

Dr. Gary Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 27, Zechariah, Part 1

Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 27, Zechariah, Part 1, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Gary Yates's lecture provides an overview of the Old Testament book of Zechariah, particularly Zechariah 1-6. The lecture emphasizes the historical context of Haggai and Zechariah's prophecies, which served to encourage the post-exilic community to rebuild the temple and seek spiritual renewal. It highlights the call to repentance and the people's positive, yet incomplete, response to God's call, as well as the "now and not yet" tension related to the restoration of Israel. The lecture provides in-depth analysis of Zechariah's night visions, exploring themes such as judgment on oppressing nations, the restoration of Jerusalem, and the roles of Joshua and Zerubbabel as forerunners of the Messiah. Yates also discusses the symbolism and interpretive challenges presented in the visions, connecting them to broader prophetic themes and New Testament understandings. Ultimately, it suggests the people's actions will determine the degree of blessing they receive from God.

**2. 21 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 27 – Double click icon
to play in Windows media player or go to the
Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link
there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Book of the
Twelve [Minor Prophets]).**



**Yates_Book12_Sessi
on27.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 27, Zechariah, Part 1

Okay, here's a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. Gary Yates' lecture on Zechariah, Part 1:

Briefing Document: Dr. Gary Yates on Zechariah, Part 1

Overview:

This lecture focuses on the books of Haggai and Zechariah, specifically Zechariah chapters 1-6, and their role in encouraging the post-exilic Jewish community to rebuild the temple and to experience spiritual renewal. Dr. Yates emphasizes the importance of repentance, God's faithfulness, the "now and not yet" aspect of restoration, and the symbolic nature of Zechariah's visions. He also explores how these prophecies relate to the future Messiah.

Main Themes and Ideas:

- **The Role of Haggai and Zechariah:** Both prophets are central to encouraging the post-exilic community to rebuild the temple. Haggai initiates the process, and Zechariah continues to call for repentance and spiritual renewal alongside the rebuilding efforts. *"They are the two prophets that God uses to encourage the post-exilic community to complete the task of rebuilding the temple and beyond that to talk about the spiritual renewal and the ultimate restoration that God will bring to the people of Israel."*
- **Importance of Repentance (Shub):** Repentance, "turning around or returning to the Lord," is a unifying concept in the Book of the 12. In the case of Haggai and Zechariah, the people show a positive response to the call to repentance. *"Therefore, thus declares the Lord of hosts, return to me says the Lord of hosts, and I will return to you."* The people acknowledge their fathers' sins and God's subsequent judgment, leading to God's promise to bless them upon their return.
- **The Difficult Context of Restoration:** The return from exile was not a glorious time. The people faced financial hardships, foreign oppression, and opposition from enemies. Rebuilding the temple was a difficult task, especially considering it wouldn't match the glory of Solomon's temple. *"When they came back from exile, it was not the glorious time that we might think about reading some of the earlier prophets. It was a difficult time; there were financial hardships, they were still under foreign oppression..."*

- **The "Now and Not Yet" of Restoration:** The people experience a partial restoration in the present (rebuilding the temple, returning to the land), but the ultimate and complete restoration lies in the future eschatological kingdom. This framework (now/not yet) shapes the structure of the Book of Zechariah: chapters 1-8 focusing on the blessings of the present, and chapters 9-14 on the future eschatological restoration. *"So, there is a partial now experience of the blessings of restoration. There is going to be an ultimate not yet experience of that in the future eschatological kingdom."*
- **Prophetic Language and Fulfillment:** Prophets like Jeremiah and Ezekiel made unconditional promises about God writing the law on people's hearts. While these promises are absolute, the *timing* and *manner* of their fulfillment depend on the people's response to God's saving initiatives. Even with the return from exile, the people still needed to fully return to God. *"When the people learn to practice justice, then God will pour out on them the covenant blessings. When they fully return to God, then the blessings will be fully experienced."*
- **Zechariah's Night Visions (Chapters 1-6):** These visions are proto-apocalyptic and present interpretive challenges, but they share key themes:
 - God will judge the nations that oppressed Israel.
 - God will restore Israel, rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple.
 - God will cleanse the land and purge the people from sin.
 - Joshua (high priest) and Zerubbabel (governor) will play key leadership roles. *"But in the midst of all the difficulties of this and the differences and the nuances and the specific details of these eight visions, there really are four or five key themes that are coming out in each one of these."*
- **Specific Visions Discussed: Vision 1: Man Among the Myrtle Trees:** The angel of the Lord questions why the nations that oppressed Israel are at peace. God assures that He will judge those nations and save His people, fulfilling His covenant promises.

