

## The Christ of Zechariah

Nutshell: “Christ” is the NT translation of the OT word “Mesheach” (“Messiah,” Jn 1:41), meaning Anointed. Christ is whom the Jews awaited as their Deliverer. The OT pictures of Christ grew in clarity from His first announcement in Gen 3:15 as the one who crush the Serpent’s head, to the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53.

But Zechariah is, like Revelation of the NT, a final, *comprehensive* “unveiling” (*apocalupsis*) of Christ. When we see the Christ of Zechariah, we see the main message of Zechariah.

**Kid-speak:** What book are we looking at today? Zechariah. What does Zechariah mean? God (Yah) has remembered.

- I. Christ was Shepherd of Israel (Ps 80:1), Guiding the Old Covenant (OC) with Israel to Its New Covenant (NC) Completion.
  - A. The OC pictures of Christ got both clearer and bigger/better throughout the OT. The example we’ve seen in Zechariah is the Tabernacle.
    1. The **Tabernacle** (Exod 25-Lev 10) was a large, entailed picture of Christ and His redemption, in its layout, furnishings, and processes.
    2. The **Temple** then generally became the Tabernacle x10.
    3. **Ezekiel’s** Temple then became Solomon’s Temple expanded yet further.
    4. And **Zechariah’s** Temple pictures the exponential expansion of Sacrifice, depicting the *reality* of the Messiah.
    5. (Then Revelation includes a sort of look-back or review of the same depiction.)
  - B. Christ was always guiding Israel toward the NC.
    1. Her intentional deafness and waywardness eventually got her displaced from the Land, 1:4-6.
    2. But now they were back in the Land.
      - a. They’d begun rebuilding the Temple amidst opposition, gotten discouraged, then began again (Haggai).
      - b. Now the question of the WORSHIP of that rebuilt Temple occupied Zechariah.
    3. God admonished them to return to Him in 1:3, separating from their fathers.
    4. “And they returned,” 1:6.
      - a. But how would their returning *hold*?
      - b. In the meantime, God began showing them the Final Reality of **Christ** which the Temple Service pictured. Voila: the book of Zechariah!

**Kid-speak:** Was Zechariah writing during God’s *Old Covenant* or God’s *New Covenant*? Old Covenant. But what was the Old Covenant always waiting for? The New Covenant.

- II. Christ was (and is) the King of Nations, Judging His Nation for Their Evil, Judging the Nations for Their Evil, While Calling a Multitude to Himself *From* the Nations.
  - A. Christ was present from the beginning of Zechariah, the “**Man**” of 1:8.

1. Overseeing the reconnoitering of the nations, 1:8-11.
  2. Assessing their smug ease (incl 1:15).
  3. Calling aloud for the nations' *unrest*, removing their stranglehold on God's people, 1:12.
- B. Zechariah then becomes a word of comfort, 1:13.
- C. God was angry with His people, 1:14.
1. He called the nations to facilitate Israel's punishment, but they overdid it, 1:15
  2. Now He'll return to His promised compassions for Jerusalem, 1:16-17
- D. The craftsmen pictured God's retribution on the nations that had or would yet harm His people, 1:18-21.
- The reconnoitering of 1:8-11 to be completed in **6:1-8**.
- E. Christ is again the "**Man**" (2:1), now measuring Jerusalem for its prosperous expansion! 2:2-5.
1. Calling for His people's complete separation from Persia (daughter of Babylon), where many of them remained, 2:6-7.
  2. Promising judgment on the anti-Jewish elements in Persia, 2:8-9 (fulfilled in Esther).
  3. A sign that He would indeed  dwell  with His people, 2:10.
  4. And join many nations to them, 2:11 (including in Esther).

**Kid-speak:** God was the God of Israel, but was He still the God over all the other nations and their gods? Yes! Is He still the God over our nation and every nation? Yes.

### III. Christ was Always Going to be "Immanuel," a God Dwelling With His People.

- A. As God walked with Adam and Eve in the Garden.
- B. As He dwelt among them via the Tabernacle/ Temple.
- C. As in 2:10.
  1. Choosing Jerusalem *again*, 2:12.
  2. Calling for the earth's silence at God awakening, 2:13.
    - a. We tend to think we're OK. God doesn't need to be roused.
    - b. But God knows the bridge to be spanned to cleanse our defilement.

**Kid-speak:** The Israelites were bad and got kicked out of their land, but now they were back. Had God decided He would live with them again? Yes!

### IV. But Our Sins Separated Us from God. Therefore, Christ had to Make Himself a Sacrificial Offering.

- A. So Christ pictured **justification** in cleansing Joshua the high priest, 3:1-5.
  1. Festal garb, connoting joy in God's presence.
  2. And joy in receiving justification.
- B. And on that basis, He called for **sanctification** in charging Joshua and His companions to faithfulness, 3:6-8.
- C. Using this as a platform for promising the fulfilling Priest, the Branch/ Shoot/ **SPROUT**.

