

## One Year Through the Bible

### Week 40: September 29<sup>th</sup> through October 5<sup>th</sup>

Daily Scripture Reading:	
Sunday:	Zech. 4-6
Monday:	Zech. 7-10
Tuesday:	Zech. 11-14
Wednesday:	Ezra 5; 6:1-15; Psa. 138
Thursday:	Ezra 6:16-22; Psa. 81,134
Friday:	Psa. 135,136,146
Saturday:	Psa. 87; Ezra 7-8

Bible Chapter Titles	
<b>Zechariah</b>	
1-6a	Eight Night Visions
6b	The Crowning of Joshua
7-8	Questions About Fasting
9-11	God's Judgment on Neighbor Nations
12-14	Second Advent and Acceptance of Messiah
<b>Ezra</b>	
5	Opposition Answered
6	Decree of Darius (Temple Finished)
7	Ezra Thanks the LORD
8	Treasure Brought to the Temple
<b>Psalms</b>	
138	"Magnified Thy Word Above Thy Name" Psalm
81	God Bares His Heart
134	Worship at Night
135	Priestly Praise Psalm
136	"His Mercy Endureth Forever" Psalm
146	Praise and Trust
87	A Song of Zion

#### *Thoughts & Notes on Zechariah Chapter Four*

1. Night vision #5: a golden lampstand and two olive trees (Zech. 4:1-14).
2. Zechariah is eager to learn the significance of this vision, and insistently asks for greater explanation (Zech. 4:4,5).
3. The angel does not answer Zechariah's question, but delivers a Word of the LORD message (Zech. 4:6,7).
4. Zechariah likewise receives a Word of the LORD message (Zech. 4:8-10).
5. Zechariah still insists on understanding the symbolism of the vision (Zech. 4:11-14).
  - a. As with the Tabernacle, the lampstand is Christ.
  - b. Oil in Scripture is symbolic of the Holy Spirit.
  - c. The olive trees are anointed believers in service to the LORD.
  - d. Zerubbabel and Joshua were the two olive trees of Zechariah's day. Two more will rise in the Tribulation (Rev. 11:4).

#### *Thoughts & Notes on Chapter Five*

1. Night vision #6: a flying scroll (Zech. 5:1-4).
  - a. The LORD of Hosts is dispatching a curse upon the whole earth.
  - b. Thieves are going to come into account by the One Who sees in secret.
  - c. There are physical thieves and there are spiritual thieves (Mal. 3:8-10).
2. Night vision #7: the ephah and the women (Zech. 5:5-11).
  - a. Zechariah sees a traveling ephah (basket).
  - b. He is allowed to peek under the lead cover and sees a woman inside, named Wickedness.
  - c. Wickedness is sealed up and carried away. It has no place in Jerusalem, but will be removed to the source of its wickedness for judgment.
  - d. Shinar is a reference to the region of Babylon from its earliest time (Gen. 10:10), and looking ahead to the fall of Babylon in the end times.

#### *Thoughts & Notes on Chapter Six*

1. Night vision #8: four chariots (Zech. 6:1-8).
  - a. The four spirits of heaven are four mighty angels used by the LORD in directing world affairs (Jer. 49:36; Dan. 7:2; Rev. 7:1).
  - b. They are not just patrolling and reporting; they are the agents of the LORD's wrath upon the north country (prophetic Babylon).
2. Following the night-visions, Zechariah's next work-assignment is to manufacture a crown for High Priest Joshua (Zech. 6:9-15).
  - a. The promised Messiah is revealed as Branch (cf. 3:8; Jer. 23:5; 33:15).
  - b. Messiah will not only be a Davidic King, but also a temple-building Priest.

