English: Condensed Translation Notes for Haggai, Malachi, Zechariah, Zephaniah

Formatted for Translators

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Notes: English ULB Translation Notes

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## Chapter 1

#### Zephaniah 1:1

##### General Information:

Verses 1:2-18 refer to Yahweh's judgment. The ULB sets poetry (1:2-18) farther to the right to show that it is poetry. Verses 1:2-3 describe Yahweh's final judgment of every sinner in the future. In this chapter, it is unclear whether these prophecies concern the fall of Jerusalem, the coming of the Messiah or the day of the Lord. It is possible that the prophecies reference more than one period of time.

##### the word of Yahweh that came

"Yahweh gave a message" or "Yahweh spoke this message"

##### Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament.

##### son of Gedaliah son of Amariah son of Hezekiah

"the grandson of Gedaliah, and the great-grandson of Amariah, whose father was King Hezekiah". This is a list of Zephaniah's ancestors.

#### Zephaniah 1:2

##### General Information:

Zephaniah writes in poetry from this verse until the end of the book.

##### I will utterly destroy everything from off the surface of the earth

The words "everything" and "will cut off man" are deliberate exaggerations by Yahweh to express his anger at the people's sin. Yahweh will destroy neither sinners who repent nor all living things.

##### destroy everything from off the surface of the earth

"destroy everything that is on the entire earth"

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

"this is what I, Yahweh, have declared". Yahweh speaks of himself to express the certainty of what he is declaring.

#### Zephaniah 1:3

##### I will cut off man from the surface of the earth

"I will kill all people." This is a hyperbole, as in verse 2.

##### men and animals

"people and animals"

##### the ruins

Possible meanings are: the piles of rubble that will remain after the judgment or the idols that Yahweh destroyed.

##### cut off

"destroy"

#### Zephaniah 1:4

##### General Information:

Verses 1:4-16 describe Yahweh's judgment on the people of Judah.

##### I will reach out with my hand over Judah

"I will punish Judah"

##### I will cut off every remnant ... the names of the idolatrous people among the priests

"I will cut off every remnant ... I will cut off the names of the idolatrous people among the priests"

##### cut off ... the names of the idolatrous people among the priests

"cause everyone ... to forget the priests who are idolatrous"

#### Zephaniah 1:5

##### the people who on the housetops ... the people who worship and swear

"I will cut off the people who on the housetops ... I will cut off the people who worship and swear"

##### by their king

See the footnote about the possible rendering of this as "by Milcom."

##### worship the heavenly bodies

"worship the sun, moon, and stars"

#### Zephaniah 1:6

##### following Yahweh

"obeying Yahweh"

##### neither seek Yahweh nor ask for his guidance

"do not think about Yahweh or ask him to guide them"

#### Zephaniah 1:7

##### General Information:

Verses 1:2-18 refer to Yahweh's judgment. Verses 1:4-16 describe Yahweh's judgment on the people of Judah.

##### Be silent

"Be shocked"

##### Yahweh has prepared the sacrifice and set apart his guests

"Yahweh has prepared the people of Judah as a sacrifice, and invited the enemy nations as his guests"

##### set apart his guests

Here "set apart" means he has invited them.

#### Zephaniah 1:8

##### General Information:

In verses 1:8-13, Yahweh is speaking. He alternates between using first person and speaking about himself in the third person.

##### It will come about

This marks the point at which Yahweh's judgment of Judah will begin.

##### everyone dressed in foreign clothes

"everyone who worships foreign gods". This phrase suggests that the Israelites wore clothes similar to the foreigners to show sympathy to their customs and to the worship of their foreign gods.

#### Zephaniah 1:9

##### On that day

"On the day of Yahweh"

##### all those who leap over the threshold

Possible meanings are: this is a reference to people who did not step on thresholds as part of their worship of a god called Dagan or people who leapt up onto platforms to worship pagan idols or royal officials who climbed the steps to the throne.

##### fill their master's house with violence and deceit

"those who do violent things and tell lies in the temples of their gods"

#### Zephaniah 1:10

##### General Information:

Zephaniah 1:2-18 refers to Yahweh's judgment. Zephaniah 1:4-16 describes Yahweh's judgment on the people of Judah. In Zephaniah 1:8-13, Yahweh is speaking. He alternates between using first person and speaking about himself in the third person.

##### Fish Gate

The Fish Gate was one of the gates in the Jerusalem city wall.

##### wailing from the Second District

"Mourn loudly from the Second District." The Second District was a newer part of Jerusalem.

##### a great crashing sound

"a loud sound of buildings collapsing"

##### from the hills

This refers to the hills surrounding Jerusalem.

#### Zephaniah 1:11

##### people of Canaan

"merchants"

##### those who weigh out silver

This refers to merchants. Before coins were used, people weighed out silver or gold as payment for things they bought.

##### cut off

"destroyed"

#### Zephaniah 1:12

##### It will come about at that time

This marks the time when Jerusalem has been destroyed by the enemies.

##### I will search Jerusalem with lamps

Yahweh speaks of knowing about all people of Jerusalem as if he had searched for them with lamps.

##### settled into their wine

They feel safe from trouble.

##### say in their heart, 'Yahweh will not do anything, either good or evil.'

"say in their heart that Yahweh will not do anything, either good or evil.

##### say in their heart

This means that they think to themselves.

##### Yahweh will not do anything, either good or evil

"Yahweh will not do anything at all"

#### Zephaniah 1:13

##### an abandoned devastation

"destroyed and abandoned"

#### Zephaniah 1:14

##### near, near and hurrying quickly

"close and will be here soon"

##### the day of Yahweh

See how you translated this phrase in Zephaniah 1:7.

##### a warrior crying bitterly

Possible meanings are: a soldier crying in despair or a soldier's battle cry.

#### Zephaniah 1:15

##### That day ... a day

These phrases refer back to the "day of Yahweh" in Zephaniah 1:14.

##### a day of distress and anguish

"a day when people feel terrible distress"

##### a day of storm and devastation

"a day of devastating judgment"

##### a day of darkness and gloom

"a day of terrible judgment"

##### a day of clouds and thick darkness

"a day full of dark storm clouds". These phrases refer to divine judgment.

#### Zephaniah 1:16

##### a day of rams' horns and alarms

"a day when people sound the alarm for battle"

##### fortified cities and the high battlements

"well fortified cities". These phrases refer to military strongholds.

#### Zephaniah 1:17

##### they will walk about like blind men

"they will walk around as confused and dazed as blind men"

##### Their blood will be poured out like dust

"Their enemies will pour out their blood and consider it to be worthless"

##### their inner parts like dung

"their enemies will cut open their bodies and leave them to rot like dung"

#### Zephaniah 1:18

##### the fire of his jealousy

"his jealousy is as intense as a fire"

##### all the inhabitants of the earth

"all the wicked people who live on the earth"

## Chapter 2

#### Zephaniah 2:1

##### General Information:

In 2:1-3, Yahweh continues to speak to Judah, and tells them to repent. In this chapter, because the prophesied destruction is so complete, it is unclear whether these prophecies concern the time near the fall of Jerusalem or the day of the Lord. It is possible that the prophecies reference more than one period of time. The ULB sets poetry (2:1-9, 12-15) farther to the right to show that it is poetry.

##### Rally yourselves together and gather

"Gather yourselves together"

#### Zephaniah 2:2

##### before the decree takes effect

"before Yahweh punishes you"

##### that day

This phrase relates to the "day of Yahweh." Translate as you did in Zephaniah 1:9.

##### that day passes like the chaff

"that day passes as quickly as chaff blown by the wind"

##### before the fierce anger of Yahweh's wrath comes upon you, before the day of Yahweh's wrath comes upon you

The prophet repeats the same phrase to emphasize how terrible Yahweh's judgment will be and the urgency with which the people must repent.

##### Yahweh's wrath

"Yahweh's punishment"

#### Zephaniah 2:3

##### Seek Yahweh

Seeking Yahweh represents asking God for help or thinking about God and obeying him.

##### Seek righteousness. Seek humility

"Try to do what is right and to be humble"

##### you will be protected in the day of Yahweh's wrath

"Yahweh will protect you in the day of his wrath"

#### Zephaniah 2:4

##### General Information:

In 2:4-15, Yahweh announces his judgment on the nations that surround Judah.

##### Gaza ... Ashkelon ... Ashdod ... Ekron

These were the four major Philistine cities of that day.

##### will be abandoned ... will turn into a devastation

These two phrases emphasize the complete destruction of these cities.

##### They will drive out Ashdod at noon

Here "They" refers to the enemies of the Philistines. Possible meanings for "at noon" are: the enemies will defeat Ashdod before noon or the enemies will attack Ashdod at noon while the people are resting and unaware.

##### they will uproot Ekron

"they will take the people of Ekron away as if uprooting a tree"

#### Zephaniah 2:5

##### the inhabitants of the seacoast, the nation of the Kerethites

The first phrase explains where the Kerethites lived.

##### the seacoast

the coast of the Mediterranean Sea

##### Canaan, land of the Philistines

The Philistines were one of several people groups who lived in Canaan.

##### until no inhabitant remains

"until every inhabitant is dead"

#### Zephaniah 2:6

##### So the seacoast will become pastures for shepherds and for sheep pens

This probably means that the Philistine cities are gone, and only open fields remain. However, the Hebrew meaning is unclear and is sometimes translated differently by modern versions.

##### the seacoast

the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. See how you translated this in Zephaniah 2:5.

##### sheep pens

A sheep pen is a small area surrounded by a fence to keep the sheep together.

#### Zephaniah 2:7

##### The coastal region

the land near the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

##### Their people

"The people of Judah"

##### lie down

"lie down to sleep"

##### reverse their captivity

"cause them to live well again" or "restore their fortunes"

#### Zephaniah 2:8

##### General Information:

In 2:4-15, Yahweh announces his judgment on the nations that surround Judah.

##### violated their borders

This refers to crossing over into Judah's territory in order to attack them.

#### Zephaniah 2:9

##### as I live

"I solemnly swear"

##### this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel

"this is what I, Yahweh of hosts, God of Israel, have declared". Yahweh speaks of himself to express the certainty of what he is declaring.

##### like Sodom ... like Gomorrah

"completely destroyed like Sodom ... like Gomorrah". These two cities were so wicked that God completely destroyed them with fire from heaven.

##### a place of nettles and a salt pit

"a place with thorns and a salt pit." This describes a barren, useless land.

##### the remnant of my people ... the remainder of my nation

These two phrases refer to the Israelites that survived Yahweh's punishment.

#### Zephaniah 2:12

##### You Cushites also will be pierced by my sword

"I will kill you people of Cush in battle"

#### Zephaniah 2:13

##### God's hand

"God's power"

##### an abandoned devastation

"ruined and deserted"

##### as dry as the desert

This means it will be so dry that nothing will grow there.

#### Zephaniah 2:14

##### every animal of the nations

"every kind of animal"

##### the screech owl

"hedgehog"

##### in the top of her columns

When buildings were destroyed and fell down, the columns used for decoration and support would often remain standing.

##### A call will sing out from the windows

"A call will be heard from the windows"

##### beams

Beams are long and thick pieces of wood that are used to keep a building stable.

#### Zephaniah 2:15

##### General Information:

In 2:4-15, Yahweh announces his judgment on the nations that surround Judah.

##### said in her heart

The city is spoken of as if it were a person that could speak. It represents the people who live in that city.

##### I am, and nothing is my equal

"I am the greatest city, and no other city is equal to me"

##### a horror

"a horrible place to see"

##### hiss and shake his fist

A hiss is an angry sound and indicates extreme anger of the people toward Nineveh.

## Chapter 3

#### Zephaniah 3:1

##### General Information:

In verses 3:1-5, Zephaniah speaks Yahweh's message of judgment to the sinful people of Jerusalem. The city represents the people who live within it. In this chapter, because the prophesied destruction is so complete, it is unclear whether these prophecies concern the time near the fall of Jerusalem or the day of the Lord. It is possible that the prophecies reference more than one period of time. The ULB sets poetry (3:1-20) farther to the right to show that it is poetry.

