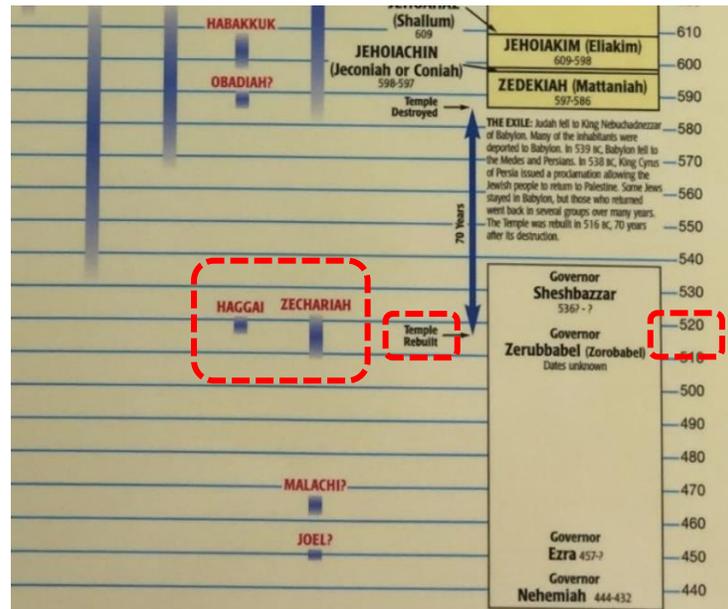


Book of Zechariah

Chapter 1:1-21

In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo saying,



In the eighth month of the second year of Darius > (NLT) In November of the second year of King Darius's reign

Benson > This month, according to that reckoning which begins the year with the month Abib, or Nisan, falls in with the latter part of our October, and the beginning of November. Haggai had begun to exhort the Jews to resume the work of building the temple two months before this, and they had actually resumed it on the 24th day of the sixth month, that is, in the beginning of September.

Constable > The name "Zechariah" (lit. "Yahweh Remembers") was a common one among the Israelites, which identified at least 27 different individuals in the Old Testament, perhaps 30 ... Zechariah, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, was both a prophet and a priest ... Zechariah apparently survived Joshua, the high priest, since he became the head of his own division of priests in the days of Joiakim, the son of Joshua.

Constable > Isaiah is appropriately called, 'the messianic prophet' because of the length of his book and the bulk of his prophecies. But Zechariah has a higher concentration of messianic prophecies though in a shorter book. Like Daniel, Zechariah gives a panoramic view of Israel's future among the Gentiles.

Robinson > "Few books of the OT are as difficult of interpretation as the Book of Zechariah; no other book is as Messianic."

Clarke > Zechariah is the longest and the most obscure of all the twelve minor prophets.

Gaebelein > "Zechariah has more to say about Christ, His Person, His Work and His Glory than all the other minor prophets combined."

Constable > One reason for this is the fact that the New Testament quotes and alludes to Zechariah so often, about 41 times. The Gospel evangelists cited chapters 9—14 more frequently in their passion narratives than any other portion of the Old Testament.

Petterson > A key theme of Zechariah is Yahweh's return to his people after the judgment of exile. Ezekiel depicts the glory of Yahweh departing from the temple and Jerusalem on account of sin (Ezek. 8 – 11). This was a death sentence for Jerusalem, and destruction came by the Babylonians shortly after. Yet Ezekiel also anticipates Yahweh's return to a new temple after the exile (Ezek. 43:1–5). The presence of Yahweh among his people will be accompanied by covenant restoration and blessing.

