



**Mustard Seed Sunday School Lesson for August 19, 2007
Released on Wednesday, August 15, 2007**

“Return to God”

GOLDEN TEXT: “Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts” (Zechariah 1:3).

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT: Zechariah 1:1–16; 7:8–14

Zechariah 1:1–6

1 In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of the Lord unto Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying,
2 The Lord hath been sore displeased with your fathers.
3 Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts.
4 Be ye not as your fathers, unto whom the former prophets have cried, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Turn ye now from your evil ways, and from your evildoings: but they did not hear, nor hearken unto me, saith the Lord.
5 Your fathers, where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?
6 But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as the Lord of hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways, and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.

Zechariah 7:8–14

8 And the word of the Lord came unto Zechariah, saying,
9 Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and shew mercy and compassions every man to his brother:
10 And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart.
11 But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.
12 Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the Lord of hosts.
13 Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts:
14 But I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations whom they knew not. Thus the land was desolate after them, that no man passed through nor returned: for they laid the pleasant land desolate.

TEACHER'S NOTES ON THE LESSON

The Prophet Zechariah came from a family of priests. His grandfather had returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel.

Some fifty thousand Israelites may have been back in the land when Zechariah began preaching his message of remembering and doing. He also may have foretold more about Messiah's coming than any other prophet except Isaiah.

Zechariah's name means "the Lord remembers," and he had much to say about remembering. He called his hearers to remember what their ancestors had done and what had happened as a result. Their fathers had turned their backs on the Lord and closed their ears when He sent prophets to warn them.

As a consequence, their forebears had suffered deportation, and their land was left desolate. Their fathers had learned from their experience, however, and acknowledged that the Lord had done only what they deserved.

Now Zechariah urged the present generation to learn from their ancestors' poor example and truly give the Lord their hearts, remembering His promise: "Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you" (1:3).

The Lord laid down no stipulations as to what kinds of sinners He would receive. All were eligible and welcome. As D.L. Moody once beautifully put it, "The Lord is so anxious to save sinners, He will take anybody who comes."

This week's lesson teaches God's grace and loving kindness toward all sinners. Thus it can be used to call the children's attention to His invitation to each of them.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach that God's message to all people is "Come," whether the sin of the individual is small or great.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

The Lord loves the disobedient and still wants them.

Because of the Cross, God extends an invitation to all and will receive all who come.

PLANNING VISUAL AIDS:

For Beginning the Lesson and Telling the Lesson, make a flash card reading "remember." Bring a picture representing Zechariah.

For Helping to Remember, for each child tape together two half sheets of yellow construction paper to form one long, narrow strip. You will also need black markers, gummed stars, glue, and glitter.

BEGINNING THE LESSON:

When Peter started upstairs to get ready for bed, his mother said, "Remember to brush your teeth." (*Show "remember."*) What she meant was "Do not forget." You remember when you think of something you know or heard or saw or did.

God once sent a man named Zechariah to tell His people to remember something important. (*Show Zechariah.*) It happened that the name "Zechariah" means "the Lord remembers."

TELLING THE LESSON:

You will remember that just then was not a happy time for the Lord's people. They would not listen to what He told them to do, and He let them be taken away to a faraway land. But He also promised that someday they would come back. The Lord remembered His promise, and after a long time, back some of them came. (*Show "remember."*) That was when God sent His friend Zechariah to them. He told the people to remember. (*Show Zechariah.*) "Remember what your fathers and grandfathers did," Zechariah said. (*Show "remember."*) "They would not do what the Lord told them. Do not be like them. Instead, come back to Him. He wants you to come."

Their trouble helped their fathers and grandfathers change their minds, Zechariah said. They remembered they had said not to the Lord's rules. (*Show "remember."*) "What God did was right," they said. "We deserved to have trouble, for we would not obey."

Zechariah said that the people back then had not paid attention when God's friends told them what He wanted. Some did more wrong than others, but in a way they all turned their backs and covered their ears so that they would not hear. And nothing but trouble came to them all.

So what was Zechariah telling the people who had come back to do? (*Hold up "remember."*) They were to remember what their fathers had done. They were to remember what had happened to them. They were to remember not to be like them, not to turn their backs, and not to cover their ears. They were to remember that the Lord said, "Turn to Me, and I will turn to you. If you come back to Me, I will take you in. I love you. I want you." That was good news to remember!

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

Zechariah is not here today, but God's Book, the Bible, is. (*Hold up yours.*) The Bible has good news like that for people today—for the people who have done many wrong things and for the people who have done not so many. Remember that God loves you. Remember that He sent Jesus to die for you. If you will come to Him, He will take you into His family. If you have never come but you want to, be sure to talk to me after Sunday school.

HELPING TO REMEMBER:

Help the children fold their paper strips into eight sections. Let them use black markers to print "R-E-M-E-M-B-E-R," one large letter in each section. Then they can trim their stand-up display with stars and glitter.

EXPLAINING THE GOLDEN TEXT:

"Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 1:3).

The Lord's people had not been paying attention to Him. This was God's way of saying, "Oh, come back and start listening again." He also wanted them to know that even though they had not obeyed well, He still wanted them. He would take them back.

MUSTARD SEED LESSON ACTIVITIES:

"RETURN TO GOD"

(ZECHARIAH 1:1–6; 7:8–14.)

UNSCRAMBLE the word on the left and draw a line across to the word on the right that matches the unscrambled word. (*The first one is done for you.*)

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| 1. SIAURD | Shoulder |
| 2. STOH | Prophet |
| 3. STHFARE | Darius |
| 4. OUDSRHLE | Return |
| 5. CHRAZIHAE | Hear |
| 6. RETACST | Fathers |
| 7. HAER | Turn |
| 8. RILNWWHDI | Scatter |
| 9. PHETROP | Host |
| 10. NURT | Zechariah |
| 11. DREIC | Whirlwind |
| 12. NETRUR | Cried |



**"RETURN TO GOD"
(ZECHARIAH 1:1–6; 7:8–14.)**

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORDS:

1. "In the eighth month, in the second year of (DAVID, DARIUS), came the word of the Lord unto (ZECHARIAH, ZIPPORAH)." ZECHARIAH 1:1

2. "The Lord hath been sore displeased with your (FATHERS, FAIRIES)." ZECHARIAH 1:2

3. "Therefore say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Turn ye unto (MARY, ME), saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto (YOU, THE TEMPLE), saith the Lord of hosts." ZECHARIAH 1:3

CIRCLE TRUE OR FALSE:

4. The children of Israel's fathers had always been obedient to God. TRUE/FALSE

5. Zechariah's name means "the Lord remembers." TRUE/FALSE

6. God loves only people who always do what is right. TRUE/FALSE

7. God will discipline His children when they do wrong. TRUE/FALSE

CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORDS:

8. "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, _____ true judgment, and shew _____ and compassions every man to his brother." ZECHARIAH 7:9
JUDGMENT GRACE MERCY EXECUTE SINFUL

9. "But they refused to _____, and pulled away the _____, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear." ZECHARIAH 7:11
SHOULDER HEARKEN HANDS SPEAK SCATTER

10. "So they _____, and I would not _____, saith the Lord of hosts." ZECHARIAH 7:13b
SANG DANCED CRIED SINNED HEAR

LESSON SUMMARIZED BY

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MEMORY VERSE:

"Turn ye unto me, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will turn unto you, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 1:3 .