##### the rebellious city

"the people of the city who have rebelled against God"

##### The violent city is defiled

"The people of the city have committed violence and so I consider them unclean"

#### Zephaniah 3:2

##### She has not listened to the voice of God

"She has not obeyed what God has said to her"

#### Zephaniah 3:3

##### General Information:

In verses 3:1-5, Zephaniah speaks Yahweh's message of judgment to the sinful people of Jerusalem. The city represents the people who live within it. To make this clear, it may be helpful to replace the singular "she" and "her" with the plural "they" and "their"

##### Her princes are roaring lions in her midst

"Jerusalem's royalty are as greedy as roaring lions". The princes of Jerusalem are spoken of as if they were roaring lions who were keeping the prey for themselves.

##### roaring lions

"mighty"

##### Her judges are evening wolves who leave nothing to be gnawed upon in the morning

"Her judges are as greedy as hungry wolves that leave nothing for anyone else"

#### Zephaniah 3:4

##### Her prophets are insolent and treasonous men

"Her prophets do not listen to anyone and cannot be trusted"

##### have profaned what is holy

"have treated holy things with disrespect"

##### have done violence to the law

"have broken the law"

#### Zephaniah 3:5

##### Yahweh is righteous ... He can do no wrong

These two phrases emphasize Yahweh's righteousness even among the wicked people in Jerusalem.

##### in her midst

"among them"

##### Morning by morning

"Every day" or "Day after day"

##### he will dispense his justice

"he will treat people justly"

##### It will not be hidden in the light

"His justice is clearly shown to all"

##### the unjust knows no shame

"unjust people know no shame"

##### knows no shame

"is not ashamed"

#### Zephaniah 3:6

##### General Information:

In verses 3:6-7, Yahweh rebukes the people of Jerusalem because they did not learn from how he judged other sinful cities. It may be helpful to add "Yahweh says this:" to the beginning of verse 6.

##### I have made their streets ruins, so that no one passes over them. Their cities are destroyed so that there is no man inhabiting them

These two sentences emphasize the complete destruction of the cities.

##### no one passes over them

"no one walks on them"

##### there is no man inhabiting them

"all the people are dead"

#### Zephaniah 3:7

##### I said, 'Surely you will fear me ... I have planned to do to you.'

"I thought they would surely fear me and accept correction so that they would not be cut off from their homes by all that I have planned to do to them"

##### and do not be cut off from your homes

"so that I will not remove you from your homes"

##### by corrupting all their deeds

"by doing deeds that were corrupt"

#### Zephaniah 3:8

##### General Information:

In this verse, Yahweh warns that he will judge all nations.

##### wait for me ... until the day

This phrase implies that they are waiting for judgment.

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

"this is what I, Yahweh, have declared". Yahweh speaks of himself to express the certainty of what he is declaring.

##### I rise up to seize the prey

"I will rise up and destroy them as an animal seizes its prey"

##### to assemble the nations, to gather the kingdoms

These two phrases emphasize that Yahweh will judge all of the nations.

##### my anger—all of my burning wrath

"my very fierce wrath"

##### in the fire of my jealousy all the earth will be consumed

"the fire of my jealousy will devour all the land"

##### in the fire of my jealousy ... consumed

"my jealousy will consume all the earth as a fire"

#### Zephaniah 3:9

##### General Information:

In verses 3:9-10, Yahweh says that he will renew the Gentiles after the judgment.

##### I will purify the lips of the peoples

"I will cause the peoples to speak what is right"

##### call upon the name of Yahweh

"worship Yahweh"

##### serve him shoulder to shoulder

"side by side"

#### Zephaniah 3:10

##### beyond the river of Cush

This may refer to the area where Sudan is located today.

#### Zephaniah 3:11

##### General Information:

In verses 3:11-13, Yahweh encourages the remnant of Israel who survive the judgment.

##### In that day ... at that time

"When that happens ... at that time." These phrases refer to the time of peace and restoration that immediately follows the day of Yahweh.

##### will not be put to shame for all your deeds

"will no longer be ashamed of all your deeds"

##### those who boasted in your pride

"all the people who celebrated the things you were proud of"

#### Zephaniah 3:12

##### they will find refuge in the name of Yahweh

"they will come to Yahweh and he will help them"

#### Zephaniah 3:13

##### The remnant of Israel

"lowly and poor people"

##### commit injustice

"do unjust things"

##### no deceitful tongue will be found in their mouth

"none of them will speak deceitful things" or "they will not say deceitful things"

##### they will graze and lie down

Yahweh speaks of his provision for the people of Israel as if they are a flock of sheep that grazes and rests in safety.

#### Zephaniah 3:14

##### General Information:

In verses 3:14-20, Zephaniah tells the remnant of Israel who survived the judgment that they should rejoice.

##### daughter of Zion ... daughter of Jerusalem

Here "daughter" refers to all the people who lived in the city.

##### Be glad and rejoice

"Be very happy"

##### with all your heart

"with all your inner being"

#### Zephaniah 3:15

##### Yahweh has taken away your punishment

"Yahweh has stopped punishing you"

##### You will never again fear evil

"You will no longer be afraid that people will harm you"

#### Zephaniah 3:16

##### In that day

"At that time" or "When this happens". This refers to the time of peace and restoration that immediately follows the day of Yahweh.

##### say to Jerusalem ... Zion

"say to the people of Jerusalem ... people of Zion"

##### Do not let your hands become weak

"Do not allow yourself to become weak" or "Do not become discouraged and so stop working"

#### Zephaniah 3:17

##### General Information:

In verses 3:14-20, Zephaniah tells the remnant of Israel who survived the judgment that they should rejoice.

##### a mighty one to save you

"he is a mighty warrior and will give you victory". Yahweh is spoken of as a mighty warrior.

##### He will celebrate over you with joy ... he will be glad over you with a shout for joy

These two phrases emphasize Yahweh's joy that the remnant is restored to him.

##### he will be silent over you in his love

"he will quiet you by his love for you" or "he will renew you because he loves you."

##### a shout for joy

"a song of joy" or "joyful singing"

#### Zephaniah 3:18

##### no longer bear any shame for it

"no longer be ashamed because of it"

#### Zephaniah 3:19

##### General Information:

In verses 3:19-20, Yahweh speaks directly to the remnant of Israel who survived the judgment and tells them that they should rejoice.

##### Behold

"Look" or "Pay attention"

##### I am about to deal with all your oppressors

"I will severely punish all those who oppressed you"

##### I will rescue the lame and gather up the outcast

"I will rescue and bring together the remnant of Israel who are like lame and outcast sheep"

##### the lame

This refers to people or animals that cannot walk.

##### I will make them as praise

"I will make them to be objects of praise" or "I will make them to be praised by others"

##### I will change their shame into renown

"I will cause them to no longer be ashamed, but for people to respect them"

#### Zephaniah 3:20

##### At that time I will lead you; at that time I will gather you together

"At that time I will gather you together and lead you home". This implies that Yahweh will bring the exiled people back to their homeland.

##### reverse your captivity

"cause them to live well again" or "restore their fortunes". Yahweh will give them back what they had before they went into captivity. See Zephaniah 2:7.

## Chapter 1

#### Haggai 1:1

##### In the second year of Darius the king

"In the second year of the reign of Darius the king"

##### Darius ... Haggai ... Zerubbabel ... Shealtiel ... Joshua ... Jozadak

These are all names of men.

##### in the sixth month, on the first day of the month

"on the first day of the sixth month." This is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the middle of August on Western calendars.

##### the word of Yahweh came

"Yawheh spoke this message". This introduces a special message from God.

##### Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament.

##### by the hand of Haggai

"through Haggai". Yahweh used Haggai as the agent to deliver his command

#### Haggai 1:2

##### the house of Yahweh

the temple

#### Haggai 1:3

##### the word of Yahweh came

"Yawheh spoke this message". This introduces a special message from God.

##### by the hand of Haggai

"through Haggai"

#### Haggai 1:4

##### Is it a time for you ... ruined?

"Now is not the time for you ... ruined". Yahweh is rebuking the people.

##### this house

the temple of Yahweh

#### Haggai 1:5

##### Consider your ways

"Think carefully about how you are living"

#### Haggai 1:6

##### General Information

Scripture frequently uses the imagery of farming in reference to spiritual matters. The statement "You have sown much seed, but bring in little harvest" indicates that they had done a lot but have very little to show for it. The ULB sets poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text.

##### bring in little

"harvest little" or "bring in only a small crop"

##### but cannot get drunk

There is not enough wine to satisfy the people's thirst and not nearly enough for drunkenness. The reader should understand that the text is not calling drunkenness a good thing.

##### the wage earner earns money only to put it into a bag full of holes

"the money the worker earns is gone before he finishes buying everything he needs".

#### Haggai 1:8

##### bring timber

This represents only a part of what they needed to build the temple.

#### Haggai 1:9

##### behold

"listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

##### I blew it away

"I made sure there was nothing there for you to find"

##### declares Yahweh of hosts

"this is what I, Yahweh, have declared". Yahweh speaks of himself to express the certainty of what he is declaring.

##### runs to his own house

"is always working to build his own house." This emphasizes that the people consider building their own houses the most important thing they can do.

#### Haggai 1:10

##### the heavens withhold the dew from you

"the sky does not allow the dew to fall" or "no dew forms"

##### the earth withholds its produce

"the earth does not allow food you grow" or "no food grows"

#### Haggai 1:11

##### I have summoned a drought upon the land

"I have kept the rain from falling on the land"

##### upon the new wine, upon the oil

"Wine" and "oil" are metonyms for grapes and olives.

##### what the earth sends forth

"what the earth produces" or "all kinds of food"

##### all the labor of your hands

"everything you have worked hard to make"

#### Haggai 1:12

##### Zerubbabel ... Shealtiel ... Joshua ... Jozadak ... Haggai

See how you translated these men's names in Haggai 1:1.

##### obeyed the voice of Yahweh ... the words of Haggai

"obeyed Yahweh and Haggai"

##### the people feared the face of Yahweh

"the people feared Yahweh" or "the people were afraid to be in Yahweh's presence"

#### Haggai 1:13

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

"this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

#### Haggai 1:14

##### Yahweh stirred up the spirit of the governor of Judah, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and the spirit of the high priest Joshua son of Jozadak, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people

"Yahweh made the governor of Judah, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and the high priest Joshua son of Jozadak, and all the remnant of the people want to act"

##### remnant

people who were still alive after being captive in Babylon and had returned to Jerusalem

#### Haggai 1:15

##### in the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month

This is just 23 days after he received the vision. This is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-fourth day is near the middle of September on Western calendars.

##### the second year of Darius the king

"second year of the reign of Darius the king"

## Chapter 2

#### Haggai 2:1

##### In the seventh month on the twenty-first day of the month

This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-first day is near the middle of October on Western calendars.

##### the word of Yahweh came

"Yawheh spoke this message". This introduces a special message from God. See how you translated this in Haggai 1:1.

##### by the hand of Haggai

"through Haggai". Yahweh used Haggai as the agent to deliver his command. See Haggai 1:1.

##### Haggai

See how you translated this man's name in Haggai 1:1.

#### Haggai 2:2

##### Speak to the governor

This is a urgent exhortation.

##### Zerubbabel ... Shealtiel ... Joshua ... Jozadak

See how you translated these men's names in Haggai 1:1.

#### Haggai 2:3

##### General Information:

Yahweh speaks to the people about the new temple they are building. They are building it on the same place their ancestors built the former temple, which Nebuchadnezzar completely destroyed. This new temple is much smaller than the former temple.

##### Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory?

"I want those among you who saw this house in its former glory to pay attention". Yahweh speaks of the new temple as if it were the same building as the old temple. He is telling those who had seen the former temple to pay attention.