Barnes > Zechariah entered into his prophetic function two months after Haggai's first prophecy. He was still a youth, when God called him **Zechariah 2:4** (The angel speaking about him > *and said to him: "Run, tell that young man, 'Jerusalem will be a city without walls because of the great number of people and animals in it.'*), and so, since in the second year of Darius Hystaspis 18 years had elapsed from the first of Cyrus, he must have been brought in infancy from Babylon. His father Berechiah probably died young, since, in Ezra, the prophet is called after his grandfather, "Zechariah the son of Iddo". He succeeded his grandfather in the office of "the priests, the chief of the fathers," (of which there were twelve) in the days of Joiakim, the son of Joshua, the High priest. Since then, while he prophesied together with Haggai, Joshua was still high priest, and it is Joshua whom he sees in his vision in that same year **Zechariah 3:1** (*Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him.*), he must have entered into his prophetic function before he succeeded to that other dignity.

Constable > 1:1-6 That this pericope introduces the whole book seems clear, since verse 7 introduces the eight night visions that follow it (1:7—6:8). Its content is also foundational to all that follows.

Robinson > "It strikes the keynote of the entire book, and is one of the strongest and most intensely spiritual calls to repentance to be found anywhere in the Old Testament.

Unger "The initial six verses of the first chapter of Zechariah constitute a synopsis of a sermon of the prophet. Its theme strikes the keynote of the entire book and forms an indispensable introduction to it. The truth it enunciates is one which runs throughout the revealed ways of God with man; namely, the appropriation and enjoyment of God's promises of blessing must be prefaced by genuine repentance.

² "The LORD was very angry with your fathers. ³ Therefore say to them, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Return to Me," declares the LORD of hosts, "that I may return to you," says the LORD of hosts.

Very angry > The KJV translates these words as *sore displeased*. **Strong's** concordance indicates the word *sore* comes from a Hebrew word meaning > *a splinter (as chipped off); figuratively, rage or strife*. The word *displeased* comes from a Hebrew word meaning > *to crack off, i.e. (figuratively) burst out in rage*. The NASB's *very angry* is correct but muted a bit

Return to Me ... return to you > (Keil and Delitzsch) Just as Haggai encouraged the chiefs and the people of Judah to continue vigorously the building that had been commenced by this announcement of salvation, so Zechariah opens his prophetic labours with the admonition to turn with sincerity to the Lord, and with the warning not to bring the same punishment upon themselves by falling back into the sins of the fathers.

Barnes > In some degree they had turned to God, for whose sake they had returned to their land; and again when, after some negligence, they renewed the building of the temple, and God had said, "I am with you". But there needed yet a more inward, more complete turning, whereon God promises a yet nearer presence

⁴ "Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets proclaimed, saying, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Return now from your evil ways and from your evil deeds.'" But they did not listen or give heed to Me," declares the LORD. ⁵ "Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever?"

Do not be like your fathers ... Your fathers, where are they > What an ear-catching, mind stopping, connection! *Don't be like your fathers ... by the way ... where ARE your fathers?!*"

And the prophets, do they live forever? > (Clarke) They also, who spoke unto your fathers, are dead; but their predictions remain; and the events, which have taken place according to those predictions, prove that God sent them.

⁶ *But did not My words and My statutes, which I commanded My servants the prophets, overtake your fathers? Then they repented and said, 'As the LORD of hosts purposed to do to us in accordance with our ways and our deeds, so He has dealt with us.'''''*

Overtake > (Strong's) to reach (literally or figuratively)

Benson > Overtake them as a pursuing enemy overtakes and seizes on the object of his hostility? In other words, Did not the evils which I had denounced by the prophets come upon your fathers?

The **Septuagint** concludes this verse with this translation > *and they answered and said, As the Lord Almighty determined to do to us, according to our ways, and according to our practices, so has he done to us.*

Petterson > The word of God has its effect – the repentance of Zechariah's contemporaries is reported (v. 6b).

NLT > *As a result, they repented and said, 'We have received what we deserved from the LORD of Heaven's Armies. He has done what he said he would do.'*

⁷ *On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the prophet, the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo, as follows:*

On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month ... > (NLT) *Three months later, on February 15*

Constable > Zechariah received eight apocalyptic visions in one night (1:7). As the text shows, they concerned God's purpose for the future of Israel, particularly Jerusalem, the seat of the Davidic dynasty and the site of the temple, and Judah ... All eight visions are meant to be interpreted as one whole, for each contributes to the total picture of the role of Israel in the new era about to dawn.

