



## World Christian Fellowship

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### Vision of Horses. God's Plan for Jerusalem! Zechariah 1:7-17

**Zechariah 1:7-17**, *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 son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet: <sup>8</sup>I saw by night, and behold, a man riding on a red horse, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him were horses: red, sorrel, and white. <sup>9</sup>Then I said, "My lord, what are these?" So the angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what they are." <sup>10</sup>And the man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, "These are the ones whom the Lord has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth."*

<sup>11</sup>*So they answered the Angel of the Lord, who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, "We have walked to and fro throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is resting quietly."*

#### **The Lord Will Comfort Zion**

<sup>12</sup>*Then the Angel of the Lord answered and said, "O Lord of hosts, how long will You not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You were angry these seventy years?"*

*<sup>13</sup>And the Lord answered the angel who talked to me, with good and comforting words. <sup>14</sup>So the angel who spoke with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "I am zealous for Jerusalem And for Zion with great zeal. <sup>15</sup>I am exceedingly angry with the nations at ease; For I was a little angry, And they helped—but with evil intent." <sup>16</sup>'Therefore thus says the Lord: "I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy; My house shall be built in it," says the Lord of hosts, "And a surveyor's line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem." ' <sup>17</sup>"Again proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "My cities shall again spread out through prosperity; The Lord will again comfort Zion, And will again choose Jerusalem." ' ' "*

Israel's history.

In **586 BC**, Judah, the southern kingdom, was taken into captivity to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar. They had been there 70 years. When **Cyrus** made a decree releasing them and sending them back. A remnant of Jews has just been released and returned to Jerusalem.

This is about 18 years after that decree was made. They are back in the land. Within seven months they had built the altar. Just after the beginning of the second year, they had begun to rebuild the walls of the temple. The foundation was laid, and the base of the wall was put up. But everything was stopped because of opposition.

Many of them did not return from Babylonian society that they couldn't uproot.

God wants that temple built.

God wants that city built.

God wants that whole thing set up the way he prescribed it in the Old Testament.

God raised a prophet Haggai to stimulate them to finish the job. Two months after Haggai Zechariah came. A revival breaks out in Israel, and they begin to do what they started to do.

The message of the prophets is clear. There is to be a spiritual revival and there is to be recommitment to do the work, to rebuild the city.

Revival has already begun, Haggai being the catalyst for it, and Zechariah just wants to encourage the people in the work.

This book about comfort for God's people. It is tough for people who are trying to repatriate a desolate country.

There is a prosperity all over the world that's hard to understand because why should everybody be prosperous, and God's people be in such a state of poverty and desolation.

Zechariah encourages the people that God is in their midst.

- ✓ God is at work,
- ✓ God has a plan,
- ✓ God has wonderful things.
- ✓ God is a God of comfort.

**V 1-6**, God comforts the people who turn away from sin.  
God's comforting blessing, and that is turning away from evil.

This prophecy falls into four sections.

**Zechariah 1:1-6**, A call to repentance.

**Zechariah 1:7- 6:15**, God begins to comfort his people through a series of **8 visions**.

**Zechariah 7 & 8**, counsel regarding fasts.

**Zechariah 9- 14**, coming events.

God has got some marvelous things laid out for people who repent.

**Zechariah 1:7- 6:15**, comfort to the people with series of **Eight visions**.

Each of them is distinct, and yet they all say the same thing.  
They come at it from different angles. These eight visions were designed to comfort God's people.

*V 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 son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet:*

The 24th day.

Five months before on the 24th day work on the temple had begun.

Two months before on the 24th day Haggai received a revelation that something terrible is going to happen.

So, on the 24th day of the 11th month is Shabbat.

The 11<sup>th</sup> month **Shabbat** is the Babylonian title.

The 24<sup>th</sup> day in the second year, the reign of Darius.

God speaks through this prophet and to this prophet in a serious of marvelous visions.

*V 8, I saw by night, and behold, a man riding on a red horse, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him were horses: red, sorrel, and white.*

In one night, he has all eight visions.

- A vision is given when somebody is awake.
- A dream is given when somebody is asleep.

There were about **86 visions** in the Old Testament and **22** of them in the book of **Daniel**. Visions have occurred in the New Testament **15 times**.