- **Vision 2: Four Horns and Four Craftsmen:** The four horns represent the enemies of Israel (from all directions). God will raise up craftsmen to defeat them. *"What this passage promises is that the four horns that have been used against Israel, God is going to raise up a craftsman...that will bring about these four horns being cut off and brought down."*
- **Vision 3: Man with a Measuring Line:** Jerusalem will be so populous that it will be an unwallled city, with God as its protector. *"Instead of having a protective wall around the city, the Lord himself will be a wall of fire that protects the city and keeps it from being invaded by these enemy armies that want to come and take it."*
- **Vision 4: Joshua the High Priest:** Joshua's defiled garments represent the defilement of the priesthood and the people. God, in His grace, provides new garments and restores the priesthood. Joshua and his successors are also a sign of the future "branch" (Messiah). *"So, the Lord, it's certainly not Joshua's own personal qualifications here, but the Lord in an act of graciousness provides new garments for the priest. He purifies the priesthood so that they will be able to serve and stand before the Lord..."*
- **Vision 5: Two Olive Trees and the Golden Lampstand:** Joshua and Zerubbabel are empowered by the Spirit of God to rebuild the temple. Obstacles will be overcome. *"Not by might nor by power but by my spirit says the Lord of hosts."*
- **Vision 6: Flying Scroll:** A gigantic scroll representing the covenant curses warns the people to obey God to avoid further judgment.
- **Vision 7: Woman in a Basket:** A woman representing sin is carried to Babylon, warning of the potential for further exile if the people don't fully return to God.
- **Vision 8: Four Chariots:** These chariots carry out God's judgment and bring justice.
- **The Branch (Messiah):** The visions of Joshua the high priest and the later crowning ceremony prefigure the coming Messiah. The dual leadership of Joshua (priest) and Zerubbabel (king) foreshadows how Christ will ultimately fulfill both roles. *"Ultimately, when the future Messiah comes and we know that the role of Jesus in the New Testament, he is going to fulfill perfectly the roles of prophet, priest, and king."*

- **The Role of Satan:** The figure of "the Satan" in Zechariah is discussed. While some see him as a legitimate prosecuting attorney in the divine counsel, Dr. Yates argues that he displays a malevolent intent, opposing both God and his people, similar to the Satan in the Book of Job. *"Even if he had originally been given the legitimate role of being God's prosecuting attorney and to bring before God instances of where individuals or other creatures might have been disobedient to God, he seems to be abusing this role in the passages that we see him in the Old Testament."*

Key Takeaway:

Zechariah provides encouragement to the post-exilic community during a difficult time of rebuilding and restoration. The book emphasizes the importance of repentance, God's faithfulness, and the promise of a future, complete restoration through the coming Messiah.

4. Study Guide: Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 27, Zechariah, Part 1

Zechariah: Rebuilding and Restoration - A Study Guide

Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each, drawing from the provided source material.

1. What was the primary task Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the post-exilic community to complete?
2. What does the Hebrew word *shub* mean, and why is it significant in the Book of the 12?
3. What was the attitude and situation of the post-exilic community upon their return from exile?
4. How does Zechariah's book distinguish between the "now" and "not yet" aspects of restoration?
5. How does Zechariah use the concept of repentance?
6. What are the five key themes present in Zechariah's night visions?
7. Describe the first vision in Zechariah and its meaning regarding the nations around Israel.
8. What does the fourth vision of Joshua the High Priest symbolize?
9. Explain the significance of the fifth vision of the two olive trees and golden lampstand.
10. Explain the meaning of the seventh vision, regarding the woman in the basket.

Quiz - Answer Key

1. Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the post-exilic community to complete the task of rebuilding the temple. This task was central to their worship and relationship with God.
2. The Hebrew word *shub* means "turning around" or "returning to the Lord." It is significant in the Book of the 12 as a unifying idea, highlighting the failure of the people to repent throughout their history.

3. The post-exilic community faced financial hardships, foreign oppression, and opposition from enemies in the land, making it a discouraging and difficult time. Rebuilding the temple was a major undertaking for them.
4. Zechariah's book distinguishes between the "now" (the blessings God is providing as the people rebuild the temple) and the "not yet" (the eschatological restoration, the return beyond the return, when Israel will fully experience God's blessings).
5. Zechariah emphasizes that the people's response to God's saving initiatives determines the timing, manner, and fullness of their blessings. While God takes the first steps, a true return to God requires a change in behavior.
6. The key themes are: judgment of nations oppressing Israel, restoration of Israel including rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple, cleansing of the land from sin, and the leadership role of Joshua and Zerubbabel who prefigure the Messiah.
7. The first vision depicts a man among myrtle trees, with angels finding the world at peace, which raises the question of why the nations that oppressed Israel are at ease. The Lord responds that he will judge those nations and restore his people.
8. The vision of Joshua the High Priest symbolizes the purification and restoration of the priesthood by God's grace, allowing them to serve in the temple. It also foreshadows the future "branch" (Messiah) who will unite priesthood and kingship.
9. The vision represents God's empowerment of Joshua and Zerubbabel through the Spirit, enabling them to overcome obstacles and rebuild the temple. It highlights that this is not done by their own strength, but by God's power.
10. The seventh vision with the woman in a basket shows the possibility of a return to exile because sin is still in the land. If the people do not fully turn back to God, there is the possibility of further exile.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the role of Haggai and Zechariah in the post-exilic period, discussing their message, the challenges they faced, and the impact they had on the community.
2. Discuss the significance of the concept of "now and not yet" in Zechariah, explaining how it relates to the restoration of Israel and the coming of the Messiah.
3. Explore the different visions in Zechariah, identifying the key themes and symbols, and explaining how they contribute to the overall message of the book.
4. Compare and contrast the leadership roles of Joshua the High Priest and Zerubbabel the governor in the context of the post-exilic community.
5. Examine the ways that Zechariah uses prophetic language and imagery to convey his message, discussing the challenges of interpretation and the impact on the audience.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Post-Exilic:** Refers to the period in Jewish history after the Babylonian exile, when the Jewish people returned to their homeland.
- **Haggai:** A prophet who ministered during the post-exilic period, encouraging the rebuilding of the temple.
- **Zechariah:** A prophet who ministered during the post-exilic period, encouraging the rebuilding of the temple and speaking of spiritual renewal and ultimate restoration.
- **Shub:** Hebrew word meaning "to return" or "to repent," emphasizing the importance of turning back to God.
- **Zerubbabel:** The governor of Judah during the post-exilic period, a descendant of David.
- **Joshua (the High Priest):** The high priest during the post-exilic period, representing the priestly leadership.
- **Temple:** The central place of worship for the Jewish people, destroyed by the Babylonians and later rebuilt in the post-exilic period.
- **Messiah:** The promised future king and deliverer of Israel, a descendant of David.
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the end times or the ultimate fulfillment of God's purposes.
- **Satan (Ha-satan):** The accuser or adversary, often seen as the devil or a prosecuting attorney in the divine counsel.
- **Branch:** A Messianic title, referring to the future Davidic ruler who will bring justice and peace.
- **Covenant Curses:** Judgments and consequences that result from breaking the covenant between God and his people.

