

## ***Session 2 The Coming Victory (Zech. 1:1-21)***

### **I. THE MESSAGE OF THE BOOK AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ZECHARIAH 1**

- A. The book of Zechariah emphasizes the zeal of God and His glorious plans for Jerusalem, the Jewish people, and the land of Israel (1:12-2:12; 8:2-22). It makes clear that Jesus will be seen as Messiah in His supremacy in all the nations (2:11; 6:12-13; 9:10, 14; 12:10; 14:10, 17).
- B. The temple in Jerusalem will be the worship center of the earth in the Millennium (14:16). Thus the message of this book is especially relevant to the prayer movement in this hour because there is “continuity” with it and the Jerusalem worship center in the Millennium. The Lord called Zerubbabel’s temple the “house of prayer” (Isa. 56:7) and Jesus affirmed this (Mt. 21:13).
- C. Zechariah called Israel to repent and return to the Lord, and then promised that He would return to them. The book of Zechariah was written to encourage Israel in a time of despair. So it is surprising that its first message was a call to repentance with warnings of judgment (1:1-6). It is one of the strongest repentance messages in the Bible, and acts as a foundation to the book’s message of hope. An authentic message of love and hope must include a call to repentance.

<sup>3</sup>***“Return to Me,” says the LORD of hosts, “and I will return to you.” (Zech. 1:3)***

1. ***Return to Me:*** The Lord calls His people to repent, knowing that it is the only way that they will be positioned to live in the joy and blessing of a deep relationship with Him.
  2. ***I will return to you:*** The Lord motivates His people to repent by promising to return to them with the blessing of His manifest presence. (Rom. 2:4).
- D. ***God’s emotions:*** Zechariah 1 highlights four divine emotions—zeal, anger, mercy, and patience.
1. ***Zeal:*** God’s eternal disposition is zealous love. He has great zeal to glorify His name, to establish His people and purposes, and to remove all that hinders love (1:14-17; 8:2-8).  
<sup>14</sup>***“Proclaim... ‘I am zealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great zeal.’” (Zech. 1:14)***  
<sup>2</sup>***“Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘I am zealous for Zion with great zeal.’” (Zech. 8:2)***
  2. God has ***great zeal*** for Jerusalem (1:14; 8:2), with ***tender mercy*** in dealing with the sins of her people (1:12, 16; 7:9; 10:6). Therefore, He comforts her (1:13, 17) with His glorious plans for her future. The Lord was ***angry*** with Jerusalem (1:2, 12) for a short time (1:15). However, He was ***exceedingly angry*** with the nations that oppress her (1:15), yet is ***patient*** with them (1:11, 15), knowing that their judgment will come in His timing.
- E. ***Proclaim:*** The book of Zechariah is a forerunner message that must be proclaimed (1:14, 17). The whole message must be proclaimed in the generation when many events in the book occur.

- F. The negative part of the Lord's view of Israel and the nations is difficult to say. Thus, Zechariah needed to be *commanded* to proclaim the full message that he received. He did not downplay the truths about God's judgment or the need for repentance in his message of love and hope. This caused him problems with the leaders of his day, both Gentile and Jewish. He was martyred by the Jewish leaders, who were obviously angered by his preaching (Mt. 23:35; Lk. 11:51).
- <sup>35</sup>...the blood of **Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.** (Mt. 23:35)*
- G. There is no contradiction in God's personality as He manifests His various emotions, e.g., mercy and anger. Nor is there any contradiction in Him when He releases His disciplinary judgments in order to prepare His people for mercy. He never suspends one attribute to exercise another.

