English: Translation Notes for Zechariah

Formatted for Translators

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Notes: English ULB Translation Notes

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## Chapter 1

# Zechariah 1 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in prose mainly with imagery used throughout to portray Zechariah's vision given by the Lord.

Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations set lines 1:3-6, 14-17, which are extended quotations, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Visions

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.

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### Date

Zechariah uses two separate dates in this first chapter. When compared to the book of Haggai, Zechariah's prophecy was proclaimed just a few weeks after Haggai. However, they prophesied in two different places: Haggai was in Jerusalem and Zechariah was somewhere outside of Jerusalem. (See: prophet)

## Links:

* [Zechariah 1:1 Notes](./01.md)
* [Zechariah intro](../front/intro.md)

#### 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

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "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. See the translationWord page about Yahweh concerning how to translate this.

##### Berekiah ... Iddo

These are the names of men.

#### Zechariah 1:2

##### exceedingly angry with your fathers

"very angry with your forefathers"

#### Zechariah 1:3

##### Turn to me ... and I will return to you

Yahweh speaks of having a change of attitude toward another person as if it were turning or returning. The people turning to Yahweh means that they will again be devoted to him and worship him, while Yahweh returning to the people means that he will again bless them and help them.

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

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: "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

No longer doing certain actions is spoken of as if it were turning away from those actions. The phrases "evil ways" and "wicked practices" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "Stop doing all of your wicked actions"

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Zechariah 1:3]

#### Zechariah 1:5

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

If your language has a way of showing that this verse challenges the readers to think about what happened to the "fathers" ([Zechariah 1:4](./04.md)). Alternate translation: "Think about your fathers—where are they now? And as for the prophets, do they live forever?"

##### Your fathers—where are they?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Your fathers—you know where they are." or "As for your fathers, you know that they have all died."

And the prophets—do they live forever?

This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "And the prophets will not live forever."

##### do they live forever?

Zechariah is probably implying that the prophets will not always be around to tell his readers that God wants them to repent. You may need to make this explicit. Alternate translation: "will they always be around to speak for God to you?" or "they will not always be around to call you to repent."

#### Zechariah 1:6

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

This rhetorical question emphasizes the positive answer that it anticipates. Yahweh speaks of the people's ancestors experiencing the consequences of not obeying Yahweh's commands as if his words and decrees were a person who had chased after and overtaken them. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "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."

##### my words and my decrees

These phrases are both ways to refer to Yahweh's message that the prophets had declared to their ancestors.

##### our ways and actions

The words "ways" and "actions" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "our behavior"

#### 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.

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

"in the second year of the reign of Darius the king" or "in the second year since Darius became king." See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:1]

##### the word of Yahweh came

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:1]

##### Berekiah ... Iddo

These are the names of men.

##### 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

##### I saw in the night

Here the word “I” refers to Zechariah. Alternate translation: “I, Zechariah, saw in the night”

##### 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

These phrases refer to the man who "was riding on a red horse" in [Zechariah 1:8]

##### These are those

The word "these" refers to the red, reddish-brown, and white horses that were behind the man who was among the myrtle trees. Possible meanings are 1) it is implicit that there were other men who were riding the horses, and that these phrases refer to the riders or 2) the horses are personified as being able to speak like people.

##### to roam throughout the earth

It is implicit that Yahweh sent these out to walk about in order to patrol the earth. This does not suggest that they were wandering or lost.

#### Zechariah 1:11

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

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

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

The word "they" refers to the red, reddish-brown, and white horses that were behind the man who was among the myrtle trees. Possible meanings are 1) it is implicit that there were other men who were riding the horses, and that these phrases refer to the riders or 2) the horses are personified as being able to speak like people.

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

There being peace and quiet in the world is spoken of as if the earth were a person who is still and resting. Possible meanings are 1) this is a good thing that means that there is peace between nations or 2) this is a bad thing that means that there is no war because nations are helpless to fight against a stronger nation that has subdued them.

#### Zechariah 1:12

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

Here the words "Jerusalem" and "cities" refer to the people who live in those cities. Alternate translation: "to the people of Jerusalem and to the people of 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

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

##### Jerusalem ... Zion

These are a metonyms for the people who live in Jerusalem and Zion. Alternate translation: "the people of Jerusalem ... the people of Zion"

#### Zechariah 1:15

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

The phrase "at ease" means that the people thought that they lived in peace and security. Alternate translation: "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

Possible meanings are 1) although Yahweh had left Jerusalem when the people had gone into exile, he will now return to Jerusalem when they have come back from exile or 2) Yahweh speaks of having a change of attitude towards the people of Jerusalem and again blessing them and helping them as if he were returning to the city. Alternate translation: "I will once again show mercy towards Jerusalem"

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

The word "her" refers to Jerusalem, and the word "house" is a metonym for the temple. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The people will build my temple in Jerusalem"

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

This refers to builders using their instruments to rebuild the city. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "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

The phrase "my cities" refers to the cities of Judah and represents the people who live in those cities. Yahweh speaks of the inhabitants of those cities again being prosperous as if goodness were a liquid that overflowed the cities, which are its containers. Alternate translation: "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

Here the word "Zion" refers to the people who live in the city. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will again comfort the people in Zion"

#### Zechariah 1:18

##### I lifted up my eyes

The word "eyes" represents the person who looks. Alternate translation: "I looked up"

#### Zechariah 1:19

##### These are the horns that have scattered 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. The words "Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem" represent the people who lived in those places. Alternate translation: "These horns represent the nations that have scattered the people of Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem"

#### 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

The horns symbolize the powerful nations that had conquered the kingdoms of Israel. The word "Judah" represents the people who lived in Judah. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Zechariah 1:19]

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

The nations oppressing the people of Judah severely is spoken of as if no person in Judah was able to raise his head. Alternate translation: "and caused them to suffer greatly"

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

Yahweh speaks of the nations using their military power to conquer Judah as if the nations had lifted up their horns. He speaks of these four craftsmen destroying the military power of these nations as if the craftsmen threw those horns to the ground. Alternate translation: "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 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

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.

Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 2:4-13, which are extended quotations, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Visions

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.

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### "This is Yahweh's declaration"

This phrase is used several times in this chapter. The UDB often translates this as "Yahweh says."

## Links:

* [Zechariah 2:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### Zechariah 2:1

##### I lifted up my eyes

The word "eyes" represents the person who looks. Alternate translation: "I looked up"

##### 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"

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

The phrase "will sit in the open country" translates a word that refers to a city that has no walls. There will be so many inhabitants in the city that it will be too large to have walls around it. Alternate translation: "Jerusalem will not have walls around it ... livestock within the city"

#### Zechariah 2:5

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

People built walls around their cities for protection. Here Yahweh speaks of protecting Jerusalem as if he himself were a wall of fire around the city. Alternate translation: "I ... will protect the city, like a wall of fire around it"

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:4]

#### Zechariah 2:6

##### Up! Up!

These two words express urgency and add emphasis to the following command. The words can be translated with an expression that communicates urgency in your language. Alternate translation: "Run! Run!" or "Hurry! Hurry!"

#### Zechariah 2:7

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

The phrase "daughter of Babylon" refers to the city of Babylon. Yahweh speaks of the city as if it were a daughter. Alternate translation: "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

The word "touches" refers to a touch meant to harm. Alternate translation: "for whoever harms you"

#### Zechariah 2:9

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

Raising one's hand against another person is a gesture of hostility. Here it is a symbolic action that means that God will attack those who harm Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "I myself will fight against them" or "I myself will attack them"

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

The word "plunder" can be translated with a verb. Alternate translation: "their slaves will plunder them"

#### Zechariah 2:10

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

"Zion" is the same as "Jerusalem." The prophet speaks of the city as if it is a daughter. Possible meanings are 1) Zechariah personifies the city as a person who can sing. Alternate translation: "Sing for joy and be glad, Zion" or 2) the phrase "daughter of Zion" is a metonym for the people who live in the city. Alternate translation: "Sing for joy and be glad, people of Zion"

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:4]

#### Zechariah 2:11

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

Zechariah speaks of the people of great nations becoming Yahweh's people and worshiping him as if they were joining themselves to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "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

Zechariah speaks of Yahweh claiming Judah as his own land as if Judah were something that Yahweh inherits as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will claim Judah as his rightful possession"

#### Zechariah 2:13

##### all flesh

Here the word "flesh" represents all humanity. Alternate translation: "all people"

##### he has been roused

Zechariah speaks of Yahweh beginning to act as if someone had roused Yahweh from inactivity. It is implied that this action refers to his returning to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "he is coming"

##### from out of his holy place

Here "his holy place" refers to heaven, and not to the temple in Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "from his holy place in heaven"

## Chapter 3

# Zechariah 3 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter is introduced in prose and shares the fourth vision, which is the priest in dirty clothes. (See: priest)

Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 3:7-9, which is an extended quotation, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

### Difficult concepts in this chapter

#### Visions

It is important for each of these visions to keep their meanings and not be interpreted to mean any specific thing.

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### The high priest

This chapter seems to refer to a particular person, Joshua the high priest. However, little is known about him. (See: highpriest)

## Links:

* [Zechariah 3:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### Zechariah 3:1

##### General Information:

Yahweh shows Zechariah a vision of Joshua the priest.

##### 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?

The angel of Yahweh asks this rhetorical question to emphasize the positive answer that it anticipates. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Joshua is a brand pulled from the fire."

##### a brand pulled from the fire

A brand is a burning piece of wood. The angel of Yahweh speaks of Joshua being rescued from captivity in Babylon 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

Since Joshua's garments were symbolic of his sinfulness, by removing his garments, the angel removed Joshua's iniquity. Causing iniquity to pass from him is an idiom that means that he had removed Joshua's iniquity. Alternate translation: "I have removed your iniquity from you"

##### dress you in official robes

Here the phrase "official robes" is a metaphor for righteousness. If your language has a word for clothes that people wear only for special occasions, you might want to use it here.

#### Zechariah 3:5

##### Let them put

Here 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

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Yahweh speaks of obeying him as if the person were walking along Yahweh's paths. Alternate translation: "If you will obey me and keep my commandments"

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

Here the word "house" is a metonym for the temple, while the word "courts" refers to the courtyards around the temple. Together the phrases mean that Joshua will have authority over the whole temple complex. Alternate translation: "you will have authority over my temple and its courtyards"

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

The phrase "to go and come among" is an idiom that means that Joshua will be a part of this group and have the same privilege as they do of access to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "to come before me as these who stand here do"

#### Zechariah 3:8

##### General Information:

The angel of Yahweh continues to speak to Joshua.

##### your companions who live with you

This phrase refers to other priests who would serve in the temple under the leadership of Joshua. Alternate translation: "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

Here the word "stone" likely refers to a precious stone or jewel.