5. FAQs on Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 27, Zechariah, Part 1, Biblicalearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on Zechariah, Part 1 (Dr. Gary Yates)

1. What was the primary purpose of Haggai and Zechariah's prophetic ministry in the post-exilic period?

Haggai and Zechariah were instrumental in encouraging the post-exilic community to complete the rebuilding of the temple. Beyond the physical reconstruction, they also addressed the need for spiritual renewal and the ultimate restoration God would bring to Israel, emphasizing the importance of the temple as central to their worship and relationship with God.

2. What role does repentance play in the Book of the Twelve, and how does it relate to Zechariah's message?

Repentance, or "shub" (turning back to the Lord), is a unifying concept in the Book of the Twelve. Zechariah, like other prophets, calls the people to repent, urging them to turn from their sinful ways and restore their relationship with God. While the Book of the Twelve often depicts the people's failure to repent, Haggai and Zechariah present a positive example of responsiveness, where the people initially heed the call and begin rebuilding the temple.

3. How did the historical context of the post-exilic period influence the message of Haggai and Zechariah?

The post-exilic period was a time of significant hardship for the returning Israelites, marked by financial difficulties, foreign oppression, and opposition from enemies in the land. The rebuilt temple paled in comparison to Solomon's temple, leading to discouragement. Haggai and Zechariah's messages aimed to encourage the people in this difficult task, assuring them of God's presence, provision, and leadership while emphasizing the importance of justice and truth.

4. What is the "now and not yet" concept in Zechariah, and how does it relate to the blessings of restoration?

Zechariah distinguishes between the immediate blessings God provides as the people rebuild the temple ("now") and the ultimate, eschatological restoration that will occur in the future ("not yet"). The initial blessings experienced upon returning to the land were partial, and full restoration is contingent upon the people fully returning to God with all their hearts, mirroring the broader Christian understanding of the kingdom of God being both present and future.

5. How should we understand the absolute and unconditional promises made by prophets like Jeremiah and Ezekiel in light of the people's response?

While Jeremiah and Ezekiel made absolute and unconditional promises about Israel's restoration, these prophecies must be understood within the framework of prophetic rhetoric. Such language was meant to encourage the people during times of exile and judgment. The timing, manner, and fullness of these blessings depend on the people's response to God's saving initiatives.

6. What are the main themes that emerge from Zechariah's night visions?

Despite the interpretive challenges posed by the symbolism in Zechariah's eight night visions, several key themes emerge: God's judgment on nations that oppressed Israel, the restoration of Israel, the rebuilding and renewal of Jerusalem and the temple, the cleansing of the land from sin, and the leadership roles of Joshua (high priest) and Zerubbabel (governor), which prefigure the Messiah.

7. Who is "the Branch" mentioned in Zechariah, and what significance does this figure hold?

"The Branch" is a Messianic figure prophesied by earlier prophets like Jeremiah and Isaiah, representing the future ideal Davidic ruler. In Zechariah, "the Branch" signifies the revival of the house of David, the agricultural prosperity of Israel, and ultimately the fusion of priestly and kingly roles in one individual, Jesus Christ.

8. Who is "the Satan" in Zechariah's vision of Joshua the high priest, and what role does he play?

"The Satan" in Zechariah is the accuser, akin to the figure in the Book of Job. While some interpret him as a legitimate prosecuting attorney in the divine council, Yates argues that his malevolent intent suggests a more adversarial role, opposing both God and his people. In light of the New Testament, this figure is understood to be the devil, actively opposing God's plans and accusing the brethren.