## **II. INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK (1:1)**

- A. The timing of the book of Zechariah (1:1) is dated by the reign of Darius since there was no king of Israel. This indicates the times of the Gentiles (Lk. 21:24), when the Gentiles control all or part of Jerusalem. It began with Nebuchadnezzar and will continue until Jesus' return.
- <sup>1</sup>In the **eighth month** of the **second year** of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet... (Zech. 1:1)*
- B. ***Eighth month***: Darius I, or Darius the Great, king of Persia, reigned from 522 to 486 BC. This repentance message was given in **November 520 BC**, three months after Haggai's ministry began on August 29. He gave four messages from **August to December 520 BC** to stir Israel to action.
1. Haggai's first message was given on **August 29**. He called Israel to start rebuilding the temple (Hag. 1:2-11). They started work 24 days later on **September 22** (Hag. 1:12-15).
  2. Haggai's second message was on **October 17**. He called them to *be strong* (or to be resolved to not quit), to *work* diligently, and to *resist fear* (Hag. 2:1-4).
  3. Zechariah's first message was given in **November**. He called them to repentance (1:1-6) because they had so quickly stumbled in compromise (1:3). They repented quickly (1:6).
  4. Haggai's third message was given on **December 18** (Hag. 2:10-23). He rebuked the priests for continuing in compromise and the people for delaying the work on the temple. He told them that their obedience would result in economic blessing (Hag. 2:10-17).
  5. Zechariah's second message was on **February 15, 519 BC** (1:7-6:8), three months after his first message and five months after work on the temple resumed (Hag. 1:15).
- C. ***Son of Iddo***: The genealogies in Ezra do not mention Zechariah's father, Berechiah, but only his more prominent grandfather, Iddo (Ezra 5:1; 6:14). The word *bēn* can also be translated as "grandson of." Iddo was a priest who returned from the Babylonian captivity (Neh. 12:4, 16).

### III. ZECHARIAH'S FIRST MESSAGE (1:1-3): A CALL TO REPENTANCE

A. Zechariah's first message was a call to repentance (1:1-3).

*<sup>1</sup>The word of the LORD came to Zechariah...saying, <sup>2</sup>“The LORD has been very angry with your fathers. <sup>3</sup>Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Return to Me,” says the LORD of hosts, “and I will return to you,” says the LORD of hosts.’” (Zech. 1:1-3)*

1. **Return to Me:** Repentance is a call to live in agreement with God's Word. It involves turning to the Lord (1:3) and turning from sin (1:4). Jesus, John the Baptist, the apostles, and all the prophets boldly called the people to repent. The message of repentance was foundational to the ministry of Jesus (Mt. 4:17), John the Baptist (Mt. 3:2), Peter (Acts 3:19) and Paul (Acts 17:30). For more on this message, see Mt. 9:13; 11:20-21; 12:41; Mk. 1:4, 15; 2:17; 6:12; Lk. 3:3-8; 5:32; 10:13; 11:32; 15:7, 10; 16:30; 17:3-4; 24:47; Acts 2:32; 3:19; 5:31; 8:22; 11:18; 13:24; 17:30; 19:4; 20:21; 26:20; Rom. 2:4; 2 Cor. 7:9-10; 12:21; 2 Tim. 2:25; Heb. 6:1, 6; 2 Pet. 3:9; Rev. 2:5, 16, 21-22; 3:3, 19; 9:20-21.
2. **I will return to you:** The Lord promises to return to Israel. He returns spiritually with blessing and then physically at the second coming (1:16; 2:5,10; 8:2; 9:9-10; 14:3-5, 10).
3. **Very angry:** The Lord has never been angry enough to end His relationship with Israel. Zechariah clarified that God was a “little angry,” or angry for just a little while (1:2, 15).
4. **Lord of Hosts:** Three times in verse 3, Zechariah refers to God as “the Lord of Hosts,” or “YHWH of hosts.” This title emphasizes the Lord's function as the divine warrior, who goes to war to deliver Israel from oppressive nations and judges Israel for her rebellion.

B. Zechariah appeals to Israel's past refusal to repent and the resulting judgment (1:4-6). Their forefathers rejected the prophets who called them to repent (Isa. 1; Jer. 3; Ezek. 18; Joel 2; etc.).