#### *Thoughts & Notes on Chapters Seven & Eight*

1. On December 7<sup>th</sup>, 518BC a delegation from Bethel came to Zechariah and asked about their fasting calendar (Zech. 7:1-3).
  - a. The 5<sup>th</sup> month had become a time for fasting and weeping over the destruction of Jerusalem.
  - b. When the LORD finally answers the petitioner's question, He also addresses the fasts in the 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, & 10<sup>th</sup> months (Zech. 8:18,19).
    - 1) The 10<sup>th</sup> month marked the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's siege.
    - 2) The 4<sup>th</sup> month marked the fall of the city.
    - 3) The 5<sup>th</sup> month marked its burning.
    - 4) The 7<sup>th</sup> month marked the assassination of Gedaliah.

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2. The LORD provided four messages to the Bethel delegation.
  - a. The LORD exposed their man-made fasts as being man-centered (Zech. 7:4-7).
  - b. The LORD reminded them how the man-centered ritual of past generations led to the captivity (Zech. 7:8-14).
  - c. The LORD promised a return from world-wide dispersion, and peace in the land (Zech. 8:1-17).
  - d. The LORD answered the question on fasting by prophesying that those very occasions would become occasions for joy (Zech. 8:18-23).

*Thoughts & Notes on Chapter Nine*

1. Chapters 9-14 contain oracle revelations concerning Israel's future. As with other prophetic Books, the distinctions between 1<sup>st</sup> Advent and 2<sup>nd</sup> Advents are not always clear.
2. The coming invasion by Alexander the Great is described (Zech. 9:1-8).
3. An even greater King's arrival is described (Zech. 9:9,10; Matt. 21:1-11; Jn. 12:12-15).
4. The King of Peace ensures that peace through the destruction of His enemies (Zech. 9:11-17).

*Thoughts & Notes on Chapter Ten*

1. In anticipation of the coming glory, Israel is commanded to seek the LORD and reject the false messages of idolatry (Zech. 10:1,2).
2. The LORD will do away with the false shepherds when He comes to shepherd His people and when He transforms them into the mightiest army on earth (Zech. 10:3-11:3).
3. The Cornerstone, Tent Peg, & Battle Bow are metaphors for Jesus Christ (Zech. 10:4). He will come in battle with every resurrected King of Judah from David to Jehoiachin.
4. This is the time-frame for the future promised Regathering of Israel—not the Z/E/N Returnings under Zerubbabel, Ezra & Nehemiah.

*Thoughts & Notes on Chapter Eleven*

1. Zechariah hears the LORD's instructions to a Faithful Shepherd of a doomed flock (Zech. 11:4-14).
  - a. This is a prophetic description of the 1<sup>st</sup> Advent of Jesus Christ.
  - b. The spiritual shepherds are more interested in economic activity (buying and selling) and political activity (power and kings) than they are in pursuing the things of the LORD.
  - c. The wages paid to this Faithful Shepherd were thirty pieces of silver, thrown to the potter (Zech. 11:12,13; Matt. 26:14-16; 27:1-10).
2. Zechariah also receives a prophetic message that highlights a coming Worthless Shepherd (antichrist) (Zech. 11:15-17).
  - a. His coming is in accord with the activity of Satan (2<sup>nd</sup> Thess. 2:9).
  - b. His coming is in accord with the purpose of the LORD (Zech. 11:16).

*Thoughts & Notes on Chapter Twelve*

1. In the context of the Worthless Shepherd (antichrist) comes a message of world war against Jerusalem (Zech. 12:1-9).
  - a. The cup of God's wrath will be consumed by the nations of the earth hostile to Jerusalem (Isa. 51:22,23).
  - b. The flaming torch likewise consumes the nations of the earth hostile to Jerusalem (Isa. 10:17,18).
2. The Great Tribulation of Israel will produce a true spirit of repentance (Zech. 12:10-14).
  - a. The return of the Crucified Christ will be a time of mourning and shame (Rev. 1:7; Matt. 24:29-31).
  - b. The mourning is national—spanning the tribes and clans, but also personal—dividing even husbands and wives (Matt. 24:40,41; Lk. 17:33-35).