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

The sides or facets of the stone that reflect light are spoken of as if they are eyes. Alternate translation: "There are seven sides on this single stone"

##### engrave

"carve"

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

Here the word "land" is a metonym for the people who live in the land. The word "remove" is a metaphor that means to forgive. Alternate translation: "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

Both the "vine" and the "fig tree" are symbols of prosperity. This phrase describes actions in which people live prosperously and in peace. Alternate translation: "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 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter is written mainly in prose about the fifth vision, which is about the golden lampstand olive trees.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Visions

This chapter 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.

## Links:

* [Zechariah 4:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### Zechariah 4:1

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

Zechariah compares the way in which the angel interrupted his being in deep thought with the way someone would awaken another person from sleep. Alternate translation: "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 ellipsis in this phrase may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "the left side of the bowl"

#### Zechariah 4:4

##### General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

#### Zechariah 4:5

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

The angel asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that Zechariah should have known what these things mean. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely you know what these things mean."

#### Zechariah 4:6

##### Connecting Statement:

The angel who speaks with Zechariah continues to explain the vision.

##### Not by might nor by power

Since there is no verb in this phrase, it may be necessary in your language to supply one. Alternate translation: "You will not succeed by might nor by power"

##### Not by might nor by power

Possible meanings are 1) that the words "might" and "power" mean basically the same thing and emphasize the greatness of Zerubbabel's strength or 2) that the word "might" refers to military strength and the word "power" refers to Zerubbabel's physical ability. Alternate translation: "Certainly not by your own strength" or "Not by military strength nor by your own power"

#### Zechariah 4:7

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

This is a metaphor in which Yahweh speaks of the obstacles that Zerubbabel will face as if they were a large mountain. He asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that these obstacles pose no threat to Zerubbabel's success. The question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "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

The top stone is the last stone placed when building something. This refers to the top stone of the temple. Alternate translation: "he will bring out the top stone of the temple" or "he will complete the construction of the temple"

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

Possible meanings are 1) the word "grace" refers to God's grace and the people are requesting that God bless the completed temple. Alternate translation: "while people shout, 'May God bless it! May God bless it!'" or 2) the word "grace" refers to beauty and the people are declaring how beautiful the completed temple is. Alternate translation: "while people shout, 'Beautiful! It is beautiful!'"

#### Zechariah 4:8

##### Connecting Statement:

The angel who speaks with Zechariah continues to explain the vision.

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

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to me. He said" or "Yahweh spoke this message to me"

#### Zechariah 4:9

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

Here the word "hands" represents Zerubbabel. Alternate translation: "Zerubbabel has laid ... he will bring it to completion"

##### the foundation of this house

The word "house" represents the temple. Alternate translation: "the foundation of this temple"

#### Zechariah 4:10

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

The angel uses this rhetorical question to speak specifically about those who have "despised the day of small things." It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Those who have despised the day of small things will rejoice"

##### the day of small things

"the time of small things." This phrase refers to the time when the people were building the temple and appeared to be making little progress. Alternate translation: "the time when progress was slow"

##### plumb stone

This refers to 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 phrase refers to the lamps that Zechariah saw in [Zechariah 4:2-3](./02.md).

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

The seven lamps symbolize the eyes of Yahweh, but they are not literally the eyes of Yahweh. The angel speaks of Yahweh seeing everything that happens on the earth as if his eyes roamed over the whole earth. Alternate translation: "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](./02.md).

#### 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?

The angel asks this rhetorical question to emphasize that Zechariah should have known what these things mean. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely you know what these are."

#### Zechariah 4:14

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

The branches symbolize these people, but they are not literally the people. Alternate translation: "These two branches represent the sons of fresh olive oil"

##### the sons of fresh olive oil

This idiom means that these men have been anointed with fresh olive oil. A person who is anointed is one whom Yahweh has chosen or appointed for a special duty. Alternate translation: "the anointed men" or "the men whom Yahweh has appointed"

##### who stand before the Lord

The idiom "stand before" means to be in a person's presence and to serve him. Alternate translation: "who serve the Lord"

## Chapter 5

# Zechariah 5 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter contains the next two visions. One is about a flying scroll and one is about the basket filled with iniquity. (See: iniquity)

## Links:

* [Zechariah 5:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### Zechariah 5:1

##### Then I turned

The word "I" refers to Zechariah.

##### lifted my eyes

The word "eyes" represents the person who looks. Alternate translation: "looked up"

##### behold

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

#### Zechariah 5:2

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

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

#### Zechariah 5:3

##### General Information:

The angel continues to speak with Zechariah.

