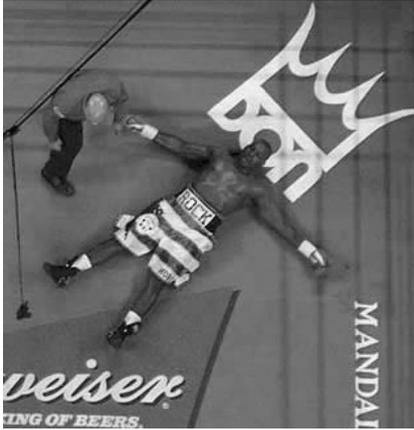
19. How did Jerusalem respond to God's deliverance from their oppressors?
20. Why is it significant that the people of Jerusalem thought the shepherd was only worth 30 pieces of silver?
21. What did the shepherd do with the silver he had been paid? Why?
22. What NT event does this sound like? How is it similar? How is it different?
23. What happened after this?

Connect It

1. Jesus came riding into Jerusalem in plain sight of people who should have known of this prophecy and yet they missed it. Why do you think they missed it?
2. Describe a time when you came across something in the Bible that you had misunderstood, and it suddenly made sense.
3. Why did you get it then and not before?
4. List some things you would like to understand better from God's word.

5. What resource could you use to study these passages?
6. What will be required for you to “get it”?
7. Zechariah describes the people as the “flock of His people”, the stones of a crown sparkling in His land and having comeliness and beauty. Is this how you see yourself? Why or why not?
8. What are some things that keep us from seeing ourselves this way (or at least make it more difficult)?
9. Name some things that can help us to see ourselves this way.
10. Because the people had no shepherd, they were easily led astray. Have you ever felt that way? If so, describe it.
11. God promised to fight for His people and to encourage their hearts. Describe a time when God encouraged you.
12. What did you do with that encouragement?
13. How can you use God’s encouragement to encourage someone else?

14. God told Zechariah His people would go through distress along the way. Is that just for them in their day? Why or why not?
15. Have you learned more about God during good times or during bad times? Give examples.
16. Why is it that you learn more during those times?
17. What are some ways that we sell out Christ today?
18. Have you ever done this? If so, describe.
19. How did you come to realize it?
20. What brought you back?
21. How is that a lesson for your walk with Christ today?
22. What needs to change in your walk with Christ right now?
23. What do you plan to do about it?



Lesson Five:
Down, but Not Out!
Zechariah 12:1 through 14:21

I have a confession. I hope it does not make you disappointed in me, but...

I like Rocky movies. I know that I probably shouldn't as they are quite violent, but I do just the same. I am not sure if it is the underdog winning, the overcoming of the punishment to rise victoriously, or if it is just that I grew up with them

and the action is more believable than today's movies. I am not sure what it is, but I like those movies.

Now that I have confessed to you, I realize what I like so much about them. Just when you think Rocky is down and out, he makes an amazing comeback. I think there is something heroic about coming back against such odds.

These chapters are a lot like that. In the Rocky movies, Rocky comes back, not because of his own strength or boxing acumen, but because it is in the script. In Scriptural accounts, God enables Jerusalem to make a comeback, not because of their righteousness or ability, but because it was His plan. Also like the Rocky movies, the city of Jerusalem must be taken down so far, that it looks like nothing can bring them back. It is at this time that God steps in and offers them forgiveness for rejecting Him and then leads them to rise up. The only reason they can stand is because they have His strength behind them.

It is the same for us as well. The only reason we can stand confident in the presence of God, and not cower at his feet in fear and condemnation, is because of the sacrifice of Jesus. Like Rocky, it is written in the Lamb's book of life that we can stand. This is not because of our wisdom or strength or works, but because of the grace of God through faith.

Have you ever been through something from which you thought you could not recover? If so, describe it.

How did it feel when God brought you through?

Consider It

1. What nation was the second burden concerning? (12:1-9)
2. How did God describe Himself in this oracle? (12:1-9)
3. What did God say would happen to all who attacked Jerusalem? (12:1-9)
4. Who did God say would attempt to attack Jerusalem? (12:1-9)
5. How would the people react to their brothers in Jerusalem? (12:1-9)
6. How did God say He would accomplish the destruction of the nations? (12:1-9)
7. How did God say the people would realize they had rejected Him? (12:10-14)
8. How would the people react when this realization comes? (12:10-14)
9. How did God promise to treat the people after this? (13:1-9)
10. How would families show their repentance and loyalty to God? (13:1-9)

