



## The Prophet Zechariah, the Kingdom of Christ, and Our Time to Build

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### Get the Big Picture

The WHOLE Bible fits together perfectly as ONE giant story of God's sovereign work for our salvation through Christ! That's the big picture on God's Word. That's why, as Christians, we study the whole Bible. We know that each individual book of the Bible illuminates the Gospel, deepens our faith and life in Christ, and clarifies our mission for Christ.

This is why we are turning to the Book of Zechariah. We will read Zechariah as Gospel centered believers in Christ. We will prayerfully enter into this portion of God's Word, with the expectation that God will speak to us and lead us to a deep understanding and application of the Gospel in our lives.

If there is one major theme in the Book of Zechariah, it is the Kingdom of God: God's purpose and plan to build His Kingdom in the midst of the broken world. The Kingdom of God is a Gospel theme! Jesus began His ministry with these words: "The time is fulfilled, the Kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe the Gospel." (Mark 1:15). The Kingdom of God is a theme that spans the entire Bible from its first pages in Genesis to its last in the Book of Revelation. Jesus is the promised King who fulfills God's promise to restore God's kingdom to our "fallen" sinful world. This is the Gospel. You have been called into this Kingdom, the Kingdom of Christ, through the Gospel. You enter by God's grace through faith, then you become a builder... you build with Christ... Christ builds in you and through you.

Christ wants to build something amazing in our lives—in our church—in our world. He asks us to actively join Him in this task. But honestly, this challenge can seem overwhelming to us! The task seems so huge and our strength seems so small. And there is opposition! Whenever we get really serious about knowing Christ, living for Him, serving Him, building something for His Glory—we start to look different than the world around us. We stick out. We begin to feel like some fringe group of weird spiritual extremists who don't fit in with the rest of the world.

### Zechariah: God's Word at the Crucial Moment

All of this shows why the Book of Zechariah is perfect for us. Zechariah is God's Word for those who have answered God's call to build. His prophetic words came to a small group of people who had bravely answered God's Call to build. They got discouraged because the task seemed so huge and the opposition so intense. The Book of Ezra, chapters 1-6, gives the context for all of this. In the year 538 BC, the Jews were given permission to return to Jerusalem after 70 years of captivity in Babylon. This was a direct fulfillment of God's promise in Jeremiah 29:10-14. They made the difficult journey only to find the city of Jerusalem completely in ruins and the temple destroyed. God told them to rebuild, beginning with the temple—the visible symbol of God's presence and God's kingdom in this broken world. They became so discouraged that they gave up—for 18 years they did nothing. Then, in 520 BC, a dramatic change took place. The next four years were the most important four years of their lives. Over those four years the people answered God's call to build. Miracles took place. Hearts were changed. The temple was completed. These were the four years in which Zechariah spoke his prophetic word to God's people. These were powerful words at the crucial moment for God's people.

### Our Time to Build

That was then and this is now. This is OUR crucial moment. Christ the Savior has come. He died for our sins and rose again in victory as Lord and King. Now He is building His kingdom. In the Old Testament the Temple was the physical symbol of God's presence and kingdom in our broken world. So the people answered the call to build. But what are WE to build? Ephesians tells us that the Body of Christ is now the living temple of God in our broken world (Ephesians 2:19-22). Now, WE are to be the living temple of God; each one of us in Christ (each a living "stone"), and all of us together in Christ. This is the building that God is now doing and He calls us to join Him (Ephesians 4:11-16).

So these words of Zechariah are not just words for the past. These words are for US! These are Gospel words for those who build. These are timely words that will challenge, comfort and empower us as we answer God's Gospel call.

God the Creator is King. He is a builder. Christ our Savior is the risen Lord and King. He is a builder. Now Christ calls you to join Him in His kingdom work. He calls you to build. Say yes to Christ. Don't wait. The words of Zechariah will point the way!

**Key verses for today's message:**

Ezra 1:1-11; Ezra 4:4-5; Ezra 4:24; Ezra 5:1-2; Ezra 6:13-15; Jeremiah 29:10-14; Isaiah 45:1-6; Zechariah 1:1; Zechariah 4:10-11; Mark 1:15; Ephesians 2:19-22; Ephesians 4:11-16.