##### This is the curse

The word "this" refers to the scroll. The scroll is a metonym for what is written on the scroll. Alternate translation: "On this scroll is the curse"

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

The phrase "the surface of the whole land" refers to every place within the land. It is implied that the curse will apply to every person who lives in the land. Alternate translation: "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 removing these people from the land is spoken of as if he were cutting them off, like a person would cut a branch from a tree. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "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

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:3]

##### consume its timber and stones

The curse destroying the houses of the thief and of the one who swears falsely is spoken of as if the curse would consume the building materials that people had used to build the houses. Alternate translation: "destroy its wood and stones" or "completely destroy it"

#### Zechariah 5:5

##### Raise your eyes

The word "eyes" represents the person who looks. Alternate translation: "Look up"

#### Zechariah 5:6

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

An "ephah" is a unit of measurement for dry materials and is equal to 22 liters. Here the word is a metonym for the container that would hold an ephah of dry material. Alternate translation: "This is a measuring basket that is coming" or "This is a large container that is coming"

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

The basket symbolizes the people's iniquity, but it is not literally their iniquity. Alternate translation: "This basket represents the iniquity of the people throughout the whole land"

#### Zechariah 5:7

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: 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

The woman represents wickedness. Alternate translation: "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

Here the word "eyes" represents the person who sees. Alternate translation: "I looked up"

##### wind was in their wings

This idiom means that they were flying. Alternate translation: "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

The words "earth" and "heaven" form a merism that refer to the sky. It is implicit that the two women flew away with the basket. Alternate translation: "They lifted the basket up into the sky and flew away"

#### Zechariah 5:10

##### General Information:

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#### Zechariah 5:11

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

The ellipsis can be supplied from the previous verse. Alternate translation: "They are taking the basket to the land of Shinar to build a temple for it"

##### the basket will be set there

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "they will set the basket there"

##### on its prepared base

The words "prepared base" refer to a pedestal or other kind of fixture upon which they will place the basket.

## Chapter 6

# Zechariah 6 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter is written mainly in prose and tells the last vision of the four chariots in the first part of the chapter.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 6:12-13.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Crown

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. (See: highpriest)

### Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

#### Meaning of the visions

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. (See: prophet)

## Links:

* [Zechariah 6:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### Zechariah 6:1

##### lifted my eyes

Here the word "eyes" represents the person who sees. Alternate translation: "looked up"

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

Since the second phrase describes the mountains in the first phrase, the two phrases may be combined. Alternate translation: "between two bronze mountains"

#### Zechariah 6:2

##### The first chariot had red horses

It is implicit that the horses were pulling the chariots. Alternate translation: "The first chariot had red horses pulling it" or "Red horses were pulling the first chariot"

#### Zechariah 6:3

##### General Information:

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#### Zechariah 6:4

##### General Information:

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#### Zechariah 6:5

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

The chariots symbolize the four winds of heaven, but they are not literally the four winds. Alternate translation: "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. However, some modern versions interpret this Hebrew expression to mean "four spirits."

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

The idiom to "stand before" means to be in a person's presence and to serve him. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 4:14]

#### Zechariah 6:6

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

Some modern versions interpret this Hebrew phrase to mean "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

Here the horses represent the chariots that they pull. Alternate translation: "the chariot with the white horses is ... the chariot with the spotted gray horses is"

#### Zechariah 6:7

##### General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

#### 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

The words "my spirit" refer to Yahweh, so many translations change this to read "Yahweh's spirit." Possible meanings are 1) the word "spirit" represents Yahweh's emotions and appeasing his spirit means that the chariots will cause Yahweh no longer to be angry with the north country Alternate translation: "they will calm my anger concerning the north country" or 2) the word "spirit" represents Yahweh's presence and the chariots will cause the Jews who live in the north land to experience Yahweh's blessings. Alternate translation: "they will cause my spirit to rest in the north country"

#### Zechariah 6:9

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

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to me. He said" or "Yahweh spoke this message to me"

#### 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

The phrase "grow up" refers to the growth of a plant, and so continues the metaphor of this person as a "Branch." 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

Possible meanings are 1) the "Branch" will be both priest and king or 2) the "Branch" will be king, and another person will be a priest who will share the royal power. Alternate translation: "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 1) the "Branch" will faithfully carry out his duties as both priest and king and not forsake one in order to fulfill the other or 2) 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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "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

Some modern versions interpret this phrase as "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

Here to "listen" means to obey and the word "voice" represents the words that Yahweh speaks. Alternate translation: "truly obey what Yahweh your God says"

## Chapter 7

# Zechariah 7 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter starts about two years after the previous chapter and is written in prose.

Some translations prefer to set apart quotations. The ULB and many other English translations set the lines of 7:4-14, which is an extended quotation, farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Fasting

This chapter discusses fasting. People were asking the same questions as those from previous generations. The Israelites were asking these same questions before they were exiled from their land.

## Links:

* [Zechariah 7:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### 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

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to Zechariah" or "Yahweh spoke this message to Zechariah"

#### 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

Here "face" is a metonym for Yahweh's presence. Alternate translation: "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

"Should I mourn in month 5." 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

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh of hosts gave me a message. He said" or "Yahweh of hosts spoke this message to me"

#### Zechariah 7:5

##### in the fifth and in the seventh month

"in months 5 and 7"

##### in the fifth

The word "month" can be supplied in translation. Alternate translation: "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?

This question is asked to make the people think about what their real reason for fasting had been. It can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "you were not really fasting for me."

#### Zechariah 7:6

##### When you ate and drank

Possible meanings are 1) when they feasted and drank when celebrating religious festivals or 2) when they ate and drank whenever they were not fasting.

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

This question is used to make the people think about whether they were honoring Yahweh when they ate and drank. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "it was for yourselves that you ate and drank."

#### Zechariah 7:7

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

Yahweh uses a question to scold the people. This question can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "These are the same words ... were inhabited."