##### How do you see it now?

"I know what you think of this new temple". Yahweh speaks of the new temple as if it were the same building as the old temple.

##### Is it not like nothing in your eyes?

"I know that you think it is not important at all". Yahweh is telling the people that he understands that they are disappointed because the new temple is so small.

#### Haggai 2:4

##### Now, be strong

"From now on, be strong"

##### this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

"this is what I, Yahweh of hosts, have declared". Yahweh speaks of himself to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See Haggai 1:9.

#### Haggai 2:5

##### my Spirit stands among you

"my Spirit lives among you" or "my Spirit will fight against your enemies" as a helper, or "my Spirit is a witness to you". This testifies that God is still with them.

#### Haggai 2:6

##### I will ... shake the heavens ... the earth ... the sea ... the dry land

The words "I will shake the earth" could be translated as "I will cause an earthquake," and that earthquake would shake "the sea" as well as "the dry land". Yahweh speaks as if they were solid objects that he could shake.

##### shake

Use the word for pushing trees back and forth to get fruit or other objects to fall from them.

#### Haggai 2:7

##### I will shake every nation

The idea that begins with the words "I will ... shake the heavens" in verse 6 ends here.

##### I will fill this house with glory

"I will make this house very beautiful" or "I will have people bring many beautiful things into this house"

#### Haggai 2:8

##### this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

"this is what I, Yahweh of hosts, have declared". Yahweh speaks of himself to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See Haggai 1:9.

#### Haggai 2:10

##### On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month

This is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-fourth day is near the middle of December on Western calendars.

##### in the second year of Darius

"in the second year of the reign of Darius"

##### Darius ... Haggai

See how you translated these men's names in Haggai 1:1.

##### the word of Yahweh came

"Yawheh spoke this message". This introduces a special message from God. See Haggai 1:1.

#### Haggai 2:11

##### Ask the priests

This is an urgent exhortation.

#### Haggai 2:12

##### meat that is set apart to Yahweh ... holy

"holy meat ... holy"

#### Haggai 2:13

##### because of death

"because he has touched a dead body". In this chapter, Haggai refers to issues related to ritual cleanliness. While the Jews were not unclean by nature as the Gentiles were, their actions made them unclean.

#### Haggai 2:14

##### So Haggai answered and said, "So it is ... is unclean

"So Haggai answered and told them Yahweh's words: 'So it is ... is unclean"

##### So it is with this people and this nation before me

"I look at this people and this nation the same way." Yahweh reminds the priests that a clean thing that touches an unclean thing becomes unclean. He then reminds them that he thinks of them as unclean because they have been worshiping idols, and so everything they touch and make becomes unclean.

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

"this is what I, Yahweh, have declared". Yahweh speaks of himself to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See Haggai 1:9.

##### the work of their hands

"everything they have done" or "everything they make with their hands"

#### Haggai 2:15

##### think in your minds

This is an urgent exhortation.

##### Before stone was placed upon stone in the temple

"Before you laid the first stones for the temple"

#### Haggai 2:16

##### twenty measures

"20 measures". A "measure" is an unknown amount.

##### fifty measures

"50 measures"

#### Haggai 2:17

##### all the work of your hands

"everything you made" or "your crops"

#### Haggai 2:18

##### Consider from this day forward

This is an urgent exhortation.

##### the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month

This is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-fourth day is near the middle of December on Western calendars. See Haggai 2:10.

##### the day that the foundation of the temple of Yahweh was laid

"the day that you laid the foundation of Yahweh's temple"

#### Haggai 2:19

##### Is there still seed in the storehouse?

"You can see that there is no seed in the storehouse". Yahweh is preparing the people for the promise he is about to give them.

##### The vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree

"Your grape vines, fig trees, pomegranate trees, and olive trees"

##### the pomegranate

"the pomegranate tree". This is a type of sweet fruit.

##### have not borne

"have not produced fruit"

#### Haggai 2:20

##### the word of Yahweh came

"Yawheh spoke this message"

##### on the twenty-fourth day of the month

"on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month"

#### Haggai 2:21

##### General Information

The ULB sets poetry (2:21-23) farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry.

##### Zerubbabel

See how you translated this man's name in Haggai 1:1.

##### I will shake the heavens and the earth

See how these ideas are translated in Haggai 2:6.

##### the heavens and the earth

"the whole universe" or "everything that exists"

#### Haggai 2:22

##### I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms

"I will take kings off of their thrones"

##### the throne of kingdoms

"government ruled by kings"

##### I will ... destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations

"I will make it so the kingdoms of the nations that are Israel's enemies are no longer strong"

##### each one because of his brother's sword

"each one because his brother has killed him"

#### Haggai 2:23

##### this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

"this is what I, Yahweh of hosts, have declared". See how you translated this in Haggai 1:9.

##### Zerubbabel ... Shealtiel

See how you translated these men's names in Haggai 1:1.

##### I will make you like a signet ring

Kings used a signet ring to seal documents to show that they truly had his authority. Zerubbabel would have authority from Yahweh because he would speak Yahweh's words.

## Chapter 1

#### Zechariah 1:1

##### In the eighth month

This is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the last part of October and the first part of November on Western calendars.

##### the second year of Darius' reign

"the second year of the reign of Darius the king" or "the second year since Darius became king"

##### the word of Yahweh came

"Yahweh gave a message" or "Yawheh spoke this message"

##### Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament.

##### Berekiah ... Iddo

These are the names of men.

#### Zechariah 1:2

##### exceedingly angry with your fathers

"very angry with your forefathers"

#### Zechariah 1:3

##### this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

"this is what Yahweh of hosts has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh of hosts, have declared"

#### Zechariah 1:4

##### Turn from your evil ways and wicked practices

"Stop doing all of your wicked actions"

#### Zechariah 1:5

##### Your fathers—where are they? And the prophets—do they live forever?

"Think about your fathers—where are they now? Think about the prophets—do they live forever?"

##### Your fathers—where are they?

"Your fathers—you know where they are." or "Your fathers have all died."

##### And the prophets—do they live forever?

"And the prophets—they do not live for ever." or "And the prophets do not live forever."

#### Zechariah 1:6

##### But my words and my decrees that I commanded my servants the prophets, have they not overtaken your fathers?

"But my words and my decrees that I commanded my servants the prophets have overtaken your fathers." or "But your fathers have suffered the consequences for disobeying my words and my decrees that I commanded my servants the prophets to tell them."

#### Zechariah 1:7

##### the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month of Shebat

"Shebat" is the eleventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The twenty-fourth day is near the middle of February on Western calendars.

##### the prophet, saying,

Here the word “saying” introduces what Zechariah was about to say. The word “saying” can be removed if it may make your readers think that Yahweh is about to speak. Alternate translation: “the prophet.”

#### Zechariah 1:8

##### look

The word "look" here shows that Zechariah was surprised by what he saw.

##### myrtle trees

a kind of small tree with colorful flowers

#### Zechariah 1:9

##### I said, "What are these things, Lord?" Then the angel who talked with me

Here Zechariah speaks to an unidentified angel. This is not the same as the "man" who was "riding on a red horse."

##### What are these things, Lord?

"What are these things, sir?" Here the word "Lord" is a form of polite address.

#### Zechariah 1:10

##### the man who stood among the myrtle trees

This refers to the man who "was riding on a red horse" in Zechariah 1:8.

#### Zechariah 1:11

##### the angel of Yahweh who stood among the myrtle trees

This phrase refers to the man who stood among the myrtle trees in Zechariah 1:10.

##### They answered ... they said

The word "they" refers either to the red, reddish-brown, and white horses or to the horses' riders.

##### all the earth sits still and is at rest

"all the earth is peaceful and resting" or "the nations of the earth have peace and rest"

#### Zechariah 1:12

##### to Jerusalem and to the cities of Judah

"to the people of Jerusalem and the cities of Judah"

#### Zechariah 1:13

##### with good words, words of comfort

"with good, comforting words"

#### Zechariah 1:14

##### I have been jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy

"I have been extremely jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion." Yahweh does not want anyone to harm Jerusalem or try to have Jerusalem love anything more than Yahweh.

##### jealous

This word refers to Yahweh's strong desire to protect his people.

##### Jerusalem ... Zion

"the people of Jerusalem ... the people of Zion"

#### Zechariah 1:15

##### I am very angry with the nations that are at ease

"I am very angry with the nations that enjoy peace and security"

##### I was only a little angry with them

"I was only a little angry with the people of Jerusalem"

##### they made the disaster worse

"the nations that are at ease made the disaster worse." This means that although Yahweh used these nations to punish Jerusalem, they did more harm to Jerusalem than what Yahweh had intended for them to do.

#### Zechariah 1:16

##### I have returned to Jerusalem with mercies

"I will once again show mercy towards Jerusalem"

##### My house will be built within her

"The people will build my temple in Jerusalem"

##### the measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem

"builders will stretch out their measuring lines over Jerusalem" or "the people will rebuild Jerusalem"

#### Zechariah 1:17

##### Again call out, saying

The angel who was speaking to Zechariah says these words.

##### My cities will once again overflow with goodness

"My cities will once again be prosperous" or "The people in the cities of Judah will once again be prosperous"

##### Yahweh will again comfort Zion

"Yahweh will again comfort the people in Zion"

#### Zechariah 1:18

##### I lifted up my eyes

"I looked up"

#### Zechariah 1:19

##### These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem

"These horns represent the nations that have scattered the people of Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem". Horns were often used as a symbol for military power. Here they symbolize the powerful nations that had conquered the kingdoms of Israel.

#### Zechariah 1:20

##### four craftsmen

"blacksmiths" or "metalworkers"

#### Zechariah 1:21

##### these people

This refers to the four craftsmen.

##### These are the horns that scattered Judah

"These horns represent the nations that scattered the people of Judah". See Zechariah 1:19.

##### so that no man would lift up his head

"and caused them to suffer greatly"

##### to cast down the horns of the nations that lifted up a horn against the land of Judah

"to destroy the power of the nations who used their military might against the land of Judah"

##### to cast down the horns of the nations that lifted up a horn

"to cast down the horns that the nations had lifted up"

## Chapter 2

#### Zechariah 2:1

##### I lifted up my eyes

"I looked up". This book contains a number of visions given to Zechariah so the images are not ones Zechariah actually saw but were given to him in a vision or dream. It is important for each of these visions to keep their meanings and not be interpreted to mean any specific thing. Please be careful to translate each of the terms in your language.

##### measuring line

a rope with a certain length that a person would use to measure buildings or large sections of land

#### Zechariah 2:2

##### So he said to me

"So the man with the measuring line said to me"

#### Zechariah 2:3

##### another angel went out to meet him

This angel is a new participant who has not appeared before this verse.

#### Zechariah 2:4

##### The second angel said to him

"The second angel said to the angel who had talked with me". This chapter is introduced in prose with imagery used in the rest of the chapter to portray Zechariah's third vision about measuring lines given by the Lord.

##### Jerusalem will sit in the open country ... livestock within her

"Jerusalem will not have walls around it ... livestock within the city". There will be so many inhabitants in the city that it will be too large to have walls around it.

#### Zechariah 2:5

##### I ... will become for her a wall of fire around her

"I ... will protect the city, like a wall of fire around it"

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

"this is what I, Yahweh, have declared". Yahweh speaks of himself to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See Zechariah 1:4. This phrase is used several times in this chapter.

#### Zechariah 2:6

##### Up! Up!

"Run! Run!" or "Hurry! Hurry!"

#### Zechariah 2:7

##### you who live with the daughter of Babylon

"you who live in Babylon"

#### Zechariah 2:8

##### General Information:

Zechariah begins to speak and tells how Yahweh is sending him to judge the nations who have plundered Jerusalem.