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#### *Thoughts & Notes on Chapter Thirteen*

1. The national mourning and repentance of Israel will be accompanied by a Divine removal of demonic influences (Zech. 13:1-6; cf. 12:10).
2. False prophets will do everything they can to conceal their involvement with demonism.
3. God's Shepherd is struck by the will of God (Zech. 13:7; Acts 2:23; Isa. 53:4; Rev. 13:8).
4. God's people are struck by the will of God (Zech. 13:8,9), refined and prepared for Millennial glory.

#### *Thoughts & Notes on Chapter Fourteen*

1. Zechariah closes his Book with a summary of the LORD's coming victory over the nations, and His rule over them with His rod of iron.
2. Jerusalem will be plundered and defiled during the Great Tribulation (Zech. 14:1,2; Lk. 20:20-24).
3. The LORD of Hosts Personally battles the assembled enemies (Zech. 14:3,12-15).
4. The LORD will stand upon the Mount of Olives, providing a way of escape for the faithful remnant to flee through (Zech. 14:4,5).
5. Topographical changes are then indicated for the Millennial reign (Zech. 14:7,8,10).
6. The LORD's world rule is stated (Zech. 14:9) and described (Zech. 14:16-21).

#### *Thoughts & Notes on Ezra Chapter Five*

1. Zerubbabel & Jeshua responded to the tough messages of Haggai & Zechariah by resuming their work on the temple (Ezr. 5:1,2).
2. A group of Persian officials observe the temple work and investigate their building permit (Ezr. 5:3-5).
3. Tattenai & Shethat-bozenai drafted a letter to Darius I (Hystapes) (the Great) (522-486BC) reporting the matter and requesting guidance (Ezr. 5:6-17).

#### *Thoughts & Notes on Chapter Six*

1. King Darius ordered an internal investigation of Persian records to research Tattenai's report (Ezr. 6:1) and found the decree of Cyrus which authorized the temple building (Ezr. 6:2-5).
2. Darius orders Tattenai's full cooperation with the temple project (Ezr. 6:6-12).
3. The temple is completed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Adar, in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of King Darius (515BC).

#### *Thoughts & Notes on Psalm 138*

1. Psalm 138 is a Davidic psalm, but the subject matter is fitting for the post-exilic Jewish people (Ps. 138:1-3).
  - a. David understood his witness and testimony before the angelic realm (v.1).
  - b. David understood the reality of the heavenly temple before any earthly temple had yet been built (v.2a).
  - c. David understood the primacy of the Word of God, which God Himself magnified (v.2b).
  - d. David understood the empowerment of fervent prayer (v.3).
2. David looked ahead to promised Millennial blessings (Ps. 138:4-6) and this provided him with confidence to endure present temporal testings (Ps. 138:7,8).

#### *Thoughts & Notes on Psalm 81*

1. Psalm 81 is a psalm of Asaph, but its subject matter is fitting for the returnees who restored the LORD's worship with the Feast of Trumpets (Ezr. 3:1-7).
2. The LORD redeemed Israel from Egypt, proved them through the wilderness, and established them in their land (Ps. 81:6-10).
3. Israel's stubborn heart produced their own Divine discipline (Ps. 81:11,12).
4. Israel's restoration will be a time of Gentile pretended obedience (Ps. 81:13-16).

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*Thoughts & Notes on Psalm 134*

1. Psalm 134 is a psalm of ascent, sung by pilgrims as they made their way to Jerusalem for the required feasts (Ps. 120-134).
2. Psalm 134 is the Psalm of the Night-shift workers, whose often unappreciated work will be blessed by the LORD.

*Thoughts & Notes on Psalm 135*

1. Psalm 135 is a Hallelujah psalm (Ps. 104-106; 111-113; 115-117; 135; 146-150). הַלְלוּ יְהוָה.
2. Psalm 135 establishes principles for believers to praise and bless the name of the LORD (Ps. 135:1-4).
  - a. A priesthood that is chosen by grace (v.2).
  - b. A people that are chosen by grace (v.4).
3. The LORD is as worthy of praise as His Sovereignty is unchallenged (Ps. 135:5-7).
4. The believer who praises the LORD gives the LORD appropriate recognition for what He has done (Ps. 135:8-14).
5. The believer who praises the LORD ascribes appropriate recognition to the emptiness of idolatry (Ps. 135:15-18; cf. 115:4-8).