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

Here "hand" is a metonym for the words spoken by the mouth. Alternate translation: "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 7:8

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

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave a message to Zechariah. He said" or "Yahweh spoke this message to Zechariah"

#### Zechariah 7:9

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

The abstract nouns "justice," "faithfulness," and "mercy" can be stated as adjectives. Alternate translation: "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

Here "heart" represents the thoughts of a person. Alternate translation: "you must not make plans to do evil"

#### Zechariah 7:11

##### set their shoulders stubbornly

This is an image of an ox refusing to allow its owner to put a yoke on its shoulders. This metaphor represents the people being stubborn. Alternate translation: "became stubborn"

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

This is an image of people putting something into their ears so they would not hear the message from Yahweh. This metaphor represents the people not being willing to hear and obey. Alternate translation: "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

The people refusing to hear and obey Yahweh are compared to their being as unyielding as rock. Here the heart represents the will of a person. Alternate translation: "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

Here the "mouth of the prophets" is a metonym for the words that the prophets speak. Alternate translation: "through the words of the prophets"

#### Zechariah 7:13

##### General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

#### Zechariah 7:14

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

Yahweh speaks of how he will scatter the people as if a whirlwind were scattering everything in its path. Alternate translation: "I will scatter them as a whirlwind scatters things"

##### 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 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter is a series of sayings from Yahweh of hosts. Each saying is an encouraging note for those returning from the exile to the land of Judah and Jerusalem. (See: yahwehofhosts)

## Links:

* [Zechariah 8:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### Zechariah 8:1

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

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 7:4]

#### 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

Here "Zion" represents the people of Zion. Alternate translation: "for the people of Zion" or "for the people of Jerusalem"

##### with great anger

You may need to make explicit that this anger is against the enemies of Zion. Alternate translation: "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

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "If something does not appear to be possible to"

##### the remnant of this people

"the people of Judah who survive"

##### in my eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "to me"

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:4]

#### 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

Possible meanings are 1) this is a poetic way of expressing specific countries to which the people were exiled. Alternate translation: "From the land to the east and from the land to the west" or 2) this is a merism that means from all directions. Alternate translation: "from all lands in every direction"

#### Zechariah 8:8

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

This can be rewritten to remove the abstract nouns "truth" and "righteousness." Alternate translation: "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

This is an idiom that means to be courageous for the work. Alternate translation: "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.

##### no crops were gathered in

"there were no crops to harvest"

##### 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.

##### for anyone going or coming

This merism refers to all of life's activities everywhere that anyone went.

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

"I had turned everyone against each other"

#### Zechariah 8:11

##### But now it will not be as in former days, I will be with the remnant of this people

"But I will not treat the remnant of this people now as I did in former days"

##### in former days

"in the past." The implied information is that this refers to the time when the people started rebuilding the temple.

##### the remnant of this people

The implied information is that this is the remnant of the people who returned from exile. Alternate translation: "the people who returned from exile"

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

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:3]

#### Zechariah 8:12

##### seeds of peace will be sown

This can be expressed in active form. Alternate translation: "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

The implied information is that the way Yahweh had allowed the temple to be destroyed and his people to be exiled had been used by other nations as an example of what it meant to be cursed by Yahweh. Alternate translation: "When I punished you, the other nations learned what happens when I curse a people"

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

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the people in the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. Alternate translation: "people of Judah and Israel"

##### you will be a blessing

Possible meanings are 1) the implied information is that the people of Judah and Israel would be a blessing to the nations around them. Alternate translation: "you will be a blessing to the surrounding nations" or 2) the implied information is that the nations around them would see what it meant to be blessed by Yahweh. Alternate translation: 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. Alternate translation: "I will give you many good things"

##### let your hands be strong

This is an idiom that means to be courageous for the work. Alternate translation: "be strong and courageous"

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

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the people in the kingdom of Judah. Alternate translation: "people of Judah"

#### 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

This is a metonym for the people of Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "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

The abstract noun "truth" can be translated using the adjective "true." Alternate translation: "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

This can be restated to remove the abstract nouns "truth," "justice," and "peace." Alternate translation: "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

The assumed knowledge is that this refers to the places where judgment took place. Alternate translation: "in your places of judgment"

#### Zechariah 8:17

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:4]

#### Zechariah 8:18

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

This idiom is used to introduce a special message from God. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 7:4]

##### came to me

Here "me" refers to Zechariah.

#### Zechariah 8:19

##### The fasts of the fourth month, the fifth month, the seventh month, and the tenth month

"The fasts of months 4, 5, 7, and 10"

##### 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. See how you translated this in Zechariah 7:3.

##### 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. See how you translated this in Zechariah 7:5.

##### 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.

##### times of joy, gladness, and happy festivals

The abstract nouns "joy" and "gladness" can be translated using adjectives. Alternate translation: "joyful and glad times, with happy festivals"

##### the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the people in the kingdom of Judah, which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"

##### love truth and peace

The abstract nouns "truth" and "peace" can be translated using adjectives. Alternate translation: "love what is truthful and peaceful"

#### Zechariah 8:20

##### People will come again

The implied information is that Jerusalem is where the people will come. Alternate translation: "People will come again to Jerusalem"

#### Zechariah 8:21

##### will go to another city

This is a metonym for the people in the other city. Alternate translation: "will go to the people of another city"

##### beg

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

##### before the face of Yahweh

Here "face" is a metonym for Yahweh's presence. See how you translated this in Zechariah 7:2. Alternate translation: "in the presence of Yahweh"

##### 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

This is a metonym for the people in the mighty nations. Alternate translation: "people of mighty nations"

#### Zechariah 8:23

##### will grasp the hem of the robe of a Jew

The implied information is that the foreigners will grab their robe to get their attention. Alternate translation: "will grasp the hem of the robe of a Jew to get his attention"