##### for whoever touches you

"for whoever harms you"

#### Zechariah 2:9

##### I myself will shake my hand over them

"I myself will fight against them" or "I myself will attack them"

##### they will be plunder for their slaves

"their slaves will plunder them"

#### Zechariah 2:10

##### Sing for joy and be glad, daughter of Zion

"Sing for joy and be glad, Zion" or "Sing for joy and be glad, people of Zion". "Zion" is the same as "Jerusalem."

#### Zechariah 2:11

##### great nations will join themselves to Yahweh

"the people of great nations will become the people of Yahweh"

##### in that day

"at that time"

#### Zechariah 2:12

##### Yahweh will inherit Judah as his rightful possession

"Yahweh will claim Judah as his rightful possession"

#### Zechariah 2:13

##### all flesh

"all people"

##### he has been roused

"he is coming". It is implied this refers to Yahweh returning to Jerusalem.

##### from out of his holy place

"from his holy place in heaven"

## Chapter 3

#### Zechariah 3:1

##### General Information:

The chapter seems to refer to a particular person, Joshua the high priest. However, little is known about him. The chapter is introduced in prose and shares the fourth vision, which is the priest in dirty clothes. It is important for each of these visions to keep their meanings and not be interpreted to mean any specific thing.

##### Satan was standing at his right hand to accuse him of sin

"Satan was standing at Joshua's right side, ready to accuse Joshua of sin"

#### Zechariah 3:2

##### Is this not a brand pulled from the fire?

"Joshua is a brand pulled from the fire."

##### a brand pulled from the fire

The angel of Yahweh speaks of Joshua as if he were a piece of wood that someone pulls from a fire before the wood is completely burned.

#### Zechariah 3:3

##### Joshua was dressed in filthy garments

In this vision "filthy garments" are symbolic of sinfulness.

#### Zechariah 3:4

##### those who stood before him

The word "him" refers to the angel. The phrase refers to other angels who were present.

##### Look

"Pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"

##### I have caused your iniquity to pass from you

"I have removed your iniquity from you". By removing his garments, the angel removed Joshua's iniquity.

##### dress you in official robes

The phrase "official robes" refers to righteousness. This refers to clothes that people wear only for special occasions.

#### Zechariah 3:5

##### Let them put

The word "them" refers to the other angels who were present.

##### turban

a long piece of cloth wrapped around the head

#### Zechariah 3:6

##### solemnly commanded Joshua

"commanded Joshua in a very serious manner"

#### Zechariah 3:7

##### If you will walk in my ways, and if you will keep my commandments

"If you will obey me and keep my commandments".

##### you will govern my house and guard my courts

"you will have authority over my temple and its courtyards"

##### to go and come among these who stand before me

"to come before me as these who stand here do"

#### Zechariah 3:8

##### your companions who live with you

"the other priests who live with you"

##### For these men are a sign

Here the word "sign" refers to something that communicates a special meaning to those who see it. Yahweh speaks of the priests serving in the temple as being this sign that shows that Yahweh will bring his servant.

##### my servant the Branch

The word "Branch" refers to a Messianic figure that would serve as king over Yahweh's people. Yahweh speaks of this person as if he were a branch that grows out from a tree. Since the word "Branch" is a title, it should be translated with an equivalent word in your language.

#### Zechariah 3:9

##### the stone that I have set before Joshua

The word "stone" likely refers to a precious stone or jewel.

##### There are seven eyes on this single stone

"There are seven sides on this single stone"

##### engrave

"carve"

##### I will remove the iniquity from this land in one day

"I will forgive the iniquity of the people who live in this land in one day"

#### Zechariah 3:10

##### each man will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and under his fig tree

"because they will be at peace, each person will invite his neighbor to come and sit under his vine and his fig tree"

## Chapter 4

#### Zechariah 4:1

##### General Information

This chapter is written mainly in prose about the fifth vision, which is about the golden lampstand olive trees and shows a conversation between Zechariah and the angel of Yahweh. It is important for each of these visions to keep their meanings and not be interpreted to mean any specific thing.

##### roused me like a man roused from his sleep

"caused me to become more alert like a man awakened from his sleep"

#### Zechariah 4:2

##### lamp wicks

the parts of a lamp that are lit on fire

#### Zechariah 4:3

##### the left side

"the left side of the bowl"

#### Zechariah 4:5

##### Do you not know what these things mean?

"Surely you know what these things mean."

#### Zechariah 4:6

##### Not by might nor by power

"You will not succeed by might nor by power"

##### Not by might nor by power

"Certainly not by your own strength" or "Not by military strength nor by your own power". This emphasizes the greatness of Zerubbabel's strength and physical ability.

#### Zechariah 4:7

##### What are you, great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain

"You are nothing, great mountain! Zerubbabel will cause you to become a plain" or "Although obstacles may appear as large as mountains, Zerubbabel will overcome them as easily as one walks upon level ground"

##### he will bring out the top stone

"he will bring out the top stone of the temple" or "he will complete the construction of the temple". The top stone is the last stone placed when building something.

##### to shouts of 'Grace! Grace to it!'

"while people shout, 'May God bless it! May God bless it!'" or "while people shout, 'Beautiful! It is beautiful!'"

#### Zechariah 4:8

##### The word of Yahweh came to me, saying

"Yahweh spoke this message to me". This introduces a special message from God.

#### Zechariah 4:9

##### The hands of Zerubbabel have laid ... his hands will bring it to completion

"Zerubbabel has laid ... he will bring it to completion"

##### the foundation of this house

"the foundation of this temple"

#### Zechariah 4:10

##### Who has despised the day of small things? These people will rejoice

"Those who have despised the day of small things will rejoice"

##### the day of small things

"the time when progress was slow". This refers to when the people were building the temple.

##### plumb stone

This is an instrument made with a heavy object attached to the end of a string that builders used to ensure that the walls of buildings were straight.

##### These seven lamps

This refers to the lamps that Zechariah saw in Zechariah 4:2-3.

##### These seven lamps are the eyes of Yahweh that roam over the whole earth

"These seven lamps represent the eyes of Yahweh, who sees everything that happens on the earth"

#### Zechariah 4:11

##### these two olive trees

This refers to the olive trees that Zechariah saw in Zechariah 4:2-3.

#### Zechariah 4:12

##### What are these two olive branches

Here Zechariah changes his question and asks about branches that are connected to the two olive trees.

##### the two gold pipes

These pipes were not mentioned in the previous description of Zechariah's vision. It is possible that they are connected to the bowl on top of the lampstand and provide the oil with which the lampstand burns.

##### golden oil

Here "golden" refers to the color of the oil and does not mean that the oil was made of gold.

#### Zechariah 4:13

##### Do you not know what these are?

"Surely you know what these are."

#### Zechariah 4:14

##### These are the sons of fresh olive oil

"These two branches represent the sons of fresh olive oil"

##### the sons of fresh olive oil

"the anointed men" or "the men whom Yahweh has appointed". A person who is anointed is one whom Yahweh has chosen or appointed for a special duty.

##### who stand before the Lord

"who serve the Lord"

## Chapter 5

#### Zechariah 5:1

##### Then I turned

The word "I" refers to Zechariah.

##### lifted my eyes

"looked up"

##### behold

The word "behold" here shows that Zechariah was surprised by what he saw. This chapter contains the next two visions. One is about a flying scroll and one is about the basket filled with iniquity.

#### Zechariah 5:2

##### twenty cubits long and ten cubits wide

"9.2 meters long and 4.6 meters wide". A cubit is 46 centimeters.

#### Zechariah 5:3

##### This is the curse

"On this scroll is the curse"

##### that goes out over the surface of the whole land

"that is upon every person within the whole land"

##### every thief will be cut off ... everyone who swears a false oath will be cut off

"Yahweh will cut off every thief ... Yahweh will cut off everyone who swears a false oath" or "Yahweh will remove every thief from the land ... Yahweh will remove from the land everyone who swears a false oath"

##### what it says on the one side ... what it says on the other side

"what the scroll says on one side ... what the scroll says on the other side"

#### Zechariah 5:4

##### I will send it out

"I will send out the curse"

##### this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

"this is what I, Yahweh of hosts, have declared"

##### consume its timber and stones

"destroy its wood and stones" or "completely destroy it"

#### Zechariah 5:5

##### Raise your eyes

"Look up"

#### Zechariah 5:6

##### This is a basket containing an ephah that is coming

"This is a large container that is coming". An "ephah" is a unit of measurement for dry materials and equals 22 liters.

##### This is their iniquity in the whole land

"This basket represents the iniquity of the people throughout the whole land"

#### Zechariah 5:7

##### a lead covering was lifted off the basket

"someone lifted a lead covering off the basket"

##### there was a woman under it sitting in it

"there was a woman under the lead covering sitting in the basket"

#### Zechariah 5:8

##### This is Wickedness

"This woman represents wickedness"

##### He threw her ... he threw the lead cover

"He thrust her ... he forced the lead cover." The word "threw" indicates the force with which the angel did these things. He did not literally throw the woman or the cover.

#### Zechariah 5:9

##### I lifted my eyes

"I looked up"

##### wind was in their wings

"they were flying"

##### they had wings like a stork's wings

A stork is a type of large bird that has a wingspan of two to four meters. Zechariah compares the size of the women's wings with the size of the stork's wings.

##### They lifted up the basket between earth and heaven

"They lifted the basket up into the sky and flew away"

#### Zechariah 5:11

##### To build a temple in the land of Shinar for it

"They are taking the basket to the land of Shinar to build a temple for it"

##### the basket will be set there

"they will set the basket there"

##### on its prepared base

This refers to a pedestal or other kind of fixture upon which they will place the basket.

## Chapter 6

#### Zechariah 6:1

##### General Information

This chapter is written mainly in prose and tells the last vision of the four chariots in the first part of the chapter. The second part of the chapter is about a crown made for the high priest. This is an actual person, but the meaning of the word "branch" should be translated as his name. The visions are stated and even when the prophet asked for an explanation, their true meaning is often obscure. This uncertainty should remain in your translation.

##### lifted my eyes

"looked up"

##### between two mountains; and the two mountains were made of bronze

"between two bronze mountains"

#### Zechariah 6:2

##### The first chariot had red horses

"The first chariot had red horses pulling it" or "Red horses were pulling the first chariot"

#### Zechariah 6:5

##### These are the four winds of heaven

"These chariots represent the four winds of heaven"

##### the four winds of heaven

This phrase refers to the four directions from which the wind blows: north, east, south, and west. Some modern versions interpret this Hebrew expression to mean "four spirits."

##### standing before the Lord of all the earth

"serving the Lord of all the earth". This means to be in a person's presence and to serve him. See Zechariah 4:14.

#### Zechariah 6:6

##### the white horses are going out to the west country

"the white horses are going out after them," that is, following the black horses to the north country.

##### the white horses are ... the spotted gray horses are

"the chariot with the white horses is ... the chariot with the spotted gray horses is"

#### Zechariah 6:8

##### he called out to me

"the angel called out to me"

##### Look at the ones

"Look at the black horses"

##### they will appease my spirit concerning the north country

"they will calm my anger concerning the north country" or "they will cause my spirit to rest in the north country"

#### Zechariah 6:9

##### the word of Yahweh came to me, saying

"Yahweh spoke this message to me". This introduces a special message from God.

#### Zechariah 6:10

##### Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah

These are the names of men.

##### this same day

"today"

#### Zechariah 6:11

##### Jozadak

This is the name of a man.

##### take the silver and gold, make a crown

"make a crown with the silver and gold"

#### Zechariah 6:12

##### Speak to him and say

"Speak to Joshua and say"

##### his name is Branch

The word "Branch" refers to a messianic figure that would serve as king over Yahweh's people. Yahweh speaks of this person as if he were a branch that grows out from a tree. Since the word "Branch" is a title, it should be translated with an equivalent word in your language. See how you translated this name in Zechariah 3:8.

##### He will grow up where he is

This likely refers to this person appearing or coming into power as the one who would supervise the rebuilding of the temple.

