

STORM WARNINGS!
#11 – ZECHARIAH: GOD’S WAY
ZECHARIAH 4:6-9, 7:8-10, 9:9



Zechariah – Zechariah (Heb. God Remembers) prophesied 520 – 480 BC. Haggai was a contemporary prophet and both are mentioned together in Ezra 5:1 & 6:14. Zechariah’s prophecies are the most apocalyptic and messianic of the Minor Prophets. The book is filled with amazing highly symbolic visions similar to the book of Revelation. The major themes are 1) the rebuilding of the Temple and society after the return from Babylonian captivity, 2) The future coming of the Messiah. The Judah Governor Zerubbabel and Joshua the High Priest are major figures in his book.

I. Build God’s Temple God’s Way (Zechariah 4:6-9)

- ***Man’s Problem: Building the Temple was an overwhelming _____*** – The people had inadequate resources – insufficient workers, talent, money, time, and building materials. Morale was low because the Temple would be inferior to Solomon’s magnificent Temple. They had given up and the temple was half-finished.
 Today’s temples are not buildings, but us! (I Corinthians 3:16, 6:19. II Corinthians 6:16) God (through the Holy Spirit) resides in each of us individually, and as a group – the Church. But, we struggle to build our temples spiritually.
- ***God’s Solution: Build the Temple in God’s _____ power (4:6)*** – There are 3 ways we can try to do the work of God: 1) In our own strength and wisdom, 2) Do it in the way and resources of the world. 3) Through the way and power of the Spirit of God. The first two ways may bring some initial success, but will not stand the test of time and will fail in the end. Only through God’s way will the building effort both last and have enduring spiritual significance. Both the people of Judah then, and us today need to build in the way and power of the Holy Spirit. How do you know you are building in the Spirit of God? There’s a supernatural personal connection to God. Also, your “temple” will consistently look like Jesus. Does your temple look like Jesus?
- ***Life’s Obstacles: God can make the mighty mountains _____ (4:7)***– There are always obstacles in building God’s Temple. For the people of Judah, it was the lack of resources and low morale. For us today, it can be stubborn personal sin, opposition from others, lack of personal resources, and personal spiritual fatigue. Though these mountains may seem mighty, God can level them if we cooperate with His efforts through faith-action. With God, mighty mountains are miraculous opportunities for God to have spiritual victory.

II. Do Justice and Mercy God’s Way (Zechariah 7:5, 8-10)

- ***The Problem: Superficial _____ traditionalism*** – The people wondered if they had to keep certain fasts (verses 2-3). In response the Lord asked, “Are you really doing it for me?” The obvious answer was “NO!” Their fasting was not done for repentance, but to impress others and keep God happy. Insincere religious traditionalism offends God. Our religious practices need to reflect our true heart in living for God. Religious traditions are wonderful if they are heartfelt and honor God.
- ***The Solution: 4 tests to indicate true devotion to _____ (8-10)*** – 1) ***Administer Justice*** (Hebrew: Mispāt): Practicing the rights and duties of each person in relation to one another that show impartiality and fairness: doing what is right. This is both an individual and societal obligation.

2) **Show Mercy** (Hebrew: Chesed): Loyal and faithful love demonstrated by caring and serving one another's needs, whether they are deserving or not (like "agape" love)

3) **Show Compassion to One Another**: A tender maternal love that is sentimental, empathetic, and sympathetic. It gives people the benefit of a doubt and always thinks the best of others.

4) **Do Not Oppress the Widow, Fatherless, the Alien, or the Poor**: These were the weakest, the neediest, the most disadvantaged of society – and the ones with the fewest legal rights. Jesus sums it up by stating "do to others what you would have them do to you. This sums up the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12) see also James 1:27

- **If you refuse to listen and obey God's way, God will be very _____ (11-12)** – There will be consequences when we refuse to listen, no matter what our excuse. Such as not paying attention, too busy with our own lives, or just saying "no" to God in rebellion.

III. Expect and Accept the Coming Messiah King God's Way

- **Rejoice greatly! See the Messianic _____ is Coming** – In contrast to previous evil kings of Judah, conquering foreign kings, and the future conqueror Alexander the Great (prophesied in Zechariah 9:1-8), God's Messianic King will be rejoiced because His reign will be amazingly different.
- **The Messiah King will be righteous and having _____** – First the King will be perfectly righteous in personal character and quality of reign. This righteousness will conform perfectly to the divine standard of morality and ethics in word and deed. The world would finally see what true righteousness looks like! The Messiah King will have salvation. He is the savior – deliverer. What the Jews did not understand was the salvation offered would not be political (saved from earthly enemies) but spiritual (saved from the spiritual enemies of sin, Satan, and self) for eternal life..
- **The Messiah King will be gentle and riding a _____** – Unlike past arrogant and brutal kings (even King David could be arrogant and brutal on occasion), the Messiah King would be gentle in spirit and reign – considerate of those under His reign. He would ride a donkey (fulfilled on the triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday) characterizing His kinship as humble, peaceful, and servanthood. Ironically, in spite of Zechariah's prophecy, most Jews rejected their Messiah King 650 years later, instead looking for the conquering political king on a warhorse. Today, what kind of Messiah King are you looking for? A strong and arrogant conquering king, or the righteous, spiritual salvation offering gentle king.

Answers: I. Struggle; Spirit; level. II. Religious; God; angry. III. King; salvation; donkey.