##### Let us go with you

The implied information is that people of God are going to Jerusalem. Alternate translation: "Let us go to Jerusalem with you"

##### God is with you

"God is with you people"

## Chapter 9

# Zechariah 9 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter is written mainly in prose about the cities and peoples around where Israel stood as a country until the exile.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 9:9-10.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Prophecies against other nations

The first two verses show that the prophecy concerns neighboring countries. Hamath, Damscus, Tyre and Sidon are cities in areas that were near Israel. (See: prophet)

## Links:

* [Zechariah 9:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### Zechariah 9:1

##### This is a declaration of Yahweh's word concerning

"This is Yahweh's message about"

##### the land of Hadrak and Damascus

Here "Hadrak" and "Damascus" refer to the people who live in those places. Alternate translation: "the people of the land of Hadrak and the city Damascus"

##### Hadrak

The location of Hadrak is unknown today.

##### its resting place

"the resting place of the people of Hadrak"

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

Some versions translate this as "for Yahweh's eye is on all mankind and on the tribes of Israel."

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

Here "eyes" refers to what they look at. Alternate translation: "all humanity and all the tribes of Israel look toward Yahweh"

#### Zechariah 9:2

##### Hamath

This refers to the people who live in that land. Alternate translation: "the people of the land of Hamath"

##### Tyre and Sidon

This refers to the people who live in those cities. Alternate translation: "the people of Tyre and Sidon"

##### for they are very wise

Possible meanings are 1) the people are wise for looking at Yahweh for help or 2) Zechariah did not really mean that the people of Hamath were wise and was using irony. Alternate translation: "though they think they are very wise"

#### Zechariah 9:3

##### built herself a stronghold

Here the city of Tyre is pictured as a woman. Alternate translation: "built a strong fortress" or "built a high wall"

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

Yahweh exaggerates to emphasize how rich Tyre was. Alternate translation: "accumulated silver and gold as much as soil in the streets"

#### Zechariah 9:4

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

Here "Look!" tells the reader to pay attention to the important statement that follows. Alternate translation: "Pay attention! The Lord will take away Tyre's possessions"

##### destroy her strength on the sea

Tyre's "strength on the sea" refers to the ships that were used for commerce and conquest. Alternate translation: "destroy Tyre's ships in which men fight on the sea"

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "and enemies will burn the city to the ground"

#### Zechariah 9:5

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

These cities each refer to the people who live in them. Alternate translation: "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

Here "cut off" is an idiom that means to stop their pride. Alternate translation: "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

Here "blood" is a metonym for meat with blood in it, and "abominations" is a metonym for meat offered to idols. Alternate translation: "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

God is speaking about himself as if he were an army that was protecting his land. Alternate translation: "I will protect my land"

##### for now

"For at that time"

##### I see with my own eyes

Here "my own eyes" represent Yahweh's personal attention. Alternate translation: "I will personally watch over my land"

#### Zechariah 9:9

##### General Information:

Yahweh appears to be the speaker in verses 9-13.

##### Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem!

These two sentences mean the same thing and intensify the command to rejoice. Yahweh is speaking to the people of Jerusalem as if they were present, but they were not there.

##### 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." The prophet speaks of the city as if it is a daughter. See how you translated "daughter of Zion" in Zechariah 2:10.

##### Behold!

This alerts the reader to pay special attention to the surprising statement that follows. Alternate translation: "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

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and refer to one animal. The second phrase clarifies that this is a young donkey. Alternate translation: "on a young donkey"

#### Zechariah 9:10

##### cut off the chariot from Ephraim

Here "cut off" is an idiom that means to destroy. Alternate translation: "destroy the chariots in Israel that are used for battle"

##### the horse from Jerusalem

The references to "chariot" and "bow" means that this refers to horses used in battle. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "the warhorses in Jerusalem"

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

Here the bow represents all weapons used in warfare. Alternate translation: "all weapons of war will be destroyed"

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

Here the action of announcing peace represents the action of making peace. Alternate translation: "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!

The phrases "sea to sea" and "from the River to the ends of the earth" mean the same thing and can be combined. Alternate translation: "his kingdom will be over all the earth!"

##### the River

This probably refers to the Euphrates River.

#### Zechariah 9:11

##### General Information:

Yahweh appears to be the speaker in verses 9-13.

##### As for you

Here "you" is singular, and continues to refer 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

Jerusalem is spoken of as a place of safety. Alternate translation: "Come back to your nation where you will be safe"

##### prisoners of hope

This expression refers to the Israelites in exile who were still trusting in God to rescue them. Alternate translation: "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

The people of Judah are referred to as if they were a bow carried by God into battle. Here "Judah" refers to the people of that nation. Alternate translation: "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

##### General Information:

In verses 14-16, Zechariah describes how Yahweh will rescue Israel from their enemies.