#### Zechariah 6:13

##### He will be a priest on his throne

"There will be a priest upon his throne"

##### he will bear a counsel of peace between the two

The words "the two" refer to the roles of king and priest. The meaning of this phrase depends upon the meaning of the previous phrase. Possible meanings are: the "Branch" will faithfully carry out his duties as both priest and king and not forsake one in order to fulfill the other or the "Branch" who serves as king and the other person who serves as a priest will each carry out their duties faithfully and they will work together in peace.

#### Zechariah 6:14

##### The crown will given

"You will give the crown"

##### Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah ... Hen

These are the names of men. See how you translated these in Zechariah 6:10.

##### for Hen son of Zephaniah as a memorial

"as a memorial to the generosity of the son of Zephaniah" or "as a memorial to the one who is gracious, the son of Zephaniah." Also, some modern versions interpret the name "Hen" as meaning the name "Josiah."

#### Zechariah 6:15

##### those who are far off

This refers to the Israelites who remain in Babylon.

##### so you will know

The word "you" is plural and refers to the people of Israel.

##### truly listen to the voice of Yahweh your God

"truly obey what Yahweh your God says"

## Chapter 7

#### Zechariah 7:1

##### on the fourth day

"on day 4"

##### Kislev (which was the ninth month)

"Kislev" is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. The fourth day of Kislev is near the end of November on Western calendars.

##### the word of Yahweh came to Zechariah

"Yahweh spoke this message to Zechariah". This introduces a special message from God.

#### Zechariah 7:2

##### Sharezer and Regem-Melek

These are the names of men.

##### beg

Here the word "beg" means to plead or ask urgently.

##### before the face of Yahweh

"in the presence of Yahweh"

#### Zechariah 7:3

##### They spoke ... they said

The word "they" refers to Sharezer and Regem Melek.

##### Should I mourn in the fifth month

The assumed knowledge is that the Jewish people fasted during a part of the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar because this is when the Babylonians destroyed the temple in Jerusalem. The fifth month is during the last part of July and the first part of August on Western calendars.

##### by means of a fast

"by fasting"

#### Zechariah 7:4

##### the word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying

"Yahweh of hosts spoke this message to me". This introduces a special message from God.

#### Zechariah 7:5

##### in the fifth

"in the fifth month"

##### in the seventh month

The assumed knowledge is that the Jews mourned during a part of the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar because in this month the remaining Jews in Jerusalem fled to Egypt after the murder of Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon appointed as governor over Judah. The seventh month is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars.

##### for these seventy years

The assumed knowledge is that the people of Israel had been slaves in Babylon for 70 years.

##### were you truly fasting for me?

"you were not really fasting for me."

#### Zechariah 7:6

##### When you ate and drank

Possible meanings are: when they feasted and drank when celebrating religious festivals or when they ate and drank whenever they were not fasting.

##### did you not eat and drink for yourselves?

"it was for yourselves that you ate and drank."

#### Zechariah 7:7

##### Were these not the same words ... were inhabited?

"These are the same words ... were inhabited". Yahweh uses a question to scold the people.

##### by the hand of the former prophets

"by the words of the former prophets" or "through the former prophets"

##### when Jerusalem and the surrounding cities were inhabited and prosperous

"you still lived in Jerusalem and everyone who lived in the surrounding cities was prosperous"

#### Zechariah 7:9

##### Judge with true justice, covenant faithfulness, and mercy

"When you judge, be just, faithful to the covenant, and merciful"

##### Let each man do this

The word "this" refers to how a person should judge.

#### Zechariah 7:10

##### widow

a woman whose husband has died

##### orphan

a child whose parents have died

##### foreigner

someone who travels from his own land to a different land

##### let none of you plot any harm against another in your heart

"you must not make plans to do evil"

#### Zechariah 7:11

##### set their shoulders stubbornly

"became stubborn". This is an image of an ox refusing to allow its owner to put a yoke on its shoulders.

##### They stopped up their ears so they would not hear

"They refused to listen"

#### Zechariah 7:12

##### They made their hearts as hard as rock so they would not hear the law or the words of Yahweh of hosts

"They stubbornly refused to hear the law or the words of Yahweh of hosts"

##### in earlier times

"in the past"

##### by the mouth of the prophets

"through the words of the prophets"

#### Zechariah 7:14

##### I will scatter them with a whirlwind

"I will scatter them as a whirlwind scatters things". Yahweh speaks of how he will scatter the people.

##### whirlwind

a strong wind that spins very quickly as it moves and can cause damage

##### delightful land

"pleasant land" or "fruitful land"

## Chapter 8

#### Zechariah 8:1

##### The word of Yahweh of hosts came to me, saying

"Yahweh of hosts gave me a message. He said" or "Yahweh of hosts spoke this message to me, saying"

#### Zechariah 8:2

##### I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy

"I am extremely jealous for Zion." Yahweh does not want anyone to harm Zion or try to have Zion love anything more than Yahweh.

##### for Zion

"for the people of Zion" or "for the people of Jerusalem"

##### with great anger

"with great anger against her enemies"

#### Zechariah 8:3

##### the mountain of Yahweh of hosts

The implied information is that this refers to Mount Zion, the location upon which the city of Jerusalem was built.

#### Zechariah 8:4

##### be in the streets of Jerusalem

"be living in Jerusalem"

##### in his hand because he has grown so old

People having the opportunity to grow old implies the city will be peaceful and prosperous for a long time.

#### Zechariah 8:5

##### The streets of the city will be full

The public areas of the city will be full of people in their normal activities.

#### Zechariah 8:6

##### If something seems impossible in the eyes of

"If something does not appear to be possible to"

##### the remnant of this people

"the people of Judah who survive"

##### in my eyes

"to me"

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

"this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

#### Zechariah 8:7

##### I am about to rescue my people

The implied information is that the people are in exile. "I am about to rescue my people of Judah who went into exile"

##### from the land of the sunrise and from the land of the setting sun

"from all lands in every direction"

#### Zechariah 8:8

##### I will be their God in truth and in righteousness

"I will be their God. I will be faithful to them and act toward them in a just manner"

#### Zechariah 8:9

##### Strengthen your hands

"Be strong and courageous"

#### Zechariah 8:10

##### For before those days

Here "those days" refers to the time the people of Judah started to rebuild the temple.

##### there was no profit for either man or animal

It was useless for people and their animals to farm the land because they got no food from it.

##### I had set every person each against his neighbor

"I had turned everyone against each other"

#### Zechariah 8:11

##### in former days

"in the past."

##### the remnant of this people

"the people who returned from exile"

#### Zechariah 8:12

##### seeds of peace will be sown

"the people will safely sow seed"

##### the earth will give its produce; the skies will give their dew

The earth and skies are spoken of as if they were persons giving what is needed.

##### inherit all these things

"to have all these things"

#### Zechariah 8:13

##### You were an example to the other nations of a curse

"When I punished you, the other nations learned what happens when I curse a people"

##### house of Judah and house of Israel

"people of Judah and Israel"

##### you will be a blessing

"when I bless you, the other nations will learn what happens when I bless a people" or 3) Yahweh will bless the people of Judah and Israel."

##### let your hands be strong

"be strong and courageous"

#### Zechariah 8:14

##### do harm to you

"punish you"

##### provoked my anger

"angered me"

##### did not relent

"did not decide to punish them less"

#### Zechariah 8:15

##### Jerusalem

"the people of Jerusalem"

#### Zechariah 8:16

##### that you must do

"You" refers to the people of Judah.

##### Speak truth, every person with his neighbor

"Everyone must say only true things to his neighbor"

##### his neighbor

Here "neighbor" means any person, not just someone who lives nearby.

##### Judge with truth, justice, and peace in your gates

"When you are making decisions in your gates, judge in a way that is true and just and causes people to live peacefully with each other"

##### in your gates

"in your places of judgment"

#### Zechariah 8:17

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

"this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

#### Zechariah 8:18

##### came to me

Here "me" refers to Zechariah.

#### Zechariah 8:19

##### The fasts of the fourth month

The assumed knowledge is that the Jews mourned during a part of the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar because this is when the Babylonians broke through the walls of Jerusalem. The fourth month is during the last part of June and the first part of July on Western calendars.

##### the fifth month

The assumed knowledge is that the Jewish people fasted during a part of the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar because this is when the Babylonians destroyed the temple in Jerusalem. The fifth month is during the last part of July and the first part of August on Western calendars.

##### the seventh month

The assumed knowledge is that the Jews mourned during a part of the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar because in this month the remaining Jews in Jerusalem fled to Egypt after the murder of Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon appointed as governor over Judah. The seventh month is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars.

##### the tenth month

The assumed knowledge is that the Jews mourned during a part of the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar because this is when the Babylonians began their siege against Jerusalem. The tenth month is during the last part of December and the first part of January on Western calendars.

##### love truth and peace

"love what is truthful and peaceful"

#### Zechariah 8:20

##### People will come again

"People will come again to Jerusalem"

#### Zechariah 8:21

##### will go to another city

"will go to the people of another city"

##### beg

Here the word "beg" means to plead or ask urgently.

##### seek Yahweh of hosts

Those who want to know Yahweh and please him are spoken of as if they are literally seeking to find Yahweh.

#### Zechariah 8:22

##### mighty nations

"people of mighty nations"

#### Zechariah 8:23

##### Let us go with you

"Let us go to Jerusalem with you"

##### God is with you

"God is with you people"

## Chapter 9

#### Zechariah 9:1

##### Hadrak

The location of Hadrak is unknown today.

##### its resting place

"the resting place of the people of Hadrak"

##### the eyes of all humanity and all the tribes of Israel are toward Yahweh

"all humanity and all the tribes of Israel look toward Yahweh"

#### Zechariah 9:2

##### Hamath

"the people of the land of Hamath"

##### Tyre and Sidon

"the people of Tyre and Sidon"

##### for they are very wise

"though they think they are very wise"

#### Zechariah 9:3

##### built herself a stronghold

"built a strong fortress" or "built a high wall"

##### heaped up silver like dust and refined gold like mud in the streets

"accumulated silver and gold as much as soil in the streets"

#### Zechariah 9:4

##### Look! The Lord will dispossess her

"Pay attention! The Lord will take away Tyre's possessions"

##### destroy her strength on the sea

"destroy Tyre's ships in which men fight on the sea"

##### so she will be devoured by fire

"and enemies will burn the city to the ground"

#### Zechariah 9:5

##### Ashkelon ... Gaza ... Ekron, her hopes

"The people of Ashkelon ... the people of Gaza ... the hopes of the people of Ekron"

##### will see

"will see Tyre be destroyed"

#### Zechariah 9:6

##### Strangers will make their homes in Ashdod

"Foreigners will take over Ashdod and live there"

##### I will cut off the pride of the Philistines

"I will make the Philistines to be proud of themselves no longer"

#### Zechariah 9:7

##### I will remove their blood from their mouths and their abominations from between their teeth

"I will no longer allow them to eat meat that still has blood in it, and I will forbid them to eat food that they offered to idols"

#### Zechariah 9:8

##### I will camp around my land

"I will protect my land"

##### for now

"For at that time"

##### I see with my own eyes

"I will personally watch over my land"

#### Zechariah 9:9

##### Shout

If your language has a word for a shout of victory that is different from a shout to begin a battle, you might want to use it here.

##### daughter of Zion ... daughter of Jerusalem

"Zion" is the same as "Jerusalem."

##### Behold!

"Pay attention!" or "Here is a surprising fact!"

##### He is righteous and victorious

Some modern translations read, "He is righteous and is coming to save you."

##### on a donkey, on the colt of a donkey

"on a young donkey"

#### Zechariah 9:10

##### cut off the chariot from Ephraim

"destroy the chariots in Israel that are used for battle"

##### the horse from Jerusalem

"the warhorses in Jerusalem"

##### the bow will be cut off from battle

"all weapons of war will be destroyed"

##### for he will speak peace to the nations

"for your king will bring peace to the nations"

##### his dominion will be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth!

"his kingdom will be over all the earth!"

