

The Book of Zechariah

Introduction

Zechariah is the great prophet of the restoration, and, as stated in the introduction to Haggai, was contemporary with him. The prophecies in both books are dated. These are as follows:

In the sixth month of Darius's second year: Haggai 1

In the seventh month of the same year: Haggai 2

In the eighth month, the same year: Zechariah 1

In the ninth month, the same year: Haggai 2

In the eleventh month, the same year: Zechariah 1-6

In the fourth year of Darius, ninth month: Zechariah 7-14

Zechariah is named in Ezra 5:1 and 6:14; he was of priestly descent, which we learn by consulting Nehemiah 12:4, 16. His name means "Jehovah remembers." He was the son of Berechiah, which means "Jehovah will bless;" and his grandfather's name was Iddo; Iddo means "the appointed time." These are significant names; one might say the great prophetic message of Zechariah is given in these three names in a nutshell. For the covenant-keeping God remembers His people, which the visions and messages of Zechariah show. When He remembers them He will bless them, but it will be at the appointed time, and the appointed time has not yet come, hence the greater part of Zechariah remains unfulfilled.

He was born in Babylon, and when he returned to the land of his fathers he was a child. In his vision he is addressed as a young man, so that he was quite young when called into the responsible position of a prophet. As to the historical setting of his prophecies, it is the same as Haggai's, and we refer the reader to what we have said there.

According to ancient sources he lived to be a very old man, and was buried alongside of Haggai in Jerusalem; but this cannot be verified. Jewish tradition says that he was a member of the great synagogue, and took an active part in providing for the liturgical service of the new temple. The Septuagint version of the Old Testament ascribes to him the composition of Psalms 137 and 138, and to Haggai and Zachariah Psalms 145-148; and the same do other versions like the Peshito and the Vulgate. Some expositors have been so superficial in their statements that they identified him with the Zechariah who was slain by Joash of Judah, between the temple and the altar, as mentioned in 2 Chronicles 24:20-23.