Daniel had a lot of visions.

**Genesis 15:1**, *After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward."*

God for a long time has been communicating his word through these visions.

**Numbers 12:6**, *Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream."*

### **What is a vision?**

A vision is an awareness of reality beyond the senses.

It is the ability to see beyond the human senses.

It is the ability to go beyond what the human senses can perceive.

The prophet will see something that cannot be seen by anyone else, but to the naked eye it is totally invisible but to this additional sense God makes it revealed and clear.

## **First Vision: Future of Jerusalem.**

Israel had gone into captivity, and Jerusalem had been devastated. The reason Israel had been taken into captivity is sin.

God said to Israel repeatedly. If you keep sinning, I must have a holy reaction against it.

The prophet constantly preached this message just before the captivity through **Jeremiah**.

Jeremiah was the one who proclaimed the coming captivity repeatedly. The whole book of Jeremiah is fully loaded with a compiling of Israel's sins that are leading to the Babylonian captivity. He was the key prophet before the exile.

But Jeremiah, among many of his prophesies, made one that is especially important. Jeremiah not only told them they were going to go to captivity, but he told them how long.

**Jeremiah 29:10**, *For thus says the Lord: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.*

God had Cyrus make a decree and the people had the freedom to leave just at the time God prescribed.

**Jeremiah 29:14**, *I will be found by you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.*

That is the prophecy that they heard. It was very explicit. God spoke through Jeremiah and said that they will be going into captivity because of their sin. When they were going into captivity there is a tolerance within God's judgment that turns to compassion. God will bring them back.

This is the basis for this vision of Zechariah.

### **The picture scene.**

One clear message out of this vision is God is faithful. When God makes a promise, He keeps it.

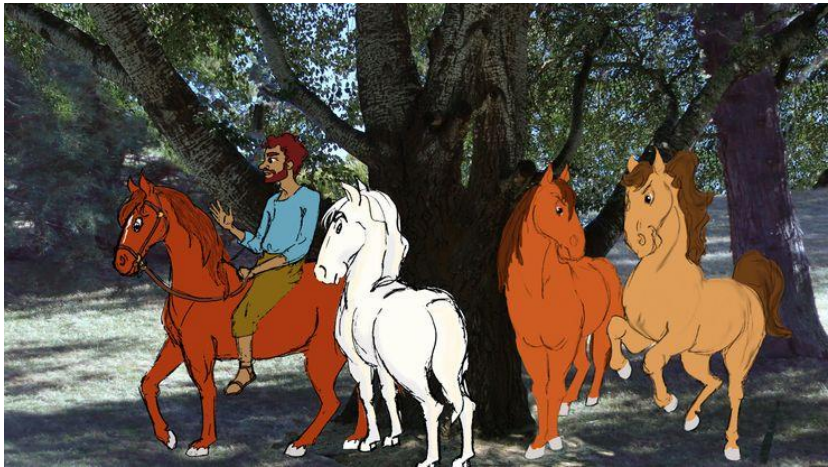
God made them a promise when they were going to captivity. At the end of 70 years, they are going to come back. God kept His promise, and they came back exactly as God promised.

When they got back to their homeland things weren't going like they thought. They were discouraged and were crying within themselves. Now God gives them the comfort.

*V 8, I saw by night, and behold, a man riding on a red horse, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him were horses: red, sorrel, and white.*

This picture is not interpreted by the prophet, but it was obvious to the people what was being said.

Zechariah has a prophetic vision. He is in a trance-like situation.



Zechariah sees like an angel in the appearance of a man and sees is riding on a red horse. Can be translated as a horse as reddish brown, rather than a bright red horse. Because the very same term is used to describe **Esau**.

Zechariah sees this horse that is reddish brown and a rider on this horse.

In the Old Testament, a **horse normally represented war**.

In the book of Revelation horses are representative of war.  
Christ comes back at the battle of Armageddon riding a horse.

**Deuteronomy 32:13**, *“He made him ride in the heights of the earth, That he might eat the produce of the fields; He made him draw honey from the rock, And oil from the flinty rock;*

God is at war, and the horse riding across the hills, God carrying out his war-like purposes.

We will find similar in **Psalm 66 and Isaiah 58**, horses appear useful in war.