*<sup>4</sup>“Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets preached, saying, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Turn now from your evil ways...”’ But they did not hear nor heed Me”...*

*<sup>5</sup>“Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? <sup>6</sup>Yet surely My words ...did they not overtake your fathers? So they returned and said: ‘Just as the LORD of hosts determined to do to us, according to our ways...so He has dealt with us.’” (Zech. 1:4-6)*

1. **God's words overtook Israel:** God's words of judgment “overtook” Israel when He sent them into Babylonian captivity because of their evil ways. God's Word always overtakes rebellion because it cannot return to Him void without fulfilling its purpose (Isa. 55:11).
2. God releases His judgments and blessings as He promised in His Word. (Deut. 28:15, 45)  
*<sup>15</sup>It shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD...that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you...<sup>45</sup>Moreover all these curses shall come upon*

*you and pursue and overtake you, until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to keep His commandments... (Deut. 28:15, 45)*

3. **They returned:** The people of Zechariah's day repented when they heard his message of repentance (1:6). It resulted in receiving God's blessing in that generation (8:9-15). Some say that people today will not respond to the old-fashioned message of repentance. God's Word will surely overtake any "popular" trend that is rooted in compromise.
4. **As the Lord determined:** Zechariah told them it was because of God's judgment on their sin that the Lord had sent them into Babylonian captivity. They returned to the Lord by agreeing that it was because of their sin that the Lord had determined to judge them (1:6).
5. The Lord insists that Israel acknowledge their sin that causes Him to judge them. This is the very thing that Israel will do when they mourn over Jesus, whom they pierced (12:10). To acknowledge persistent sin and God's corresponding discipline leads to restoration.  
*<sup>40</sup>But if they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their fathers...<sup>41</sup>...if their uncircumcised hearts are humbled, and they accept their guilt <sup>42</sup>then I will remember My covenant...<sup>43</sup>The land shall be left empty...they will accept their guilt, because they despised My judgments and because their soul abhorred My statutes. <sup>44</sup>Yet for all that, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away... (Lev. 26:40-44)*
6. **Where are your fathers:** Zechariah called them to consider what fruit their fathers gained by ignoring God's commands. The prophets who warned them died, but their warnings did not die with them. God's words from their lips continue to have relevance.  
*<sup>5</sup>Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, do they live forever? (Zech. 1:5)*
7. Man's life span is short, but God's Word transcends every generation. It is consistent and reliable over thousands of years. Zechariah's generation acknowledged that the Lord was judging them just as had He promised to do if they did not obey Him (Deut. 28:15, 45).

#### **IV. INTRODUCING THE FIRST VISION (1:7)**

- A. Zechariah's second message included eight visions that he saw all on the same night (1:7-6:8). These eight visions focus on the future of Israel, particularly Jerusalem and the temple. They were not fulfilled in Zechariah's day. Their purpose was to encourage the people to persevere in the work of building the temple. They are helpful to any who are building a house of prayer.
- B. This first vision emphasized that God was zealous for His people and would restore Jerusalem and the temple with His glory and that He would not cast Israel off while under Gentile control.

- C. The twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month (Shebat) on our modern calendar would have been on **February 15, 519 BC** (1:7). This was three months after Zechariah’s first message on repentance given in November. Five months earlier, on same day (24 Shebat), the rebuilding of temple resumed as the people were stirred by the prophesying of Haggai (Hag 1:14-15).

***<sup>7</sup>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... (Zech. 1:7)***

## **V. FIRST VISION: THE MAN ON A RED HORSE (1:7–17)**

- A. **Summary:** Zechariah saw a man riding a red horse among a grove of myrtle trees in a valley, followed by a team of red, sorrel, and white horses (1:9). The “man” was the Angel of the Lord, the preincarnate Christ, who appeared in the form of an angel (1:12). The man explained that the horses carried the angelic riders who patrolled the earth (1:10). These angelic scouts reported to the Lord that at that time there was “rest” from war and revolt in the nations (1:11, 15).