##### will appear to them

The word "them" refers to God's people. Alternate translation: "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

Team was located to the south of Judah. The Israelites sometimes thought of God as traveling on violent storms coming from the south. Alternate translation: "will march from Teman with the storm winds"

#### Zechariah 9:15

##### they will devour them

"the people of Judah will devour their enemies"

##### will devour

To completely defeat enemies is spoken of as devouring them as a wild animal eats its prey. Alternate translation: "will completely defeat"

##### defeat the stones of the slings

Slings to throw stones were a common weapon in the days of Zechariah. Here the "stones of the slings" represent the soldiers who were using them to attack Israel. Alternate translation: "defeat the enemies who attack them with slings and stones"

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

The people of Judah will shout and celebrate their victory over their enemies as if they were noisy drunks. Alternate translation: "Then they will shout and celebrate their victory as loudly as if they were drunk"

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

This probably refers to the bowls that the priests used to carry animal's blood to the altar. Alternate translation: "they will be as full of wine as the basins with which priests carry blood to the altar"

##### like the corners of the altar

Altars had projecting corners that were drenched in animal blood. Alternate translation: "they will be drenched as the corners of the altar are covered in blood"

#### Zechariah 9:16

##### General Information:

In verses 14-16, Zechariah describes how Yahweh will rescue Israel from their enemies.

##### 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

The people of Israel are spoken of as if they were the expensive jewels in the crown of a king that show how glorious he is. Alternate translation: "They will be like beautiful stones in a crown"

#### Zechariah 9:17

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

This is an exclamation, and not a question. Alternate translation: "They will be very good and beautiful!"

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

This sentence uses a parallel structure to express that everyone will have plenty to eat and drink. If your readers might think that only the men ate and only the women drank, you may want to adjust the wording. Alternate translation: "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.

##### grain ... sweet wine

These two phrases are parallel and together represent all of the different kinds of the food and drink.

## Chapter 10

# Zechariah 10 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter is written mainly in prose but still uses figurative language as the writer shares a message of redemption and hope for the exiles. (See: redeem)

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 10:1-2.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Redemption

This book, and especially this chapter, uses the concepts of redemption and remnant to share the relationship that the people of Judah have with their God. So many of the people of Israel perished as their kingdom went into exile. Now they are returning to the land, but the land is no longer theirs. They are living under foreign rule. (See: redeem and remnant)

## Links:

* [Zechariah 10:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### Zechariah 10:1

##### General Information:

Zechariah continues speaking to the people of Israel.

##### 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. The UDB makes this explicit.

##### diviners envision a lie

"diviners see false visions"

##### they tell deceitful dreams

It is implied that they know these dreams are false. This can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "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 do not have true prophets who tell the truth are spoken of as sheep who do not have a shepherd to tell them where to go. Alternate translation: "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 do not have true prophets are spoken of as sheep who suffer because they do not have a shepherd to tell them where to go. Alternate translation: "the people who listen to the false prophets ... are suffering like sheep who do not have a shepherd to guide them"

#### Zechariah 10:3

##### General Information:

It is unclear whether Yahweh is speaking, or if Zechariah is speaking for Yahweh in verses 3-5.

##### My wrath burns against the shepherds

Here "the shepherds" represent the leaders of God's people. The intensity of Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it was a blazing fire. Alternate translation: "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

Here Yahweh's care for his people is spoken of as a shepherd cares for his sheep. Alternate translation: "Yahweh of hosts will take care of the house of Judah as a shepherd cares for his sheep"

##### the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the people of Judah, which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. Alternate translation: "Judah" or "the people of Judah"

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

Yahweh changes the metaphor for his people from defenseless sheep to a mighty war horse. He speaks of his people as if they were a strong horse in battle. Alternate translation: "will cause them to be strong like war horses in battle"

#### Zechariah 10:4

##### General Information:

It is unclear whether Yahweh is speaking, or if Zechariah is speaking for Yahweh in verses 3-5.

##### From Judah will come the cornerstone

"The cornerstone will come from Judah." The most important ruler is spoken of as if he where the main foundation stone of a building. Alternate translation: "One of the descendants of Judah will become the most important ruler"

##### the cornerstone ... the tent peg ... the war bow

Possible meanings for these three things are 1) they may be symbolic language that refers to the Messiah who will come from the tribe of Judah or 2) they may refer to different leaders who will come from Judah.

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

"the tent peg will come from him." The tent pegs held the ropes that supported tents in which people lived. Here the most important ruler is spoken of as if he where the main peg that holds a tent in place. Alternate translation: "the leader who will hold the nation together will come from Judah"

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

"the war bow will come from him." Here the most important ruler is spoken of as if he where the a war bow that was used in battle. Alternate translation: "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

The rulers from Judah are spoken of as if they were victorious warriors. Alternate translation: "They will be mighty in battle, trampling their enemies into the mud of the streets"

##### who trample their enemies into the mud of the streets in battle

To trample them into the mud is an idiom that means to completely defeat them. Alternate translation: "who defeat their enemies completely"

##### Yahweh is with them

Here "with them" is an idiom that means he is present to help them. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will help them"

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

Here shame accompanies and represents defeat. Alternate translation: "they will defeat their enemies who ride warhorses"

#### Zechariah 10:6

##### General Information:

In verses 6-12, Yahweh is speaking to the people of Israel.

##### the house of Judah

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Judah, which included the descendants of Judah and Benjamin. Alternate translation: "Judah" or "the kingdom of Judah" or "the people of Judah"

##### the house of Joseph

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to the kingdom of Israel. Alternate translation: "Israel" or "the kingdom of Israel" or "the people of Israel"

#### Zechariah 10:7

##### Ephraim will be like a warrior

"Ephraim" refers here to the northern kingdom of Israel. Warriors are strong. Alternate translation: "Ephraim will be very strong"

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

Here "hearts" refers to the whole person. They will have the same joy as a person who is enjoying drinking wine. Alternate translation: "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

##### General Information:

In verses 6-12, Yahweh is speaking to the people of Israel.