**Zechariah 9:10**, *I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim And the horse from Jerusalem; The battle bow shall be cut off. He shall speak peace to the nations; His dominion shall be ‘from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.’*

We have the chariot, the horse, and the battle bow all in the same verse indicating that horses were used in situations of war.

Basically, a horse in the Old and in the New Testament, was a symbol of war.

**Red is also a symbol of blood, judgment, and vengeance** in the bible.

**Revelation chapter 6**, a rider on a red horse, there is war, bloodshed and death, because red speaks of blood and judgment and vengeance.

**Isaiah 63:1-4**, *Who is this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah, This One who is glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength?— “I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.”* <sup>2</sup>*Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress?* <sup>3</sup>*“I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one was with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes.* <sup>4</sup>*For the day of vengeance is in My heart, And the year of My redeemed has come.*

This is almost a direct parallel to **Revelation 19**, when the Messiah comes, his garments are stained red with blood.

**The symbol of war, death, vengeance, and judgment.**

What we have here then is a war horse, prepared for battle, prepared for judgment, prepared for vengeance.

In Israel the **myrtle** is very common.

It is not a tree but a bush, and it grows everywhere.

Not always beautiful, but if it's growing along a stream or under shadow. These shrubs can grow to the height of eight feet. They can have glossy, shiny green leaves and be very lovely.

In fact, the ones that really flourished developed a star-shaped white flower and are very beautiful. When you bruise one of the leaves of a myrtle that is flourishing like that, it gives off its fragrance, but its fragrance is only given off when it is bruised.

The word myrtle in Hebrew is ***hadassah***, and a synonym for it is Esther.

in the Millennium comes there will be tremendous flourishing of the myrtle, so God even likes it.



**Isaiah 41:19**, *I will plant in the wilderness the cedar and the acacia tree, The myrtle and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the cypress tree and the pine And the box tree together,*

**Isaiah 55:13**, *Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree, And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; And it shall be to the Lord for a name, For an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off."*

Now myrtle branches also were gathered with palm branches and willow twigs at the Feast of Tabernacles. Myrtle branches were used to make the booths in which the children of Israel celebrated their wanderings in the wilderness.

This rider, riding a war horse and in a bunch of myrtle bushes.

This is identified most frequently with a low place.

The lowest place outside of the city of Jerusalem is the Kedron Valley.

The Kedron Valley proceeds to the south, it makes a bend around Mount Zion and connects up with another valley known as the Valley of Hinnom.

Where the Valley of Hinnom and the Valley of Kidron meet is the lowest place outside the city of Jerusalem. It was called the hollow, and the spot had always been a garden.

**2 Kings 25:4**, *"Then the city wall was broken through, and all the men of war fled at night by way of the gate between two walls, which was by the king's garden, even though the*

*Chaldeans were still encamped all around against the city.  
And the king went by way of the plain.*

In a low place outside the city sits a red horse with a rider on top amidst some flourishing myrtles that would flourish in the shade and the water that would run in that area.

**V 8**, *I saw by night, and behold, a man riding on a red horse, and it stood among the myrtle trees in the hollow; and behind him were horses: red, sorrel, and white.*

We have more riders.

They are red, sorrel, and white.

### **What is sorrel?**

A mixture of Red and white.

We have got the red horse, the white horse, and the combination.

### **Is there any significance to the colors in visions?**

- **Red means Blood, judgment, and vengeance.**
- **White horse a sign of Victory, triumph.**

When a Roman conqueror conquered a city, he rode back into his own city riding a white horse, the sign of victory.

When Christ comes, he comes on a white horse.

What we have here is there is a war that is going to end up in victory, and the mixture on some of the horses. So, the scene is a scene of preparedness for war. It is going to be bloody but it's going to be victorious.

**Who are all these riders?**

**Who historically have been the agents of God's judgment?**

Angels.

This is the God squad, the angelic squadron. They are led by a competent leader on a red horse.

The horses speak of battle, speed, swiftness, and readiness to hasten to God's command. There are messengers of vengeance and messengers of victory, and the commanding angel is the rider on the red horse.