##### the River

This probably refers to the Euphrates River.

#### Zechariah 9:11

##### As for you

This refers to the city of Jerusalem, also called "Zion."

##### the pit where there is no water

This dry pit represents the exile in Babylon.

#### Zechariah 9:12

##### Return to the stronghold

"Come back to your nation where you will be safe"

##### prisoners of hope

"prisoners who still hope in Yahweh"

##### return double to you

"return to you twice as much as was taken from you"

#### Zechariah 9:13

##### Zion

This refers to the city of Jerusalem, also called "Zion."

##### I have bent Judah as my bow

"I will cause the people of Judah to be like my bow"

##### filled my quiver with Ephraim

Yahweh speaks of the people of Israel, the northern kingdom, as if they were arrows that he would shoot at his enemies. A quiver is a bag that holds a soldier's arrows. (

##### I have roused your sons, Zion, against your sons, Greece

God is speaking to the people of two different nations at the same time.

#### Zechariah 9:14

##### will appear to them

"will be seen in the sky by his people" or "will come to his people"

##### his arrows will shoot out like lightning!

The Israelites sometimes thought of lightning bolts as arrows that God shot.

##### blow the ram's horn

People blew into rams' horns to give signals in battle and on other occasions. Here the ram's horn is blown as a military signal.

##### will advance with the storms from Teman

"will march from Teman with the storm winds"

#### Zechariah 9:15

##### they will devour them

"the people of Judah will will completely defeat their enemies"

##### defeat the stones of the slings

"defeat the enemies who attack them with slings and stones"

##### Then they will drink and shout like men drunk on wine

"Then they will shout and celebrate their victory as loudly as if they were drunk"

##### they will be filled with wine like bowls

"they will be as full of wine as the basins with which priests carry blood to the altar"

##### like the corners of the altar

"they will be drenched as the corners of the altar are covered in blood"

#### Zechariah 9:16

##### God will rescue them ... as the flock of his people

The people of Israel are spoken of as if they are God's sheep that he cares for and protects.

##### They are the jewels of a crown

"They will be like beautiful stones in a crown"

#### Zechariah 9:17

##### How good and how beautiful they will be!

"They will be very good and beautiful!"

##### The young men will flourish on grain and the virgins on sweet wine!

"All of the people, both men and women, will have plenty of grain to eat and sweet wine to drink!"

##### The young men ... the virgins

These two phrases are parallel and together represent the entire population of Israel.

## Chapter 10

#### Zechariah 10:1

##### vegetation in the field

"causes plants to grow in the field"

#### Zechariah 10:2

##### household idols speak wickedness

"household idols say evil things." Zechariah is not suggesting that idols actually speak. He is referring to the messages people say they hear from idols.

##### diviners envision a lie

"diviners see false visions"

##### they tell deceitful dreams

"diviners lie about their dreams in order to deceive people"

##### empty comfort

This refers to words that sooth temporarily, but do not provide any longterm help.

##### they wander like sheep

"the people who listen to the false prophets are like sheep who do not know which way to go"

##### they ... suffer because there is no shepherd

"the people who listen to the false prophets ... are suffering like sheep who do not have a shepherd to guide them"

#### Zechariah 10:3

##### My wrath burns against the shepherds

"My anger toward the shepherds of my people is as intense as a fire" or "I am very angry with the leaders of my people"

##### it is the male goats—the leaders—that I will punish

Male goats are typically more dominant than female goats. Here "male goats" represents the oppressive leaders of God's people.

##### Yahweh of hosts will also attend to his flock, the house of Judah

"Yahweh of hosts will take care of the house of Judah as a shepherd cares for his sheep"

##### the house of Judah

"Judah" or "the people of Judah"

##### make them like his warhorse in battle

"will cause them to be strong like war horses in battle"

#### Zechariah 10:4

##### From Judah will come the cornerstone

"One of the descendants of Judah will become the most important ruler"

##### from him will come the tent peg

"the leader who will hold the nation together will come from Judah"

##### from him will come the war bow

"the military leader will come from Judah"

##### from him will come every ruler together

"every ruler will come from Judah"

#### Zechariah 10:5

##### They will be like warriors ... streets in battle

"They will be mighty in battle, trampling their enemies into the mud of the streets"

##### Yahweh is with them

"Yahweh will help them"

##### they will shame those who ride warhorses

"they will defeat their enemies who ride warhorses"

#### Zechariah 10:6

##### the house of Judah

"Judah" or "the kingdom of Judah" or "the people of Judah"

##### the house of Joseph

"Israel" or "the kingdom of Israel" or "the people of Israel"

#### Zechariah 10:7

##### Ephraim will be like a warrior

"Ephraim will be very strong"

##### their hearts will rejoice as with wine

"and they will be very happy"

##### their children will see and rejoice. Their hearts will rejoice in me!

"their children will see what has taken place and will be happy because of what Yahweh has done for them!"

#### Zechariah 10:8

##### I will whistle

To whistle is to produce a high, shrill sound with air through narrowed lips. It is often done to give a signal to other people, as here.

#### Zechariah 10:9

##### I sowed them among the peoples

The exile of the people is spoken of as if they were seed that Yahweh had planted in a distant land.

#### Zechariah 10:10

##### until there is no more room for them

"and they will completely fill the land"

#### Zechariah 10:11

##### I will pass through the sea of their affliction

"I will go with them and help them as they go through their many afflictions"

##### I will strike the waves of that sea

"I will cause the waves of that sea of affliction to stop"

##### will dry up all the depths of the Nile

"I will cause the Nile River to lose all its water"

##### The majesty of Assyria will be brought down

"I will destroy Assyria's proud army"

##### the scepter of Egypt will go away from the Egyptians

"the power of Egypt to rule other nations will end"

#### Zechariah 10:12

##### I will strengthen them in myself

"I will cause them to be strong and to believe in me"

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

"this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

## Chapter 11

#### Zechariah 11:1

##### Open your doors, Lebanon, that fire may devour

"People of Lebanon, get ready, because fire will devour" or "People of Lebanon, do not try to stop the fire that will devour"

##### fire may devour your cedars

"fire may completely destroy your cedars" or "fire may completely burn up your cedars"

#### Zechariah 11:2

##### Wail, cypress trees, for the cedar trees have fallen

"If the trees were people, they would cry out in sorrow. The cypress trees stand alone because the cedars have burned and fallen"

##### What was glorious has been devastated

"The glorious cedar trees are no more" or "The cedar trees were once glorious, but now they are ruined"

##### Wail, you oaks of Bashan, for the impenetrable forest has gone down.

"If the oak trees in Bashan were people, they would wail, for their impenetrable forests are gone"

##### impenetrable forest

a forest in which plants grow so close together that people cannot pass between them

#### Zechariah 11:3

##### the shepherds' howl

"The loud cry of the shepherds"

##### for their glory has been destroyed

"for their rich pastures are ruined"

##### for the pride of the Jordan River has been devastated

"because the trees and shrubbery where they lived by the Jordan River are ruined"

#### Zechariah 11:4

##### watch over the flock set aside for slaughter

"take care of a flock of sheep that the owners plan to slaughter"

#### Zechariah 11:5

##### Those who buy them ... them and are not guilty

"Those who buy them ... them, but no one believes they are guilty for doing so"

#### Zechariah 11:6

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

"this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared"

##### See!

"Listen!" or "Pay attention!"

##### I myself

The word "myself" is used to emphasize that it is Yahweh who will do these things.

##### turn over every person into the hand of his neighbor and into the hand of his king

"allow the people to harm each other and the king will oppress them"

##### none of them will I deliver them from their hand

"I will not save them from those who are harming them" or "I will not rescue them"

#### Zechariah 11:7

##### for those who dealt in sheep

"for those who bought and sold sheep"

##### Favor

Other versions of the Bible translate this word as "grace," "beauty," or "pleasant."

#### Zechariah 11:8

##### I became impatient with them,

Possible meanings are 1) "them" refers to the three shepherds or 2) "them" refers to the sheep owners.

#### Zechariah 11:9

##### the sheep that are being destroyed—let them be destroyed

"the sheep that are perishing—let them perish" or "the sheep that are to wander and get lost—let them get lost"

#### Zechariah 11:10

##### all the peoples

"all the nations." Some modern translations read "all the people," referring to the people of Israel.

#### Zechariah 11:11

##### the covenant was broken

"the covenant ended"

##### knew that Yahweh had spoken

"knew that Yahweh had given them a message"

#### Zechariah 11:12

##### thirty pieces of silver

"only thirty pieces of silver"

#### Zechariah 11:13

##### treasury

This is the place in the temple of Yahweh where the priests kept the money.

##### the excellent price

"the small amount of money"

#### Zechariah 11:14

##### between Judah and Israel

"between the people of Judah and the people of Israel"

#### Zechariah 11:16

##### I am about to set in place a shepherd in the land

"I am about to appoint a shepherd in the land" or "I am about to put a shepherd in charge in the land"

##### the fattened sheep

"the fattest sheep" or "the best sheep"

##### will tear off their hooves

This was probably done as an act of cruelty.

#### Zechariah 11:17

##### May the sword

"May enemies"

##### come against his arm and his right eye

"strike and wound his right arm and pierce his right eye"

##### his arm

Here "arm" represents the power to fight.

##### his arm wither away

"his arm waste away" or "his arm become completely useless"

## Chapter 12

#### Zechariah 12:1

##### who stretched out the skies

"the one who created the sky"

##### laid the foundation of the earth

"put all the earth into place"

##### fashions the spirit of mankind within man

"creates the human spirit"

#### Zechariah 12:2

##### I am about to make Jerusalem into a cup ... to stagger about

"Soon it will be like I make Jerusalem into a cup ... to stagger about"

##### into a cup

"into a cup full of wine" or "into a cup full of an alcoholic drink"

##### surrounding her

Here "her" refers to the city of Jerusalem.

#### Zechariah 12:3

##### I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all the peoples

"It will be like I will make Jerusalem a very heavy stone for all the peoples"

##### burdensome stone ... carry

Some modern translations read, "stone that cannot be moved ... move."

#### Zechariah 12:4

##### Over the house of Judah I will open my eyes

"I will do good things for the house of Judah" or "I will protect the house of Judah"

##### the house of Judah

"the people of Judah"

#### Zechariah 12:5

##### say in their hearts

"think to themselves" or "say to themselves"

##### are our strength

"make us strong" or "encourage us"

##### Yahweh of hosts, their God

"Yahweh of hosts, the God they worship"

#### Zechariah 12:6

##### like firepots among wood ... standing grain

"like firepots among stacked firewood ... unharvested stalks of grain standing in a field"

##### firepots

clay pots in which ancient people often carried burning coals

##### flaming torch

a wooden stick that is burning at one end which gives light as one travels or carries fire somewhere

##### will consume all the surrounding peoples

"will destroy the surrounding peoples"

##### on their right and on their left

"in every direction"

##### Jerusalem will again live in her own place

"The people of Jerusalem will again live in their own city"

#### Zechariah 12:7

##### the tents of Judah

"the people of Judah"

##### the house of David

Possible meanings are 1) the descendants of David or 2) the ruling class of people.

#### Zechariah 12:8

##### those who are weak among them will be like David

"those who are weak will be strong like David"

##### the angel of Yahweh

This is an angel sent by Yahweh to protect the people.

#### Zechariah 12:10

##### I will pour out a spirit of compassion and pleading on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem

"I will cause the house of David and inhabitants of Jerusalem to have mercy on others and to pray to me for mercy"

##### the one they have pierced

"the one whom they stabbed to death"

##### for an only son

"for an only son who has died"

#### Zechariah 12:11

##### the wailing in Jerusalem will be like the wailing at Hadad Rimmon

Hadad Rimmon may have been the place where the good King Josiah died of battle wounds after the Battle of Megiddo. It appears that the custom arose to hold periodic mourning there for his death. Some people, however, think that Hadad Rimmon was the name of a false god who was believed to die every year, an event for which his worshipers would go into mourning.