***<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.” (Zech. 1:8-11)***

1. Most commentators see only two angels in this passage—the Angel of the Lord (or the man among the myrtle trees; 1:8, 10) and the “angel who talked with me” (1:9, 13-14).
  2. There were four persons or groups interacting in this vision (1:8-11)
    1. The man (1:8, 10) on the red horse, who is the Angel of the Lord (1:11-12)
    2. The prophet Zechariah
    3. The interpreting angel, called “the angel who talked with me” (1:9, 13-14)
    4. The patrolling angels on a team of horses following the man (1:8, 10-11)
- B. **The man:** The man riding a red horse (1:8) remains unidentified throughout the passage. Most conservative commentators agree that the man among the myrtle trees in verses 8 and 10 is the same as the Angel of the Lord who stood among the myrtle trees in verse 11. He is also probably the same man who measured Jerusalem in the third vision (2:1-2).
- C. **Angel of the Lord:** The Angel of the Lord is the preincarnate Christ, who also appears in Zechariah 3:1-2. The Angel of the Lord addresses the Lord as a separate person (1:12). In some passages, the Angel of the Lord is distinct from God, but is then described as if He is the Lord (Gen. 16:7-13; 31:11-13; Ex. 3:2-6, 14; 23:20-22; Num. 22:22-35; Judg. 6:11-18).

- D. **The angel who talked with me:** An interpreting angel talked to Zechariah throughout the night visions to help him understand them (1:9, 13, 14, 19; 2:3; 4:1, 4; 5:5, 10; 6:4). He is the same one who is called “my lord” (1:9). The interpreting angel was going to explain the meaning of the horses (1:9), but the man spoke up to explain their role with the patrolling angels (1:10).
- E. **What are these:** Zechariah asked for understanding of the horses (1:9). The interpreting angel described them as an angelic patrol of the earth who reported to God (1:10-11). He asked the same angel seven times: “What are these?” (1:9, 19, 21; 4:4, 11, 12; 6:4).
- F. **Walked to and fro:** The angelic riders who walked to and fro throughout the earth (1:10) on the colored horses (1:8) patrolled the earth and reported back to the Lord (1:11). There is a deep interaction between the activity in the spirit realm and the natural realm (1:8-11; 2:1-4; 3:1-5; 6:1-8; Dan. 10:12-13, 20-21; Eph. 6:12; Rev. 6:1-8; 12:7-9).
- G. **Resting quietly:** The patrolling angels reported rest, or peace, in the earth in 520 BC after Cyrus defeated Babylon (539 BC). This rest, or ease, (1:15) spoke of the conquered nations enduring Persia’s rule without openly revolting or of the absence of a major military conflict.
1. Many draw the wrong conclusion by seeing God’s patience with guilty nations. We must not misinterpret the “rest” of oppressive nations as God approving of them (Eccl. 8:11).
  2. The Lord allowed the nations to rest at that time but He destroyed them later. With a short-term view we do not see the entirety of what God is doing, since He works from a long-term plan. These nations were still appointed for judgment (1:15, 21; 6:1-8).
  3. All of the earth was “resting,” except for Israel, who was still under some desolation linked to her last seventy years of being under God’s discipline. Israel’s main complaint was God’s apparent silence related to the judgment of nations that were oppressing her.
  4. God is patient with the nations in order to give them more time, so that:
    1. More people will be saved (2 Pet. 3:9)
    2. The guilt of their national sins will be filled up (Gen. 15:18)
    3. He may discipline His people by nations like Assyria (Isa. 10:5) or Babylon (Jer. 25)
    4. He may show mercy and give them time to repent and avoid judgment (Rev. 2:20-23)
- H. **Myrtle trees:** The myrtle tree is symbolic of Israel. A myrtle is an evergreen tree that grows to eight feet. The lowly myrtle, rather than the proud, tall cedar, symbolizes Israel. Myrtle boughs were used to make booths for the Feast of Tabernacles, which prophetically speaks of Israel’s salvation (Neh. 8:15). They were also **worn by the bridegroom** in ancient Israel.
- I. **Stood among the myrtle trees:** The man standing among the myrtle trees symbolized the Lord standing among the people of Israel, i.e., being deeply involved with them. He watches all that happens to them and even intercedes for God’s mercy to be released on them (1:12).

