

Zechariah Profile

Family background and Place of Origin

Zachariah is the son of Berekiah (Berechiah), the son of Iddo.

Dates and to Whom He was Writing

Zechariah ministered from 520- 518 BC to people who returned from exile in Judah. He is a contemporary of Haggai who preached in 520 BC. Several years have elapsed since the people returned from exile, but the temple still needs to be rebuilt. The people were apathetic and had lost enthusiasm for things of God which included rebuilding the temple. Zechariah's messages encourage the people through his proclamation about the kingdom of God and prophetic fulfillment. He urged the people to trust in God and not follow their ancestors. Instead, one should trust in God and his promises (1:1-6). He also prophesied and declared God's judgment against the nations (14:12-15). Zechariah also spoke about the universal worship of God as the nations will join with Jewish people in devotion to God (14:16-19)

Jewish Kings and Their Reign

There were no Jewish kings currently, but the governor was Zerubbabel, and the high priest was Joshua. Zerubbabel is a part of the Davidic line (1 Chron 3:17)

Foreign Nations or Kings

Darius I Hystaspes (522-486) supported the Jewish community and religious customs. He was an officer under Cambyses. The Haggai proclamation came during his rule in 520 BC.

Other Important Events

The temple was rebuilt and dedicated in 515 BC.

Themes

The first eight chapters of Zechariah speak about a series of visions that shows God's plan for his people. There are various themes contained within those visions that speak to what God was doing for his people. Overall, the visions highlighted God's actions as he established his rule over his people and the nations. For example, the four horns and craftsmen vision (1:18-21) speak of God defeating those who oppose his people. The visions were a means of encouragement for the people. It formed a framework for them to understand how God dwelt with his people.

Moreover, Zechariah speaks about the restoration of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the temple (1:16-17, 2:1-13). He encourages the people that God is with and will help them overcome any obstacles faced. Zechariah urges the people to repent and turn back to God (1:3-6, 7:1-14). He assures the people that if they do, God will restore their fortunes and bless them (8:1-23).

He also discussed God's judgment on the people for their failure to obey. Zechariah warned them about the prophecies concerning the exile had occurred despite the warnings from previous prophets (1:6:7:7-14). Therefore, he admonished the people to fear the judgment of God. He warned them to look at the past and not repeat the same mistakes. Finally, he showed them the judgment of God (7:13-14).

Overall, the book of Zechariah contains themes of encouragement, judgment, restoration, and the coming of the Messiah. It speaks to the people of God in their present situation but also points to the future fulfillment of God's plan for his people and the nations.