Keil and Delizsch > As they were shown to the prophet one after another in a single night, so that in all probability only short pauses intervened between the different views; so did they present a substantially connected picture of the future of Israel, which was linked on to the then existing time, and closed with the prospect of the ultimate completion of the kingdom of God.

⁸I saw at night, and behold, a man was riding on a red horse, and he was standing among the myrtle trees which were in the ravine, with red, sorrel and white horses behind him.

I saw at night > As you view the chart below you'll see that Zechariah was given 8 visions this evening. We will cover the first two of them in this chapter.

Constable > Certain features mark each of these eight visions: an introduction, an explanation of what the prophet saw, his request for clarification of its meaning, and the elucidation.

This first vision emphasizes that God was lovingly jealous of His chosen people, and would restore them, even though they were troubled at present, and the nations that oppressed them were at ease (cf. Habakkuk). In the vision, an angelic patrol reported on the state of the whole earth. This vision presents hope for dispersed and downtrodden Israel.

<u>The Eight Visions of Zechariah</u>			
Vision	Passage	Description	Meaning
1	1:7-17	Man among the Myrtle Trees	God Promises Prosperity to Israel
2	1:18-21	Four Horns and Four Craftsmen	God Judges the Nations that attacked Israel
3	2:1-13	Man with a Measuring Line	God Rebuilds Jerusalem
4	3:1-10	Cleansing of the High Priest	God Purifies both High Priest and People
5	4:1-14	Golden Lampstand and Two Olive Trees	God Rebuilds the Temple
6	5:1-4	Flying Scroll	God Removes Imparted Sin/Idolatry
7	5:5-11	Woman in a Basket	God Removes the System of False Religion
8	6:1-8	Four Chariots	God Brings Peace and Rest to Israel
Appendix	6:9-15	Coronation of the High Priest	Messiah assumes of the office of both King and Priest

The MacArthur Bible Commentary
by John MacArthur

And behold, a man was riding on a red horse ... It appears that behind him were other horses ... riders are assumed as there is a reply from their direction. The commentators are varied in their belief as to whom the rider might be. Some say the angel Gabriel, others that it is Jesus prior to His birth. And multiple opinions as to the meaning of the colors of the horses.

Ravine > (Strong's) shade ... bottom

Red, sorrel and white horses > (Petterson) Each of these colors is in the plural which suggests a herd of horses, rather than only three horses.

⁹ Then I said, "My lord, what are these?" And the angel who was speaking with me said to me, "I will show you what these are." ¹⁰ And the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered and said, "These are those whom the LORD has sent to patrol the earth."

Speaking with me > (Barnes) Literally, "spake in me." The very rare expression seems meant to convey the thought of an inward speaking, whereby the words should be borne directly into the soul, without the intervention of the ordinary outward organs.

Patrol > (Strong's) to walk (in a great variety of applications, literally and figuratively)

¹¹ So they answered the angel of the LORD who was standing among the myrtle trees and said, "We have patrolled the earth, and behold, all the earth is peaceful and quiet."

Peaceful > (Strong's) to sit down (specifically as judge. in ambush, in quiet); by implication, to dwell, to remain; causatively, to settle, to marry

Quiet > (Strong's) to repose (usually figurative)

Barker > "Darius boasted that in nineteen battles he had defeated nine rebel leaders and had subdued all his enemies. So the empire was again virtually quiet by 520 B.C."

Keil > "In the second year of Darius there prevailed universal peace; all the nations of the earlier Chaldaean empire were at rest, and lived in undisturbed prosperity."

¹² Then the angel of the LORD said, "O LORD of hosts, how long will You have no compassion for Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which You have been indignant these seventy years?"

O LORD of hosts > Remember this phrase from Haggai? The "Lord of the Armies"! Although they were under the rule of the Persians ... the Lord, through both Haggai and Zechariah, was letting the children of Israel know that He was still in charge.