- J. ***In the hollow:*** The Targum and the Talmud translate this as the “valley.” The valley spoke of Israel’s lowly position and of being out of the world’s view. In other words, it pointed to Israel’s depressed position in Zechariah’s day. Myrtle trees grow in a valley.
- K. ***These:*** The antecedents of “these,” “they,” and “we” in verses 9-11 are the patrolling angels (1:10) who were riding the three colored horses (1:8).

## **VI. THE HORSES (1:8)**

- A. The colors of the horses were red, sorrel (speckled), and white (1:8). The colors probably spoke of their mission. Angelic riders on horses patrolling the earth suggest a military context (1:10).  
***8I 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. (Zech. 1:8)***
- B. There are horses in the heavenly realm. Elijah and Elisha saw horses with heavenly chariots (2 Kgs. 2:11; 6:17). Jesus will return on a horse, with the saints also riding horses (Rev. 19:11, 14).
- C. ***Four:*** The number four is the number of the earth, or that which is worldwide. It speaks of the four corners of the earth coming under and being affected by these judgments (1:11; 6:5).
- D. The four sets of horses in Zechariah 1:8-11 and 6:1-8 seem connected to the four horses in Revelation 6:1-8. In Zechariah, the meaning of the colors of the horses is not made clear. However, in Revelation 6, the meaning of each color is clearly given.
1. In Zechariah 1:8, the horses are ***red, sorrel*** (speckled), and ***white***. They functioned as an angelic patrol on the earth (1:10-11).
  2. In Zechariah 6:2-3, the horses are red, ***black, white***, and ***dappled*** (spotted grey). They pulled four chariots between two mountains of brass and executed judgment in the earth.
  3. In Revelation 6, the horses are white, ***red, black***, and ***pale*** (grayish green).
- E. ***Red horses:*** The red horse speaks of bloodshed in war. John saw the rider on a red horse being given a sword to strike the earth with war (Rev. 6:4). The man riding a red horse symbolizes the impending judgment on the nations who mistreated Israel (1:21). Isaiah describes the Messiah coming to Israel in red garments, because it is the day of vengeance (Isa. 63:1-6).
- F. ***Sorrel horses:*** The Hebrew word *seruqim* translated “sorrel” can also be “speckled” or “mixed color.” The term cannot be known with certainty. It is probably a mixed color, or combination of color, signifying a mission combining judgment and mercy.
- G. ***White horses:*** White is a symbol for victory, connected to going forth to conquer (Rev. 6:2).
- H. ***Black horses:*** The black horse speaks of mourning created by a worldwide famine (Rev. 6:5).

- I. **Pale horses:** The pale green horse is associated with physical death (Rev. 6:8). The Greek word *chloros* is translated as “pale” (ashen, or leprous yellow), and it represents the pallor of death and decay in a corpse.

## **VII. THE ANGEL OF THE LORD INTERCEDED FOR GOD TO INTERVENE (1:12-13)**

- A. The Angel of the Lord interceded for mercy for Israel and released comfort to them (1:12-13). Jesus’ intercession is the hope of Israel. Jesus, the great intercessor prays for Israel.

*<sup>12</sup>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>The LORD answered the angel who talked to me, with good and comforting words. (Zech. 1:12-13)*

- B. **How long:** The report of the Gentile nations being at rest discouraged those in Jerusalem who continued in desolation. This difficulty moved the Angel of the Lord to intercede for the ending of the desolation related to the seventy years of trouble prophesied by Jeremiah (Jer. 25:11-12). That period was over, so why was Jerusalem still in ruins and under the yoke of the Gentiles?