1. Who'd come among us, one of us, as a baby.
2. And humbly do His work, increasing as He went.
3. Going to the Cross.
  - a. As a omniscient Stone, seeing our sins, engraved with our sins, 3: 9.
  - b. Removing the Land's (or earth's) perversity in one day! 3:9.
4. Providing the basis for universal peace and happiness! 3:10.
  - a. Christ Building God's Temple, beginning with His resurrection, an initial **SPROUTING** (Firstfruits of the resurrection), **6:12**
  - b. He's the Priest who'll be King as well, having obtained, by His death, rights to the world, **6:9-15**

**Kid-speak:** Jesus is called the Sprout in Zechariah, meaning He'd start off small. How big will He be one day? King *on* the earth over the *whole* earth!

- V. Now Christ would have the Authority to Implement Our Holiness, and Implanting in us the Desire and Authority to Obey
  - A. The New Menorah, 4:1-14, picturing our Spirit-empowered walk (sanctification), 4:6.
    1. Including, again, its festive nature, 4:14: harvest oil, not anointing oil.
    2. But the basic picture being **light** (a lamp).
      - a. Christ is the Light, the lamp, the menorah, Jn 12:46.
      - b. We are lights, and we are light, Eph 5:8.
  - B. Christ's sacrifice empowers the complete overcoming of darkness.
    1. Though, for now, darkness remains around us and within us.
    2. But it is no longer our master, 1 Thess 5:5.
  - C. But Christ's stamp on us also necessitates the expulsion of the counterfeit (no light) from our midst. It's not all just relative (we all have some darkness).
    1. Zech 5, the discovery and dissolution of darkness *from our midst*.
    2. Everyone eventually finds his proper home, 5:11.
    3. Where God ensures that home's reward, 6:1-8.
  - D. Christ, Priest who-is-King (6:9-15), reminds them (and us) of our former wanderings to prevent their repetition, 7:1-14.
  - E. Christ's sacrifice and union with us promises an all-good future, 8:1-15.
    1. But we must make our walk with one another consistent with that goodness, 8:16-17.
    2. This will be a magnet by which God will bring many peoples in! 8:18-23; 6:15.

**Kid-speak:** When God joins us to Jesus at the Cross, who does He send into our hearts and minds to make us like Jesus? The Holy Spirit (you could say Jesus too). How do we learn to understand the Holy Spirit and cooperate with Him? By the Bible.

- VI. Christ Will Soon Finish His Two-Path Work on Earth: Delivering & Sifting His People while Judging Their Haters.
  - A. Zechariah is a book culminating in the Final Battle.

1. Chaps. 9-14 contain different angles of that same battle.
2. First using Alexander as a type of the conquering Christ, 9:1-8: a short-term type promising the later reality.
  - a. But Christ's conquest based on His humble yielding to the Cross, 9:9.
  - b. He thereby fits His people for battle, 9:10-10:12 (the Maccabees a short-term fulfillment), Eph 6:10-20; 2 Cor 10:4-5.
- B. But God's people are sifted during the trials of upheaval, 11:1-17.
  1. Eventually rejecting God as shepherd.
  2. As pictured in Zechariah's play as two shepherds.
- C. With His sifting done, He will unite His peoples' hearts in Him, 12:1-9.
  1. Bringing Israel to acknowledge her killing of her Messiah, 12:10.
  2. With a deep, universal mourning, 12:10-14.
- D. Cleansing them, and causing a purging of idolatry and lies in their midst, 13:1-6.
  1. Refining the refined gold *further*, 13:7-9, 14:1-2
  2. because the Cross demands full refining, 13:7: Strike the Shepherd.

**Kid-speak:** How clean will the Cross make us one day? Not one little bit of sin left!

#### VII. Christ Will Return, 14:4.

- A. Delivering His people, 14:3-5.
- B. Entering the battle personally, 14:3-5; 12-15.
- C. Reshaping the landscape to reflect the new reality, 14:6-11.
- D. Making earth a place of worship in the Millennium, 14:16-19.
- E. And transferring the holiness of the Temple outward, where it belongs, in all God's people, 14:20-21.

**Kid-speak:** How does earth's/ man's history have to end? Jesus has to come back and be king. Is it a good idea to be treating Him like king right now? Oh yeah!

Wrap-up: The Christ of Zechariah is like the Christ of Revelation: so up-close and expansive that our 'eyes' have trouble adjusting. The strange images are the most accurate analogies God could give us of the cosmically huge and deep realities, especially those connected with the Cross, Justification, and Sanctification.

Zechariah would be a final, comprehensive picture of the NC and its Mediator Christ, before its fulfillment.

Now, Zechariah serves even better to instruct us in the beauties and powers of the NC. Plus, we are still just as subject to the prompting of the flesh. Understanding Zechariah gives us the TOOLS to *access* the Spirit and *combat* the flesh, but only seeking God with all our hearts will keep us **in** the Spirit and **from** the flesh, same as Zechariah's original audience. A better covenant does not lessen the flesh's pull, but only makes our yielding to it less excusable.