



## **The Future Salvation of Israel**

### **“God’s Call to Repentance”**

#### **Zechariah 1:1-17**

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In 586 B.C., God used the army of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon as His agent of judgment upon His people for their sins of idolatry and rebellion against Him. Not only were the cities left in ruins, the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, and around 80,000 Jews were taken captive to Babylon.

- The prophet Jeremiah said the Israelites would be in exile in Babylon for 70 years. However, in 537 B.C., the Babylonian Empire fell to the armies of Persia, and King Cyrus allowed some of the Jews to return to Israel to begin the process of rebuilding their homeland, including the Temple.
- Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi were the prophets through whom God spoke to the Jews who had returned.
- Zechariah warned them, now that they had returned to the land they loved, and were rebuilding the Temple they loved, they still needed to return to the God who loved them, for it was the forefather’s lack of love for God that caused them to be exiled.
- The Theme of Zechariah is how God plans to deliver the Jews from their enemies, and lead them to finally receive Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, so that He can live with them in the city of Jerusalem. Hence, God’s call to repentance.

**The Theme of the whole Bible is God’s eternal plan for our redemption through the death of His only begotten Son.**

- From Genesis 3:15 to Revelation 22, the Bible is God’s full and final revelation of Himself to mankind, and His plan to

send His Son to be our Savior.

- In Isaiah 40:3, the prophet proclaimed, ***“Prepare the way for the Messiah to come; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”***
- Seven hundred years later, John the Baptist arose as that lone voice, declaring the arrival of the God-Promised King and crying out in the wilderness for the people of Israel to prepare the way for Him by repenting of their sins.
- When John saw Jesus approaching him, he cried out, ***“Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.”***
- The four gospels tell us how Jesus was rejected, charged, tried, convicted, and crucified for a crime He did not commit. But three days later, He rose from the dead, proving Himself to be the Savior God had sent Him to be.
- The book of Acts tells the amazing results of the Apostle’s proclamation of Jesus’ life, death, burial, and resurrection, proving Himself to be the Savior He had claimed to be.
- The New Testament Letters explained the two comings of Christ, first as our Savior and Lord, and second as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.
- The Book of Revelation describes the events of those final days of this age, when Jesus, having conquered Satan, sin, and death, and after destroying His enemies, will establish His New Kingdom in the current City of Jerusalem, and those who received Him as their Savior and Lord will reign with Him forever, world without end.

## **The Prophet Zechariah had a personal encounter with the Pre-incarnate Son of God.**

- In Zechariah, chapters 1-6, the prophet said he had a conversation with a certain person whom he described as the Angel of the Lord. (2:3, 4:1, 4:5, 5:5, 5:10, and 6:4)
- The Angel of the Lord was an appearance of God the Son in the Old Testament before He was born as Mary’s child in the New Testament.
- In Zechariah 9:9, the prophet described the day Jesus entered Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey, and the people treated Him as their King. **(The King Arrives)**
- In Zechariah 11:12, the prophet described the day Judas sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. **(The King Rejected)**
- In Zechariah 12:10, the prophet described the day Jesus was crucified. **(The King Crucified)**
- In Zechariah 13:8, the prophet described the last days of the Great Tribulation, when 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of the Jews will be killed, but 1/3<sup>rd</sup> will recognize Jesus as their Messiah and be saved. **(The King Received)**
- In Zechariah 14:9, the prophet described the day when Jesus will be the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords, and rule the world with truth and grace. **(The King Recognized)**
- In Zechariah 14:16, the prophet described the day when people from all over the earth will come to Jerusalem to worship Jesus. **(The King Worshipped)**
- Six hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ, the prophet Zechariah, in conversation with the Pre-incarnate Son of God, prophesied Jesus’ arrival on Palm Sunday, His rejection by the people, His crucifixion by the religious leaders, His reception by the surviving remnant of the Jews, His recognition as the King of Kings, and that He will be worshipped as the Lord of Lords.

Zechariah means **“God Remembers,”** and by sending His Son to have a conversation with Zechariah, God was assuring His chosen people that He will remember them, and, in the fullness of time, He will comfort them.

- When we read John 14:6, we often think the Holy Spirit is the only Comforter. However, Jesus said, ***“When I go away, I will send you another Comforter,”*** which means Jesus was also the Comforter.
- In the Old Testament, Jesus appears as the Angel of the Lord to comfort His people before they enter a dark time in their history.
- In the New Testament, Jesus appears as the prophesied and Promised Messiah to comfort those who would receive Him as their Savior and fully surrender unto Him as their Lord.
  - Jesus wasn’t just a good man who set a good example for us.
  - Jesus wasn’t just a martyr who allowed Himself to be crucified for our sins.
  - Jesus was God in the flesh, the second person of the Triune Godhead, who, because of His love for the Father, gave His life to pay the eternal debt for the sins of those who would believe in Him, receive Him as their Savior and Lord.
- God’s message to His people through His servant, Zechariah, was very clear. God had an abundance of blessings He wanted to pour out upon them, but to receive them, they had to return to Him by fully repenting of their sins – that which their fathers would not do, and therefore, they were exiled to Babylon.
- God’s message to His people today has not changed. God has a place of hope, a place of peace, a place of rest for those who are heavy burdened because of their sins, but that place is reserved for those who will turn from their sins and run into His arms of love.
  - To the sinner, God says, **“Return to Me, by receiving Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord!”**
  - To the backslidden, God says, **“Return to me through your repentance of your sin, and I will return to you and restore unto you the joy of your eternal salvation.”**