- C. **Seventy years:** There are two main views on the seventy years of the Babylonian exile. The first view is that it began in 606 BC when the first captives were taken to Babylon and continued until 536 BC when the first Jewish captives returned to Jerusalem. The second view is that it began in 586 BC with the destruction of the temple and continued until the temple was rebuilt in 516 BC. The Lord probably intended a double reference, so both approaches can be accurately applied. The seventy years were fulfilled with amazing precision according to both of these calculations.

- D. **Comforting words:** God’s answer to the intercession was given to the interpreting angel (1:14). The message of comfort included the revelation of God’s zeal and His promise to fully restore Jerusalem, the temple, and many cities in Israel (1:14-17). The word *comfort* (1:13) is the same word Isaiah used when he prophesied about Israel in the end times (Isa. 40:1-2).

*<sup>1</sup>“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.” (Isa. 40:1-2)*

## **VIII. THE MESSAGE OF COMFORT (1:13-17)**

- A. Zechariah was commissioned with a specific message to proclaim (1:13-17). This is the first of four prophetic oracles that Zechariah received regarding the eight visions that he had in one night (1:14-17; 2:6-13; 4:6-10; 6:9-15). Jerusalem and Zion are synonymous here. The use of dual names for the city suggests all that is related to Jerusalem in the past and to Zion in the future.

*<sup>13</sup>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. 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 [the temple] shall be built in it...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.”’”** (Zech. 1:13-17)

- B. **Proclaim:** Zechariah was commissioned to proclaim the message of God’s zeal for Jerusalem (1:14) and the sure destruction of her enemies (1:15, 21). Make this part of your life message. Proclaim everywhere that God has great zeal for Jerusalem, His people, and His purpose.
- <sup>14</sup>**Proclaim, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts: “I am zealous for Jerusalem...with great zeal.”’**  
(Zech. 1:14)
- C. **Zeal of God:** The revelation of God’s zeal was the core message given to Zechariah in verses 14-17. God has zeal, or burning desire, for His people and purpose. We must grow in our understanding and experience of God’s emotions. His desire is manifest in Jesus as an affectionate Bridegroom, powerful King, and righteous Judge who removes all that hinders His love.
1. **Zealous for Jerusalem:** The Lord will visit Jerusalem with His glory and will fight to defend her against the political oppression of the Gentiles and the spiritual compromise of the Jewish people. He desires Jerusalem’s covenant loyalty and her promised destiny.
  2. **Zealous to live in Jerusalem:** The Lord is zealous to live in Jerusalem forever (1:16; 2:5, 10). Jerusalem is the city of the great king (Ps. 48:1-5; Mt. 5:35) and will be the political, spiritual, educational, and financial capital of the millennial earth (Isa. 2:2-4; Jer. 3:17).  
<sup>16</sup>**I am returning to Jerusalem with mercy; My house [the temple] shall be built in it.**  
(Zech. 1:16)
  3. **Zealous to build the temple:** Jesus will build His house (temple, 6:12) as the place of His throne (Ezek. 43:6-7) and the epicenter of His activity throughout the millennial earth.  
<sup>12</sup>**The Man [Jesus] whose name is the BRANCH...shall build the temple of the LORD**  
(Zech. 6:12)  
  
<sup>6</sup>**I heard Him speaking to me from the temple...He said to me, “Son of man, this is the place of My throne...where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel forever.”**  
(Ezek. 43:6-7)
  4. The Lord helped Zerubbabel to build the temple in Zechariah’s generation (4:6-10). He completed it in five years, dedicating it in March 516 BC (Ezra 6:15). Jesus called Zerubbabel’s temple the *house of prayer*, and expressed zeal for it (Mt. 21:13; Jn. 2:17).

- D. **Surveyor's line:** The surveyor's line was a measuring tool used in building projects. Stretching out a measuring line over a city spoke of enlarging its boundaries. Here, it symbolizes rebuilding and enlarging Jerusalem and the temple. The work began in Zechariah's generation, and again in 1948, but this prophecy will only be completely fulfilled at the time of the millennial kingdom.