##### Megiddo

This is the name of a plain in Israel.

#### Zechariah 12:12

##### The land will mourn

"All the people in the land of Judah will mourn"

#### Zechariah 12:13

##### The clan of the house of Levi

"The descendants of Levi"

## Chapter 13

#### Zechariah 13:1

##### a spring will be opened ... for their sin and impurity

"it will be like a spring opens ... to cleanse their sin and impurity"

##### a spring

a place where water flows naturally out of the ground

##### the house of David

"the descendants of David"

#### Zechariah 13:2

##### this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

"this is what Yahweh of hosts has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh of hosts, have declared"

##### I will cut off the names of the idols from the land

"I will cause the people to no longer mention the names of the idols"

##### they will no longer be remembered

"so that they no longer think about the idols"

##### I will remove the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness from the land

"I will also remove from the land the false prophets and their evil spirits"

##### spirit of uncleanness

Some modern translations read, "unclean spirit," taking the phrase "of uncleanness" as a description of the word "spirit."

#### Zechariah 13:3

##### to prophesy

"to prophesy falsely"

##### his father and mother who bore him

"his own father and mother"

##### You will not live

"You must die"

##### you speak lies in the name of Yahweh

"you claim to speak for Yahweh but you speak lies"

##### will pierce

"will stab and kill him"

#### Zechariah 13:4

##### each prophet

"every false prophet"

##### no longer wear a hairy cloak

Prophets often wore heavy outer garments made of animal hair.

#### Zechariah 13:5

##### I am a man who works the soil

"I am a farmer"

##### the land became my work while I was still a young man

"I became a farmer when I was young." Some versions of the Bible translate this as "a man sold me as a slave when I was young."

#### Zechariah 13:6

##### What are these wounds between your arms?

"How did you get those cuts on your chest?" This refers to the apparent custom of false prophets wounding themselves in their ceremonies.

##### he will answer

"he will lie to him saying"

#### Zechariah 13:7

##### Sword! Rouse yourself against my shepherd

"You, enemies! Go and attack my shepherd"

##### my shepherd

"my servant who is like a shepherd"

##### this is the declaration of Yahweh of hosts

"this is what Yahweh of hosts has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh of hosts, have declared"

##### the flock will scatter

"my people will run away like sheep"

##### I will turn my hand against the lowly ones

"I will attack the lowly ones"

##### the lowly ones

This probably refers to all the Israelites who are weak and defenseless.

#### Zechariah 13:8

##### that two-thirds of it will be cut off! Those people will perish; only one-third will remain there

"that two out of every three people will die! Only one person out of three will remain in the land"

#### Zechariah 13:9

##### I will bring that third through the fire

Metal is passed through fire in order to purify or harden it.

##### refine them as silver is refined; I will test them as gold is tested

Refining refers to making precious metals such as silver more pure. Metals such as silver and gold are tested in order to discover how pure or strong they are.

##### They will call on my name

"They will call out to me"

## Chapter 14

#### Zechariah 14:1

##### A day for Yahweh is coming when your plunder will be divided in your midst

"Soon Yahweh will judge you, and he will allow your enemies to take all of your possessions and divide if for themselves while you watch"

#### Zechariah 14:2

##### I will gather every nation against Jerusalem for battle

"I will cause many nations to attack Jerusalem"

##### the city will be captured

"your enemies will capture the city"

##### The houses will be plundered and the women raped

"Enemies will plunder the houses and rape the women"

##### the remainder of the people will not be cut off from the city

"your enemies will allow the remaining people to stay in the city"

#### Zechariah 14:3

##### as when he makes war on the day of battle

"just as he fought battles in the past"

#### Zechariah 14:4

##### On that day

"At that time"

##### his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives

"he will stand on the Mount of Olives"

##### The Mount of Olives will be split ... by a very great valley

"The presences of Yahweh will split the Mount of Olives ... causing there to be a very great valley"

#### Zechariah 14:5

##### you will flee

Here "you" is plural and refers to the people of Jerusalem.

##### between Yahweh's mountains

This refers to the mountains created after the Mount of Olives split in half.

##### Azel

This is the name of a town or village east of Jerusalem.

##### You will flee just as you fled

"You will flee just as your ancestors fled"

##### in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah

"when Uzziah was king of Judah"

##### the holy ones

This probably refers to God's angels.

#### Zechariah 14:6

##### On that day

"At that time"

##### there will be no light

"there will be no light from the sun"

#### Zechariah 14:7

##### a day known only to Yahweh

"only Yahweh knows when that day will begin" or "only Yahweh knows when that time will begin"

#### Zechariah 14:8

##### living waters

This normally means running or flowing water, rather than still or stagnant water.

##### the eastern sea

This refers to the Dead Sea, which is east of Jerusalem.

##### the western sea

This refers to the Mediterranean Sea.

#### Zechariah 14:9

##### there will be Yahweh, the one God, and his name alone

"people will know that Yahweh is the only true God" or "people will only worship Yahweh, the one true God"

#### Zechariah 14:10

##### All the land

"All the land of Judah"

##### Arabah

This is the name of a plain in the Jordan River Valley.

##### Geba

This is the name of a town on the northern border of Judah.

##### Rimmon

This is the name of a town south of Jerusalem.

##### Jerusalem will continue to be raised up

"But, Jerusalem will remain high up"

##### the Benjamin Gate ... the first gate ... the Corner Gate

These are names of gates in the northeast part of city wall of Jerusalem. Possible meanings are 1) "the first gate" and "the Corner Gate" refer to the same gate or 2) "the first gate" and "the Corner gate" are separate gates.

##### the Tower of Hananel

This refers to a strong point in the city defenses on the northern wall. It was probably built by a man named Hananel.

##### the king's winepresses

This probably refers to the place where wine was made for the royal family. It was located in the southwest part of Jerusalem.

#### Zechariah 14:11

##### Jerusalem will live in safety

"The people will live safely in Jerusalem"

#### Zechariah 14:12

##### even as they are standing on their feet

"while they are still standing up." This emphasizes how quickly their flesh will rot away. They will not even have time to lie down.

#### Zechariah 14:13

##### that great panic from Yahweh will come among them

"Yahweh will cause the people to be very terrified"

##### Each one will seize the hand of another, and the hand of one will be raised up against the hand of another

"Each person will grab someone, and they will fight each other"

#### Zechariah 14:14

##### Judah will also make war against Jerusalem

"Even the other people in Judah will make war against the people of Jerusalem"

##### They will gather the wealth

"They will capture all the valuable possessions"

##### in great abundance

"in great quantities"

#### Zechariah 14:16

##### that came against Jerusalem

"that attacked Jerusalem"

##### will go up from year to year

"will go to Jerusalem every year"

##### the Festival of Shelters

"the Festival of Tabernacles" or "the Festival of Booths" or "the Festival of Tents"

#### Zechariah 14:18

##### A plague from Yahweh will attack the nations

"Yahweh will cause a plague among the people of the nations"

#### Zechariah 14:20

##### the bells of the horses will say

"the inscription on the bells of the horses will say"

##### the basins in the house of Yahweh

"the cooking pots in the courtyard of the temple"

##### will be like the bowls before the altar

"will be as sacred as the bowls used at the altar"

#### Zechariah 14:21

##### every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be set apart to Yahweh of hosts

Various types of pots and utensils were made especially to be used in the temple for the worship of Yahweh and for the sacrifices. These were considered special, not to be used for anything else.

##### traders will no longer be in the house of Yahweh

"people will no longer buy or sell things in the courtyard of the temple of Yahweh"

##### traders

Some versions of the Bible translate "traders" as "Canaanites."

## Chapter 1

#### Malachi 1:1

##### The burden of the word of Yahweh to Israel by the hand of Malachi

This can be expressed as a statement. "This is the burden of the word of Yahweh to Israel by the hand of Malachi"

##### burden

This is a metaphor for a serious message.

##### Yahweh

This is the name of God that he revealed to his people in the Old Testament.

##### by the hand of Malachi

"through Malachi" or "spoken to them by Malachi"

#### Malachi 1:2

##### How have you loved us?

"You have not shown that you love us."

##### Was not Esau Jacob's brother?

"You know that Esau was Jacob's brother."

##### declares Yahweh

"Yahweh has solemnly said this"

##### I have loved Jacob

"as you know, I obligated myself with a covenant to love Jacob"

##### I have loved Jacob

This name "Jacob" refers here not only to Jacob, but also to all his descendants.

#### Malachi 1:3

##### Esau I have hated

Here "hated" implies that there was no covenant between Yahweh and Esau. However, it does not imply that Yahweh was emotionally against Esau.

##### Esau I have hated

This name "Esau" refers here not only to Esau, but also to all his descendants.

##### his mountains

This refers to the hill country of Edom.

##### I have made his inheritance a place for the jackals of the wilderness

In the Old Testament, the presence of wild animals such as jackals was a frequent description of land deserted by the people who once lived there.

##### his inheritance

Here "inheritance" stands for the region that Esau's descendants, the nation of Edom, occupied.

#### Malachi 1:4

##### If Edom says

"If the people of Edom say"

##### I will throw down

"I will destroy"

##### country of wickedness

"country of wicked people"

#### Malachi 1:6

##### despise my name

"treat me as though you hate me"

##### How have we despised your name?

"We have not really despised your name." or "Tell us how we have despised your name, because we do not think that we have done so."

#### Malachi 1:7

##### polluted bread

Here "polluted" describes anything that is not suitable to sacrifice to God.

##### How have we polluted you?

"We have not polluted you." or "Tell us how we have polluted you, because we do not think that we have done so."

##### table

This refers to an altar.

##### By saying that Yahweh's table is contemptible.

"You have polluted my altar by saying, 'Yahweh's table is contemptible.'"

##### contemptible

something people should regard as bad, worse than worthless

#### Malachi 1:8

##### When you offer blind animals for sacrifice, is that not evil?

"You know very well that it is evil for you to offer blind animals for sacrifice!"

##### When you offer the lame and sick, is that not evil?

"And you know very well that it is evil for you to offer lame and sick animals!"

##### Present that to your governor! Will he accept you or will he lift up your face?

"If you present that to your governor, will he accept you or will he lift up your face?"

##### will he lift up your face

"will he accept you with favor" or "will he agree to help you"

##### Present

give as a gift to show respect

#### Malachi 1:9

##### keep asking the face of God, that he may be gracious

"keep begging God to be gracious"

##### with such an offering in your hand, would he lift up any of your faces?

"if you offer unacceptable offerings, he will certainly not lift up your faces."

##### in your hand

"brought by you"

##### would he lift up any of your faces

"would he accept any of you with favor" or "would he agree to help any of you"

#### Malachi 1:10

##### Oh, if only

This expresses great desire.

##### so that you might not light fires on my altar in vain

"so that you might not make fires to burn offerings that I will not accept"

##### from your hand

"from you"

#### Malachi 1:11

##### from the rising of the sun to its setting

This expression means "everywhere." It is parallel to "among the nations" and "in every place"

##### my name will be great among the nations

"I will be honored in other nations"

##### in every place incense and pure grain offerings will be offered in my name

"in these nations people will worship me by offering incense and pure grain offerings to me"

##### in my name

"to me"

#### Malachi 1:12

##### its fruit, its food

Possible meanings are 1) "the meat sacrificed on the altar from animals whose other parts the priests should eat" or 2) "the meat sacrificed on the altar."

#### Malachi 1:13

##### snort at it

show great disrespect by making noises through the nose

##### what has been torn

Possible meanings are 1) "what you have stolen from others" or 2) "what a wild animal has killed."

##### Should I accept this from your hand?

"I should certainly not accept this from you!"