How long will You have ... > **Romans 8:34** states > ³⁴ *who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.*

These seventy years > There it is! The indication of the END of the exile!

¹³ *The LORD answered the angel who was speaking with me with gracious words, **comforting** words.*

Comforting > (Strong's) consoled; abstractly, solace

¹⁴ *So the angel who was speaking with me said to me, "**Proclaim**, saying, 'Thus says the **LORD of hosts**, "**I am exceedingly jealous** for Jerusalem and Zion. ¹⁵ But I am **very** angry with the nations who are at ease; for while I was only a little angry, they **furthered** the disaster."*

Proclaim > (Strong's) to call out to (i.e. properly, address by name, but used in a wide variety of applications)

The **NLT** translates this phrase as > *"Shout this message for all to hear:*

I am > (Barnes) Literally, "I have been,"

Benson > The words may be rendered, *I am jealous for Jerusalem with great zeal*, for so (the Hebrew word) signifies

Exceedingly ... very > (Strong's) great

Barnes > literally "with great anger am I angered against the nations which are at ease."

Furthered > (Strong's) to help, succor

The **Septuagint** translates verse 15 as > *And I am very angry with the heathen that combine to attack her: forasmuch as I indeed was a little angry, but they combined to attack her for evil.*

¹⁶ *Therefore thus says the LORD, "I will return to Jerusalem with compassion; My house will be built in it," declares the LORD of hosts, "and **a measuring line** will be stretched over Jerusalem."*

A measuring line > (Benson) That is, the architect's measuring-line, for laying out the buildings. And Jerusalem shall be wholly rebuilt, and fortified with walls, &c.

¹⁷ *Again, **proclaim**, saying, 'Thus says the **LORD of hosts**, "My cities will again **overflow** with **prosperity**, and the LORD will again **comfort** Zion and again choose Jerusalem."*

Proclaim > (Strong's) to call out to (i.e. properly, address by name, but used in a wide variety of applications)

Overflow > (Strong's) to dash in pieces, literally or figuratively (especially to disperse) ... break (dash, shake) in (to) pieces, cast (abroad), disperse (selves), drive, retire, scatter (abroad), spread abroad.

Prosperity > (Strong's) good (as an adjective) in the widest sense; used likewise as a noun, both in the masculine and the feminine, the singular and the plural (good, a good or good thing, a good man or woman; the good, goods or good things, good men or women), also as an adverb (well):--beautiful, best, better, bountiful, cheerful, at ease

Comfort > (Strong's) to sigh, i.e. breathe strongly; by implication, to be sorry, i.e. (in a favorable sense) to pity, console or (reflexively) rue; or (unfavorably) to avenge

*¹⁸ Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, there were **four horns**. ¹⁹ So I said to the angel who was speaking with me, "What are these?" And he answered me, "**These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem.**"*

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Four horns > (Constable) Horns were a common figure for power in biblical and ancient Near Eastern iconography, specifically, of a Gentile king or world empire

These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem > (Constable) Assyria took Israel into captivity, and Babylonia destroyed Jerusalem and took the Judahites captive. So perhaps the fact that there were four horns symbolizes that they represented nations from the four corners of the world, the totality of opposition. Another view is that they stand for Babylonia, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome (cf. Dan. 2; 7). Still another interpretation sees them as representing Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Greece.

²⁰ Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen. ²¹ I said, "What are these coming to do?" And he said, "These are the horns which have scattered Judah so that no man lifts up his head; but these craftsmen have come to terrify them, to throw down the horns of the nations who have lifted up their horns against the land of Judah in order to scatter it."

Four craftsmen > (Constable) lit. workers in metal, "craftsmen"

These are the horns which have scattered > (Feinberg) "Several features are noteworthy in this vision: (1) God takes account of every one that lifts his hand against Israel; (2) He has complete knowledge of the dejected condition of His people and the extent of their injury; and (3) He has already provided the punishment for every foe of His chosen ones."