**Who is he?**

**Zechariah 1:11**, *So they answered the Angel of the Lord, who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, "We have walked to and fro throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is resting quietly."*

**Who is the Angel of the Lord?**

Jesus Christ.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Angel of the Lord. He is the commander in chief of the God squad, about to embark upon the battle.

### **What are the myrtles?**

Because of the lowliness, commonness, simplicity, beauty, and the fragrance when bruised, the only possibility for the myrtle is that the myrtle represents Israel.

The commonness. They are everywhere in the land, the people of God.

### **What is a hollow?**

The suffering, the lowliness, and the baseness of their present condition. All the little lovely myrtles.

They are looking up at their city and wondering if they will ever rebuild it. Suddenly standing in the midst is the angelic army, led by the commander in chief, ready for battle. It's going to be bloody but it's going to be victorious.

Tremendous vision.

They are the covenant people. They are the eternally elect nation. They are loved by the Lord, and they are the object of his unchanging purpose.

**Romans 11:29**, *For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.*

The Angel of the Lord, none other than Jesus Christ, none other than God himself the second person of the Trinity taking on an angelic form.

### **How do we know that?**

**Genesis 16:7**, *Now the Angel of the Lord found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.*

**Genesis 16:9**, *The Angel of the Lord said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand."*

**Genesis 16:11**, *And the Angel of the Lord said to her: "Behold, you are with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the Lord has heard your affliction.*

Here we know here an Angel of the Lord is identified.

**Genesis 16:13**, *Then she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees me?"*

### **Who was the Angel of the Lord?**

God.

God manifest as God the Son, second person of the Trinity.

Moses in the burning bush.

**Exodus 3:2**, *And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed.*

**Exodus 3:4**, *So when the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!"*

The Angel of the Lord and God are the same, God manifest, the Angel of the Lord.

**Zechariah 3:1-2**, *Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him.<sup>2</sup> And the Lord said to Satan, "The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?"*

The Lord asking the Lord.

The Angel of the Lord is one person of the Trinity, unique and yet the same.

This is God, the second person of the Trinity in the form of an angel riding a horse.

**Who the Angel of the Lord was in terms of his responsibility to Israel?**

**Psalm 34:7**, *The Angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them.*

The Angel of the Lord was the protector and deliverer of Israel. He was the commander in chief of the angelic force, and he is the protector of Israel.

- ✓ He is the protector of Israel.
- ✓ He is the interceder for Israel.
- ✓ He is the comforter of Israel.

The group of people in a state of humiliation about to be delivered by their glorious protector, defender, interceder, comforter who stands ready to fight for them.

The Lord is in the midst of His people, ready to defend, protect, advocate their cause, and comfort them in the time of their need.

He is outside the city ready to judge the nations and put Israel back in the right place where God intended all along.

**V 9**, *Then I said, "My lord, what are these?" So the angel who talked with me said to me, "I will show you what they are."*

He is a special angel, and his job is to explain things to Zechariah. Zechariah is having this vision while he was awake.

He was given some supernatural wisdom to perceive things that are beyond human vision and insight.

To understand them, God sends along an interpreter angel who helps him to get things clear. This angel is mentioned 11 times in the book. This is the angel who is going to help Zechariah to understand.

**V 10**, *And the man who stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, "These are the ones whom the Lord has sent to walk to and fro throughout the earth."*

Zechariah looks back, and he sees the riders on the red, the white, and the sorrel horses.

This is God's reconnaissance crew. This is the divine patrol. The word occurs in a military sense, the word "*walk to and fro through the earth*" is used in a military sense with the idea of surveying, or the idea of patrolling, ascertaining the state of the enemy.

God has His squad, His patrol moving through the earth just to get the up-to-date information on what's going on among the enemy.

Satan also does the same thing.

**Job 1:7**, *And the Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."*

**Job 2:2**, *And the Lord said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Satan answered the Lord and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."*

- Satan is all over the place, checking everything out.
- God with His heavenly host.

This is the reason why the warfare between the angels and the demons goes on all over the place. God is on patrol all over the earth.

The squadron of the Lord has been sent out on a world mission, and they have come back to report to the Angel of the Lord.

The Lord knew everything about the earth because His angels were moving around it in this vision.

**V 11**, *So they answered the Angel of the Lord, who stood among the myrtle trees, and said, "We have walked to and fro throughout the earth, and behold, all the earth is resting quietly."*

We have checked it all out, and everybody's at rest.