***<sup>16</sup>I am returning to Jerusalem...and a surveyor's line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem. (Zech. 1:16)***

- E. **Exceedingly angry:** The Lord gives His reason for His great anger with the nations (1:15). He was angry with them because they went beyond their divine assignment in disciplining Judah.

***<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.” (Zech. 1:15)***

1. **Exceedingly angry:** God is angry with the nations that have cruelly oppressed Israel. They must acknowledge their sin and repent to thwart the judgment that is piling up.
2. **At ease:** Those anti-Semitic nations were at ease and at rest (1:11, 15), assuming that the God of Israel was not angry with them. They reasoned that since God's judgments were delayed, they would not be released (Eccl. 8:11). History proves differently, since the great empires of ancient history who cruelly struck Israel are no longer world powers.
3. **A little angry:** God being a *little angry* can refer to a short period of His anger, as in being angry for a “little while,” instead of it describing the intensity of anger (1:2, 15). The Lord has never been angry long enough to end His relationship with Israel.
4. **They helped:** The Lord's ways are complex. He uses evil nations who deserve judgment to help Him discipline His people, and then He judges those guilty nations. Babylon went beyond her divine assignment in disciplining Judah (Isa. 47:5-6).  
***<sup>6</sup>I was angry with My people...and have given them into your hand. You [Babylon] showed them no mercy; on the elderly you laid your yoke very heavily. (Isa. 47:6)***
5. The nations can “go beyond” what the Lord wants. He sovereignly allows nations to exercise their free will by refusing to obey His plan for them, and then He judges them for their disobedience. The Lord sovereignly sets the boundaries on how far He will let any go outside of His will. Even as nations sin, the Lord still fulfills His higher purposes.

- F. The Lord promised that the cities of Judah (1:12) would overflow with prosperity (1:17). This happened in part in Zechariah's generation, and even more since 1948. However, the fullness of prosperity in the cities of Israel will occur after Jesus returns to live in Jerusalem (1:16).

***<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.””” (Zech. 1:17)***

1. **My cities:** The Lord claims the cities of Israel as His own (1:17). He will personally care for, provide for, and protect these cities as His inheritance (2:4-5; Ps. 2:8-9).
2. **Again choose Jerusalem:** The Lord told Moses that He had chosen Jerusalem, and then told Solomon that He wanted to put His Name there (2 Chr. 6:6, 34-38). In Zechariah, He again chooses Jerusalem (1:17; 2:12; 3:2) to be the epicenter of His worldwide kingdom (Isa. 2:2-4).

***“I have chosen Jerusalem that My name may be there.” (2 Chr. 6:6)***

## **IX. SECOND VISION: FOUR HORNS AND FOUR CRAFTSMEN (1:18-21)**

- A. Zechariah saw four horns representing the Gentile world powers that scattered Israel (1:18-19). The second vision gives more details about the Lord’s message of comfort (1:13, 17). It shows us what God will do to the Gentile world powers with whom He was “exceedingly angry” (1:15)
- <sup>18</sup>Then I raised my eyes and looked, and there were four horns. <sup>19</sup>And I said to the angel who talked with me, “What are these?” So he answered me, “These are the horns [empires] that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.” (Zech. 1:18-19)***
- B. **Horns:** Horns are symbolic of power (Deut. 33:17; 1 Sam. 2:10; 1 Kgs. 22:11; Ps. 18:2; 22:21; 75:10; 89:17, 24; 92:10; 112:9; 132:17; Jer. 48:25; Ezek. 29:21; Dan. 7:7-8, 24; 8:3, 5-6, 20-21; Rev. 5:6; 13:1; 17:3, 7, 12). Animals defend themselves and attack with their horns.
- C. **What are these:** Zechariah asked the interpreting angel for understanding of the horns (1:18). The horns are the empires that have scattered Israel (1:19) and gouged them with their horns.
- D. **The four horns:** These probably represent Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome—the four Gentile world empires seen by Daniel (Dan. 2:31-45; 7:2-13). The times of the Gentiles began with Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon oppressing Jerusalem, and will end with the Antichrist’s oppression of Jerusalem. Daniel saw these same four Gentile world powers in the four metals of the great statue (Dan. 2) and in the vision of the four beast empires (Dan. 7). Most Jewish commentators identify the four kingdoms as Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome.
1. Some see these as the empires of Assyria, Babylon, Media, and Persia since they had already “scattered” Israel (past tense) as Zechariah specified in this vision (1:19). However, some prophetic passages speak of events yet in the future using the past tense.
  2. Some say the number four stands for the four points of the compass. Thus, the four horns signify enemies of Israel in every direction: Syria, Assyria, and Babylon to the north; Edom and Egypt to the south; Ammon and Moab to the east; and Philistia to the west.
  3. Others say the number four represents nations from the four corners of the world; thus, the four horns signify the totality of the Gentiles’ opposition of Israel throughout history.