*Thoughts & Notes on Psalm 136*

1. The LORD's lovingkindness is everlasting. This is a point made 26 times in 26 verses.
2. Step by step, day by day, believers ought to be offering up the prayerful sacrifice of thanksgiving (1<sup>st</sup> Thess. 5:16-18; Heb. 13:15).

*Thoughts & Notes on Psalm 146*

1. Psalm 146 is a Hallelujah psalm (Ps. 104-106; 111-113; 115-117; 135; 146-150). הַלְלוּ יְהוָה.
2. The infinite glory of the LORD is worthy of praise, even as the finite limitations of man cannot be trusted (Ps. 146:1-7).
3. The Almighty is worthy of praise because He tenderly cares for the unworthy (Ps. 146:8-10).

*Thoughts & Notes on Psalm 87*

1. Psalm 87 looks ahead to Millennial Jerusalem (Zion).
2. Zion will be a place where the LORD's love will motivate "glorious things" to be spoken of.
3. Nations that are often the object of Divine wrath will become witnesses to Divine blessing.
4. Zion will be the most joyous place on earth.

*Thoughts & Notes on Ezra Chapter Seven*

1. Chapter 7 describes the mission of Ezra the priest-scribe from Babylon to Jerusalem.
2. Artaxerxes, King of Persia reigned from 464-423BC.
3. Ezra's priestly lineage is firmly established (Ezr. 7:1-5).
4. Ezra was a mature believer in grace and knowledge (Ezr. 7:6a).
  - a. He was blessed with favor in temporal-life politics (Ezr. 7:6b).
  - b. He inspired others to follow his leadership (Ezr. 7:7).
  - c. The LORD blessed his travels, and guided his path to Jerusalem (Ezr. 7:8,9).
  - d. Ezra's intention was to establish a school of Mosaic Law instruction in Israel (Ezr. 7:10).
5. Artaxerxes commissioned Ezra to start his school, and to place his graduates in political office (Ezr. 7:11-26).
  - a. He gives permission for any who desire to go to accompany him (v.13).
  - b. He sends a freewill offering from his own treasury & authorizes additional offerings from the Jewish people (vv.14-20).
  - c. He authorizes Ezra to draw from the Treasuries in the Provinces beyond the River (vv.21-24).
  - d. He instructs Ezra to appoint his graduates as magistrates and judges over civil affairs (vv.25,26).
6. Ezra praised the LORD for the grace He extended and the blessings He provided for his journey (Ezr. 7:27,28).

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*Thoughts & Notes on Chapter Eight*

1. Chapter 8 details the people and wealth that Ezra brought with him to Jerusalem.
2. Ezra took a census of all those with him, recording their lineage (tribal inheritance) (Ezr. 8:2-14).
3. Ezra observed a shortage of Levites, and appealed to Iddo at the “place” (school) of Casiphia (Ezr. 8:15-20).
4. Ezra began the journey by leading a prayer meeting (Ezr. 8:21-23).
5. They divided the wealth between their various groups, and arrived in Jerusalem safely (Ezr. 8:24-32).
6. They successfully delivered their offerings to the temple, and issued King Artaxerxes’ decree to the satraps and governors (Ezr. 8:33-36).

Note:

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Sources:

The Bible reading schedule is from a long-forgotten, and uncertain source.

Chapter Titles are from The Categorical Notebook, Vol. 3 / Ralph G. Braun—Brookings, OR: Berean Fundamental Church, 1974.

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The Persian Empire at its greatest extent.

Persian history is important for the study of Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Haggai, Zechariah, & Malachi.