**V 11** calls the rider, for the first time, the Angel of the Lord. The Angel of the Lord is none other than Jesus Christ. None other than the second person of the Trinity.

Every Jew who knew anything about his Old Testament know that one super angel who was set for the defense of Israel. It was the Angel of the Lord.

What is so wonderful is that the Angel of the Lord had not appeared for 200 years in the history of Israel. Now, suddenly the Angel of the Lord is back. When their chastening was done, and repentance had taken place, He was back, ready to defend His people.

**How excited those people got when they heard Zechariah describe His vision as incorporating the Angel of the Lord?**

They must be joyful and think that victory is imminent.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the Angel of the Lord, is our defender and protector.

He will not make Himself known in that fashion when we are living in a state of unrepentant, unconfessed sin.

In a sense we forfeit His protection. He turns us over to the consequence of our sinfulness. The moment we repent, and the moment we confess, He is back to defend.

*“The earth sits still and is at rest?”*

The term literally means relaxed, peaceful, tranquil, free from war.

The nations were at peace, but it was the peace of indifference. What the Jewish people had in their mind is this.

**Why do the unrighteous prosper?**

The contrast of the earth’s indifferent peace makes the state of Israel more distressing.

**V 15**, *I am exceedingly angry with the nations at ease; For I was a little angry, And they helped—but with evil intent.”*

It isn’t the kind of ease that honours God.

It isn’t the right kind of peace.

It’s the wrong kind of peace.

It’s the peace of injustice, inhumanity, and characterizes.

The Jews had never assumed that they could have the financial resources to build the whole city themselves. They were counting very strongly on loans from the Persian government.

They were counting on some wealth made available to them by other nations to help them to rebuild.

But Persian wealth had been distributed in other ways, and they weren’t interested.

The rest of the world powers were concerned with their own interests, and they were unlikely to even bother with this insignificant group of patriots. So, all was well in the world for everybody but Israel.

They do it on their own.

The promises made by God when they came back from the Babylonian captivity hadn't come to pass yet.

- They couldn't rest in that defenseless state.
- They were still under the yoke of Gentile power. Darius was their king, and he was a Gentile.
- They were constantly hassled by the enemy nations in the building.
- They were defenseless because they had no walls, no army.
- The promise of God for the shaking of the nation's hadn't happened.
- They were shaking in that hollow and waiting for God to do something.

When the angelic squadron came back and said, *"The world is at peace, that just made them feel worse."*

**Why should the pagan world rest and the covenant people of God be at unrest?**

**Is God going to make things right?**

**V 12**, *Then the Angel of the Lord answered and said, "O Lord of hosts, how long will You not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You were angry these seventy years?"*

**Who is always before the Father pleading the cause of His people?**

**Who is the faithful High Priest?**

Christ.

Here is Christ the Intercessor.

Christ the Advocate, the Defender, the Protector and He is taking up the cause of His people.

**How long are you going to keep your mercy from him?**

Intercessory prayer, the plea stated. How long?

Now, the reason He asks this isn't because He is ignorant.

He is simply crying out to reveal Himself as the defender of His people.

Cry of expectation, sympathy, but not the cry of doubt.

It isn't the cry of questioning, begging and doubting.

It is believing expectation coupled with sympathy.

The angel is praying in conformity to the will of God on the behalf of the people.

Perplexity is solved as the interpreter helps him to see the picture better.

**V 13**, *And the Lord answered the angel who talked to me, with good and comforting words.*

The second person of the Trinity always knows when it's the right time to ask the first person of the Trinity.

Good words and comforting words.

The essence of the whole book.

The key to the book.

But specifically, the good words and the comforting words come from verses **14-17**.

God will keep His promise about His city.

**V 14**, *So the angel who spoke with me said to me, "Proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "I am zealous for Jerusalem And for Zion with great zeal.*

This interpreter angel says to Zechariah.

This message is not a private one but to everybody. To hear and to be proclaimed to all the people that they all may be comforted and encouraged.

**What is the message?**

God is jealous for Jerusalem and Zion with a great jealousy. God is on your side.

The Hebrew root for jealousy is **qanah**.