11. How would those who formerly led the people astray react to God? (13:1-9)
12. How would the people show their genuine repentance from their former ways? (13:1-9)
13. How did the person say they had received the wounds between his arms? (13:1-9)
14. Who called the sword to attack the shepherd? (13:1-9)
15. What did God say would happen when the shepherd was killed? (13:1-9)
16. How many of the people would be left after this? (13:1-9)
17. What would happen to the survivors? (13:1-9)
18. How did God describe the future of Jerusalem? (14:1-7)
19. What hope did God offer regarding that future? (14:1-7)
20. When did God say this would happen? (14:1-7)

21. What would be unique about that day? (14:1-7)
22. Where would God set up His Kingdom? (14:8-21)
23. What will happen to those who oppose that Kingdom? (14:8-21)
24. What will save the people from judgment? (14:8-21)
25. How will God provide wealth for His people? (14:8-21)
26. What feast will still be celebrated by the nations in that Kingdom? (14:8-21)
27. How will the sacrifices change? (14:8-21)
28. What does the last sentence of Zechariah's prophecy mean? (14:8-21)

Comprehend it

1. What did God mean by saying he would make Jerusalem a heavy stone?
2. What other story of the Bible describes a situation where God blinded His enemies? What was the result of that story?

3. God promised to deliver Jerusalem from the nations. How had He told Zerubbabel this would happen?
4. How did God say He would establish peace between the people of Jerusalem and Judah?
5. From the history of the Jews, when did they tend to cling to God?
6. When did they tend to stray?
7. How was God going to change this?
8. What did God say would have to precede His defense of Jerusalem?
9. Why is this significant?
10. If you were part of Zechariah's original audience, how would you have responded to Zechariah's telling you that you would look upon God, whom you had pierced?
11. To what other Biblical event was this similar?

12. How would Zechariah's message have been an encouragement to finish rebuilding the temple?
13. How did God say the revival would come to Jerusalem?
14. Is this the normal way God had brought revival in the past? Why or why not?
15. Young's Literal Translation renders Zechariah 13:6 as follows:
"And one hath said unto him, 'What are these wounds in thy hands?'
And he hath said, 'Because I was smitten at home by my lovers.'" What words are different than in the translation you are reading?
16. What did God call idolatry back in Hosea?
17. Considering 1 Kings 18, from where might these wounds have come?
18. What did this prove?
19. How does Zechariah 13:7 compare to Jesus' comments in John 10?
20. From this comparison, how would you answer the question, "Who killed Jesus?"?

21. Why did God require the one third remnant to go through trial and testing?
22. God describes splitting the Mount of Olives from east to west with the north and south retreating. Has this happened yet? If not, what might this mean?
23. What did Zechariah say would happen after the Mount of Olives split?
24. Where else do we read about earthquakes leveling mountains?
25. Do we read anywhere in the Bible about God setting up an earthly Kingdom? If so, where.
26. What about that world will be the same as this one?
27. What about that world will be different than this one?
28. According to the books of Exodus and Leviticus, who could eat a portion of the sacrifices?
29. How was God going to change that?

30. Does this mean that there will be sacrificing in that Kingdom? Why or why not?
31. What had led the Israelites into sin in the first place?
32. How was God ensuring the Israelites would not repeat that sin?

Connect It

1. Does following Christ mean you will never face attack? Why or why not?
2. What does God promise Jerusalem about when an attack comes?
3. What condition(s) does God put on this?
4. What attacks are you facing right now?
5. How does this lesson apply to that struggle?
6. God promised to listen to their prayers, to protect them, and to pour out His Spirit on Jerusalem AFTER they mourned and repented. Have you experienced a time of grieving over your sin and repenting? If so, what does that mean? If not, what does that mean?

7. By whose power was God going to deliver Jerusalem?
8. How do you face your struggles?
9. Should anything change? If so, what?
10. What had to happen for God's cleansing to come to Jerusalem? (See Chapter 13)
11. How is that different from the way Judas Iscariot responded in Matthew 27:1-10?
12. How is that different than how you react when convicted of sin?
13. Does God still test believers today? Why or why not?
14. What happens to gold when it passes through the fire?
15. 1 Corinthians 3 says our works will also pass through the fire. What will happen to YOUR works?
16. When you think about "end times", what do you think about?

17. What was the overall message God was communicating through Zechariah concerning “end times”?
18. Does that message apply to us? Why or why not?
19. Name some differences between how Jesus came the first time and how He is coming again (from this passage).
20. What needs to change in your life for you to be ready for Jesus to come again?
21. What will you do about it today?

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