- E. Regardless of how one interprets this, God will surely destroy any nation that oppresses Israel.
- F. Israel's comfort was to be found in the assurance of final deliverance from all Gentiles powers. Because of the use of symbolism, Israel couldn't be sure which nation would rise up next as a horn-empire.
- G. **Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem:** The three names "Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem," (1:19) provide an all-inclusive reference to the whole nation, regardless of which stage of history is considered.
- H. Zechariah saw four craftsmen overthrowing the four horn-empires that attacked Israel (1:20-21).  
***<sup>20</sup>Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen. <sup>21</sup>And I said, "What are these coming to do?" So he said, "These are the horns that scattered Judah, so that no one could lift up his head; but the craftsmen are coming to terrify them, to cast out the horns of the nations that lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter it."*** (Zech. 1:20-21)
- I. **Horns that scattered Judah:** The angel repeated (1:21) what he had just said (1:19) to emphasize the severity of Judah's suffering in being scattered so that no one could lift his head.
- J. **Four craftsman:** The craftsmen were builders with hammers that could easily shatter a brittle ram's horn. These craftsmen were God's tool of judgment to destroy the evil horn-empires. *Craftsman* is from the Hebrew word *harash*, which means "a worker in wood or metal."
1. These four craftsmen represent the empires of Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and Messiah. Each empire was used by God to cast down and destroy the horn-empire that had preceded them and had been oppressing Israel (Dan. 2:34-35, 44-45).
  2. The first craftsman is Persia, which broke the horn of Babylon (538 BC). The second craftsman is Greece, which, under Alexander the Great, defeated the Persian horn (331 BC). Third is the Roman Empire, which destroyed the Greeks (146 BC) (it is also the fourth horn in both its ancient form and its future revived form as the Antichrist's empire). The fourth craftsman is the kingdom of the Messiah, who will destroy the Antichrist's empire.
- K. **To terrify and cast out:** These craftsmen-empires would terrify and cast down the horn-empires who scattered Israel. This has overtones of David's prophecy of God terrifying the nations in His anger (Ps. 2:5). God is determined to destroy the nations who gouge Israel with their horns.
- L. God will curse everyone who curses Israel (Gen. 12:3). Beware, nations of the earth, God is watching, even though He patiently waits for the right time to judge those who attack Israel. The fullness of this prophecy will occur at the end of the age (10:3-9; 12:3-9; 14:2-5, 12-16). The Antichrist's empire is certain to fail as it leads the nations to attack Israel (12-14).

- M. Israel is indestructible because of God's covenant with her. He has promised to make a full end of all nations where He scattered Israel, but He will not make a full end of Israel (Jer. 30:11).  
***"Though I make a full end of all nations where I have scattered you, yet I will not make a complete end of you. But I will correct you in justice... (Jer. 30:11)***
- N. In the two visions of Zechariah 1, the prophet reveals God's zealous heart, calling Israel to repent, warning them of judgment, and promising their full salvation, restoration, and protection. Israel can be encouraged that the Lord is zealously watching all things that pertain to them.