A two-sided word.

Zeal means love and hatred together.

- I love my wife. I love my children so much that I hate anything that hurts them.
- God loves His people so much that He hates anything that hurts His people.

It is a mixture that becomes zeal.

The Arabic word means to turn intentionally red or black, depending on what color it is, with dye.

By derivation, it is drawing its attention to the colour of the face that is produced when somebody becomes furious. God is really getting upset.

The Greek equivalent is **zēloō**, and it means to boil. God is boiling. Intense zeal.

God has a special place in His heart for Jerusalem. He has a special place in His heart for the people.

**2 Chronicles 6:6**, *Yet I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there, and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.'*

That city is still His city.

**Isaiah 31:5**, *Like birds flying about, So will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem. Defending, He will also deliver it; Passing over, He will preserve it."*

God's going to take care of His town.

So, God is jealous.

God is spoken of as being jealous at the giving of the covenant law in Exodus 20. As soon as God established a relationship with His people through His covenant, the possibility of Him being jealous came into existence.

God's jealousy is a measure of His love for His people.

- ✓ God loves Israel.
- ✓ God loves the land.
- ✓ God loves the city.
- ✓ God loves the people.

Still. Special. Uniquely in His plan. This isn't going to change. There is yet a future and a fulfillment to God's love for that people.

**Hosea 11:7-9**, *My people are bent on backsliding from Me. Though they call to the Most High, None at all exalt Him. <sup>8</sup>“How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I set you like Zeboiim? My heart churns within Me; My sympathy is stirred. <sup>9</sup>I will not execute the fierceness of My anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim. For I am God, and not man, The Holy One in your midst; And I will not come with terror.*

God says, “I can’t do it. I can’t ultimately destroy those people.”  
God has got plans for the city. He can’t be indifferent.

God says that “I Am jealous for My people, and I Am going to act in judgment on those who have offended them.

When God first gave the covenant to Abraham, He said the same thing.

**Genesis 12:3**, *I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”*

God never breaks His covenant. Never, ever!

God promised to preserve His people.

He promised if they repented then He would give them the land. In Zechariah, they had repented.

God was going to fulfill His promise and give them the land.

To do that God is going to have to destroy the nations around them, because they have been hostile and vengeful toward His people.

God's jealousy turns to anger.

**V 15**, *I am exceedingly angry with the nations at ease; For I was a little angry, And they helped—but with evil intent."*

I am angry with a great anger with the nations.

### **What nations?**

**Edom, Assyria, Babylon** particularly who had offended His people because they are at ease.

**8 Times** in the Old Testament, that phrase "at ease" is used in an insulting way.

**Psalm 123:4**, *Our soul is exceedingly filled With the scorn of those who are at ease, With the contempt of the proud.*

God was a little displeased at Israel, and He wanted the nations to chasten them a little bit, but they have pushed it all out of shape.

*And they helped—but with evil intent."*

The nations were delighted in Israel's suffering.

They prolonged it. They intensified it. They were back in the land. 70 years was over.

God's prophet had said it was for 70 years and no more, and then you are to assist Israel. But they had prolonged the agony. Because of that God was not pleased with them and they sit in smug indifference against Israel.

The nations didn't grasp that God's intention was to punish for a moment and then show great compassion. That's always the way.

So, the punishment of the nations is set. It was going to come, and it did come.

- They rebuilt their city.
- They rebuilt their walls.
- Yet even a future is coming as well.

**Promise secured.**

**Can you imagine how encouraged the Jews are after they heard this first message from Zechariah?**

Wrongs suffered by God's people are going to be compensated. They will be compensated God will bring justice on the behalf of His people.

**Isaiah 40:1-2**, *Comfort, yes, comfort My people!*” Says your God.  
<sup>2</sup> *“Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the Lord’s hand Double for all her sins.”*

God is saying comfort her now.

The nations had not done it. They had not. So, God was angry.

**V 16**, *‘Therefore thus says the Lord: “I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy; My house shall be built in it,” says the Lord of hosts, “And a surveyor’s line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem.” ’*

### **Five things:**

#### **1. Return.**

**V 16**, *“I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy*

God is saying that I have returned to My city. We can just feel they are getting excited.

God is back.

The temple is going to go up.