#### Malachi 1:14

##### my name will be honored among the nations

"people in the other nations honor my name"

##### my name will be honored

"I will be honored"

## Chapter 2

#### Malachi 2:2

##### lay it on your heart

"consider it to be very important"

##### my name

Here this expression refers to God.

##### I will send a curse on you

"I will curse you"

##### you are not laying my command on your heart

"you are not considering my command to be very important"

#### Malachi 2:3

##### I will spread dung on your faces

"I will most certainly put you in deep disgrace; it will be as bad as if I had spread dung on your faces"

##### the dung from your festivals

Here "festivals" stands for the animals that the priests offered in sacrifice at the Israelite festivals. "The dung" probably refers both to the dung that was produced by the animals just before they were slaughtered for sacrifice, and to the dung that was found inside the animals when their bodies were cut apart before being sacrificed. Temple workers had to transport this dung to a place outside of the temple, and probably outside of Jerusalem.

##### he will take you away with it

"they will throw you on the dung pile; God will make sure that they take you away when they remove all the dung"

#### Malachi 2:4

##### Levi

"so that my covenant may be with you, the descendants of Levi"

#### Malachi 2:5

##### My covenant with him was life and peace

"The purpose of my covenant with Levi was for the priests to live in prosperity and peace"

##### fear, and he feared me

"My covenant with him was also fear, and he feared me" or "In my covenant with him, I required him to fear me, and he did fear me"

##### in awe of my name

Here "my name" stands for God himself.

#### Malachi 2:6

##### nothing false was found

"there was no falsehood"

##### on his lips

Here "lips" stands for a person's ability to speak.

##### He walked with me

Here walking stands for living, conducting one's life in a certain way.

##### in peace and uprightness

"peacefully and uprightly"

##### he turned many away from iniquity

"he persuaded many people to stop sinning"

#### Malachi 2:7

##### For a priest's lips should keep knowledge

Here knowledge is spoken of as if it were an object that a priest could keep. In this passage, the idea of "keep knowledge" implies communicating true knowledge about God.

##### seek instruction

"want to be instructed" or "want a priest to teach them truly"

#### Malachi 2:8

##### you have turned away from the true path

The right way to behave is spoken of as if it were the right path to follow, and abandoning right conduct is spoken of as if it were turning away from that path.

##### You have caused many to stumble with respect to the law

"You have caused many to disobey the law"

##### corrupted the covenant of Levi

"broken the covenant I made with the Levites."

#### Malachi 2:9

##### kept my ways

"followed my desires in how you should live"

##### shown partiality in matters of the law

"set easy standards of behavior for people you like and difficult standards of behavior for people you do not like"

#### Malachi 2:10

##### Is there not one Father for us all? Has not one God created us?

"You know that we all have one Father, that our God has created a nation out of us." or "You all know that God is the Father of all us Israelites, because he is the one who made our nation."

##### Has not one God created us?

"Certainly it is the same God who has created us."

##### Why are we faithless each man against his brother, profaning the covenant of our fathers?

"We should certainly not mistreat our brothers and disrespect God's covenant by disobeying his commands, as you have been doing."

#### Malachi 2:11

##### Judah has been faithless

"The people of Judah have been faithless"

##### A disgusting thing has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem

"People have done disgusting things in Israel and in Jerusalem"

##### For Judah has profaned the holy place of Yahweh

"For the people of Judah have profaned the holy place of Yahweh"

##### has married the daughter of a foreign god

"have married women from other nations, women who worship idols"

#### Malachi 2:12

##### May Yahweh cut off from the tents of Jacob the man who

"May Yahweh destroy anyone in the tents of Jacob who" or "May Yahweh kill anyone in the community of Israel who"

##### the tents of Jacob

Here "tents of Jacob" stands for the community of Israel.

##### the one who is awake and the one who answers

This expression seems to mean "absolutely everyone."

#### Malachi 2:13

##### with weeping and sighing

"with great weeping"

##### does not turn toward the offering

This implies that those who are weeping at Yahweh's altar have offered sacrifices to him.

##### from your hand

"from you"

#### Malachi 2:14

##### Why does he not?

"Why does he not turn toward the offering or accept it with favor from our hand?"

##### the wife of your youth

"the woman you married when you were young"

##### Yahweh was a witness between you and the wife of your youth

This statement assumes that this woman is still living.

##### a witness between you and the wife of your youth

Here a witness to an agreement between two people is thought of as standing between them in order to testify about what they agreed to, in case a dispute arises between the two people. This sentence also was meant to remind the people that Yahweh would punish any Israelite who broke the covenant of marriage.

##### she was your companion and your wife by covenant

This statement implies that many of the Israelites had divorced their wives.

##### by covenant

"by the covenant of marriage that you agreed to"

#### Malachi 2:15

##### Did he not make them one, with a portion of his spirit?

"He certainly made husband and wife one, with a portion of his spirit."

##### make them one

"make husband and wife one flesh"

##### an offspring from God

Children who would honor and obey God.

#### Malachi 2:16

##### I hate divorce

"I hate it when a man divorces his wife"

##### the one who covers his garment with violence

This phrase probably means any man who is violent toward his wife.

##### So guard yourselves in your spirit and do not be faithless

"So be careful to be loyal to your wife"

#### Malachi 2:17

##### You have wearied Yahweh

"You have offended Yahweh"

##### How have we wearied him?

"We have certainly not wearied him."

##### By saying

"You have wearied him by saying."

##### in the eyes

"in the opinion" or "in the judgment"

##### Where is the God of justice?

"God certainly does not punish evil people!"

##### the God of justice

the God who punishes evildoers justly

## Chapter 3

#### Malachi 3:1

##### See

"Look" or "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

##### he will prepare the way before me

Here getting people ready to welcome Yahweh is spoken of as if a road were being cleared for Yahweh to travel on.

#### Malachi 3:2

##### But who will be able to endure the day of his coming? Who will be able to stand when he appears?

"However, no one will be able to resist Yahweh when he comes to judge them."

##### the day of his coming

"the time when he comes"

##### be able to stand

Here standing represents resisting someone's attack or accusations.

##### For he will be like a refiner's fire and like laundry soap

This sentence gives the reason why no one will be able to resist God when he comes. God's power to judge the people and to stop them from sinning is spoken of as if it were the power of strong soap to clean clothes, or the power of fire to melt an object. These are ways of saying that God's power to do these things cannot be stopped.

#### Malachi 3:3

##### he will purify the descendants of Levi

"he will correct the sons of Levi and forgive them for having sinned"

##### He will refine them like gold and silver

Here persuading people not to sin any longer is spoken of as if a metalworker were making gold and silver more pure.

##### they will bring offerings of righteousness to Yahweh

"they will bring acceptable offerings to Yahweh in order to worship Yahweh"

#### Malachi 3:4

##### the offering of Judah and Jerusalem

"the offerings brought by the people of Judah and Jerusalem"

##### as in the days of old, and as in ancient years

"as it was in the distant past" or "as it was a long time ago"

#### Malachi 3:5

##### Then I will approach you for judgment

"Then I will approach you in order to judge you"

##### oppress the hired worker in his wages

"cause the hired worker to suffer by not paying him for his work"

##### turn away the foreigner

"deny foreigners living in Israel the rights that they should have"

#### Malachi 3:6

##### you descendants of Jacob have not been consumed

"I have not consumed you descendants of Jacob" or "you descendants of Jacob have not perished"

#### Malachi 3:7

##### From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them

"You have disobeyed my statutes ever since the days of your ancestors"

##### Return to me, and I will return to you

"Love me and honor me, and I will always help you"

##### How will we return?

"We have never gone away from you, so we cannot return to you." or "We have never gone away from you, so it makes no sense to speak of us as returning to you."

#### Malachi 3:8

##### Would a person rob God?

"A man should certainly not rob God." or "No one should ever rob me."

##### How have we robbed you?

"We have certainly not robbed you."

##### In tithes and offerings

"You have robbed me by withholding from me your tithes and offerings"

#### Malachi 3:9

##### You are cursed with a curse

"I have certainly cursed you"

##### you are robbing me, the whole nation

"all of you in the whole nation are robbing me"

#### Malachi 3:10

##### the full tithe

"all the tithes"

##### my house

"my temple"

##### and test me now in this ... if I do not open to you the windows of heaven

"And if you test me ... I will open up the windows of heaven" or "And you should test me ... If you do, I will open up the windows of heaven"

#### Malachi 3:12

##### All the nations will call you blessed

""The people in all the nations will know that you have been blessed"

##### a land of delight

Here "delight" stands for the condition in which the inhabitants of a land take delight in their land.

#### Malachi 3:13

##### Your words against me have been strong

"What you have said about me is terrible"

##### What have we said among ourselves against you?

"We have not said anything among ourselves against you."

#### Malachi 3:14

##### What profit is it that we have kept his requirements or walked mournfully before Yahweh of hosts?

"It is useless that we have kept his requirements and walked mournfully before Yahweh of hosts."

##### walked mournfully before Yahweh of hosts

Here "walk mournfully" stands for "behave in a sorrowful manner," probably in order to indicate sorrow over their sins.

#### Malachi 3:15

##### we call those who do evil blessed

"we say that God has blessed those who do evil" or "we say that those who do evil are well off"

##### escape

That is, "they escape God's punishment."

#### Malachi 3:16

##### a book of remembrance was written before him about those who feared Yahweh

This can mean 1) the Israelites wrote a book so they would remember what they had promised and listed the names of people who feared Yahweh or 2) Yahweh caused someone in heaven to write a book with the names of people who feared him.

##### honored his name

Here "his name" stands for God himself.

#### Malachi 3:17

##### They will be mine

"They will be my people"

##### my own treasured possession

"they will belong completely to me"

##### I act

the time when Yahweh will judge and punish the rebellious Israelites, giving victory to the faithful Israelites

#### Malachi 3:18

##### distinguish between

"see a difference between" or "treat differently"

## Chapter 4

#### Malachi 4:1

##### see

"look" or "listen" or "pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

##### the day is coming, burning like a furnace

The disaster occurring at this time is spoken of as if the day itself were burning. God's judgment is often spoken of as if it were a fire.

##### all the arrogant and all the evildoers will become stubble

"all the arrogant and all the evildoers will burn up like dry plants"

##### The day that is coming will burn them up

"On that day I will burn them up"

##### it will leave them neither root nor branch

"nothing will be left"

#### Malachi 4:2

##### you who fear my name

Here "my name" stands for Yahweh himself.

##### the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings

This can mean 1) Yahweh, who always acts righteously, will come and heal his people on that day or 2) on that day Yahweh will reveal the people's righteousness and heal them.

##### healing in its wings

Possible meanings are 1) the act of healing someone is spoken of as if it were an object that the sun carried to people by means of its wings or 2) the healing takes place under the wings, that is, in the security God gives his people.

##### wings

It was common in the Ancient Near East to speak of the sun as if it had wings, with which it moved across the sky. Possible meanings are 1) the sun's life-giving rays of light are spoken of as if they were its wings or 2) the wings are said to cover God's people so as to give them peace and safey.

#### Malachi 4:3

##### you will trample down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet

Here the victory of God's people is spoken of as if they were walking over the burned bodies of their enemies.

##### they will be ashes

The Israelites' enemies are spoken of as having been burned to ashes

#### Malachi 4:4

##### Remember

Here "Remember" stands for "Think about" and, at the same time, "Obey."

##### Horeb

This is another name for Sinai.

##### all Israel

Here "all Israel" is a reference to all the people in the nation of Israel.

##### the statutes

These are the laws that God gave Israel for all time.

##### the rulings

These are legal decisions meant to make clear how the general statutes apply to everyday life.

#### Malachi 4:5

##### the coming of the great and fearful day of Yahweh

"before the great and fearful day of Yahweh happens"

##### the great and fearful day of Yahweh

This expression refers to any time in which Yahweh acts decisively.