The Shekinah is going to come back.

No more Ichabod, the glory is departed. Returned.

## **2. Restoration.**

**V 16,** *My house shall be built in it,"*

Four years after that prophecy the temple was finished. It was built. Four years later God occupied it.

## **3. Reconstruction.**

**V 16,** *And a surveyor's line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem."*

What does it mean a line will be stretched forth on Jerusalem? They are going to lay out the city to rebuild it.

God is saying that I am going to return. Temple worship is going to be restored. The city is going to be reconstructed.

80 years later Nehemiah finished the wall, and the thing was done.

## **4. Prosperity.**

**V 17,** *"Again proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "My cities shall again spread out through prosperity; The Lord will again comfort Zion, And will again choose Jerusalem." ' "*

The place is going to gush with prosperity, overflow.

They rebuilt it. They had some wonderful years of prosperity.

## **5. Reassurance.**

**V 17, *The Lord will again comfort Zion, And will again choose Jerusalem.***” ’ ”

Comfort's coming.

What a wonderful message for the troubled little remnant. God's going to keep His promise to His people no matter what the world is doing, no matter how indifferent they are, no matter how it looks.

What a great hope.

- ✓ God is still dealing with Israel.
- ✓ God is going to deal with His people.
- ✓ God is going to comfort Israel in the future.
- ✓ God will bring His Messiah and redeem them.

## **Conclusion:**

We can see the same characteristic of God in relation to the Church.

Great to know that Christ is in the midst of His Church.  
In many ways, we are in the valley in the world.

- We don't reign in this world, but Satan does.
- We are the outcasts.
- We are the ones in the hollow outside the kingdoms of the world looking in.
- We are the ones that the world looks down on.
- We are the ones who exist in a kind of humiliation.

But right in the midst of us is the living Christ.

Christ is saying, "It won't be long until we are going to ride in and take over this world, and I am going to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords."

Zechariah's vision came true in a total of 80 years. All of it.

But we can't leave it there, because this prophecy has a double character.

The prophet was also looking at the kingdom of Messiah to come many years in the future. The rebuilding under Zerubbabel in the temple. Nehemiah built the wall in the city were very temporary and very short lived.

The temple and the wall went down again. But there is a future yet.

There is going to be another temple, and Ezekiel describes it as the millennial temple. Read Ezekiel 40 to 48. God is going to be

in it. Jesus Christ is going to be on the throne. The people are going to be gathered into the millennial kingdom, and we are going to reign with Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The land is going to flourish.

All the marvelous things described by the prophets for the kingdom are going to come to pass. The future of Jerusalem is secured in the promise of God.

God will rebuild His house.

God will restore His kingdom.

God will reign upon its throne.

We, along with the redeemed people of Israel who come to Jesus Christ in the tribulation, who look on Him whom they have pierced and mourn for him as an only Son, shall gather at the feet of the King and reign with Him forever.

That's the future.

When I begin to see what's going on in Israel today, I can get excited about that. God begins to lay the groundwork to build His city, to build His kingdom. The temples have been destroyed again and again in Israel. There isn't anyone there. There's no temple.

But in the great tribulation, Israel again will be in the hollow, humiliated, degraded, outside Jerusalem. But then comes the

King of Kings and Lord of Lords and establishes the new reign on earth. The kingdom is restored. God reigns. The temple's rebuilt. The city is built. The cities are prosperous. Zion is comforted. The nations are punished. We go into His wonderful kingdom.

Keep your eyes on Israel. The myrtle bushes are in the hollow, and I think the rider on the red horse is there with them, and He may be pleading to God to take back the land and judge the nations very soon.

Isn't it interesting that it will probably be at a time when the world is at peace. Is it not that characteristic of the first three-and-a-half years of the tribulation?

But they are back in their land. The scene is set.

If you have never committed yourself to Christ, history is not going to have a good ending for you. History is going somewhere. God is fulfilling history in the nation Israel right now and preparing things for His kingdom.

All the signs are there.

He could come at any moment for His Church and then begin the things that prelude to the setting up of a kingdom.

The question is **do you know the Lord Jesus Christ so that you will be a part of that?**

**Are you a part of that wonderful plan God has?**

You can be if right now you just open your heart to Christ.