##### 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

The people will continue to go back to Judah and it will become crowded with no room for any more people to live there. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "and they will completely fill the land"

#### Zechariah 10:11

##### General Information:

In verses 6-12, Yahweh is speaking to the people of Israel.

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

Scripture often refers to the sea as an image of many troubles and hardships. Here Yahweh speaks of himself accompanying the people to help them go through these afflictions. Alternate translation: "I will go with them and help them as they go through their many afflictions"

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

Here to "strike" the waves is an idiom that means he will stop the waves from forming. Stopping the afflictions of his people is spoken of as calming the waves of that sea. Alternate translation: "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

Here "the majesty of Assyria" probably refers to the Assyrian army. Alternate translation: "I will destroy Assyria's proud army"

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

Here "the scepter of Egypt" refers to the political power of Egypt. Alternate translation: "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

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:4]

## Chapter 11

# Zechariah 11 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter unlike the previous one is a warning against the leaders amongst the exiles.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 11:1-3, 17.

### Important figures of speech in this chapter

#### Metaphor

This chapter uses an extended metaphor of sheep and shepherds to represent Yahweh's dismay at the leaders during the exiles.

#### Symbolism

The writer uses symbolism. Zechariah is told to become a shepherd. He uses two staffs and names them "Unity" and "Favor." He does this very purposefully. In order to preserve this symbolism, it is important to pay attention to the specific words used. (See: favor)

## Links:

* [Zechariah 11:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### Zechariah 11:1

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

Not resisting what is about to happen is spoken of as if Lebanon were opening its doors. Here "Lebanon" is a metonym that represents the people of Lebanon. Alternate translation: "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 completely burning up the cedars is spoken of as if the fire would devour the cedars. Alternate translation: "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

Cypress trees are spoken of as if they could grieve like a human. Alternate translation: "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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "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.

The oaks of Bash are spoken of as if they could grieve like a human. Alternate translation: "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

Here "their glory" probably represents the rich pastures that the shepherds led their sheep to. Alternate translation: "for their rich pastures are ruined"

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

Here "the pride" probably represents the forests that grew near the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "because the trees and shrubbery where they lived by the Jordan River are ruined"

#### Zechariah 11:4

##### General Information:

In 11:4-17 is a story about two shepherds. Possible meanings are 1) Zechariah actually became a shepherd over a flock as a symbolic act showing how Yahweh will treat his people or 2) Zechariah tells a parable that teaches how Yahweh will treat his people. Since it is uncertain which of these meanings is correct, it would be best not to specify either option in the translation.

##### 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

The inhabitants of the land do not consider "those who buy them" guilty, but Yahweh does and uses irony to say so. Alternate translation: "Those who buy them ... them, but no one believes they are guilty for doing so"

##### guilty

You may need to make explicit that Yahweh considers them guilty of murder.

#### Zechariah 11:6

##### this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:4]

##### 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

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "allow the people to harm each other and the king will oppress them"

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

Here "hand" represents power or control. Alternate translation: "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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "the covenant ended"

##### knew that Yahweh had spoken

It is implied that those watching knew Yahweh was giving them a message through the breaking of the staff. Alternate translation: "knew that Yahweh had given them a message"

#### Zechariah 11:12

##### thirty pieces of silver

It is implied that this was very little pay for the shepherd. Alternate translation: "only thirty pieces of silver"

##### thirty pieces

"30 pieces"

#### Zechariah 11:13

##### General Information:

The parable about shepherds and sheep continues.

##### treasury

This is the place in the temple of Yahweh where the priests kept the money. Many versions of the Bible translate this as "potter." This is the person who would melt metal to make vessels out of it. Here Yahweh would mean that the payment is so small that the shepherd should have the silver melted to show how insulted he was.

##### the excellent price

Yahweh uses irony to say that this price was very small for a shepherd doing Yahweh's work. Alternate translation: "the ridiculously small amount of money"

#### Zechariah 11:14

##### between Judah and Israel

Here "Judah" represents the people of the southern kingdom and "Israel" represents the people of the northern kingdom. Alternate translation: "between the people of Judah and the people of Israel"

#### Zechariah 11:15

##### General Information:

This continues the story about two shepherds that began in [Zechariah 11:4]

#### Zechariah 11:16

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

Here "set in place" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "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

Here "sword" represents enemies who will attack the shepherd. Alternate translation: "May enemies"

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

Here "come against" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "strike and wound his right arm and pierce his right eye"

##### his arm

Here "arm" represents the power to fight.

##### his right eye

A soldier would use his right eye to look around the shield that he held with his left hand. If his right eye was wounded, he would not be able to see to fight in war.

##### his arm wither away

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

## Chapter 12

# Zechariah 12 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

Similar to chapter 11, this chapter is written mainly in prose and is talking about Jerusalem.

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Prophecy

Verses 10-11 are quoted in the New Testament and apply to Jesus's death on the cross. (See: cross)

## Links:

* [Zechariah 12:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### Zechariah 12:1

##### General Information:

These verses begin a section that tells about the coming attack against Jerusalem and how God will rescue the city.

##### who stretched out the skies

This is a metaphor that speaks of the sky as if it were like a scroll that is rolled up and needs to be stretched out. Alternate translation: "the one who created the sky"

##### laid the foundation of the earth

This is a metaphor that speaks of the earth as if it were a building with a foundation. Alternate translation: "put all the earth into place"

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

This is a metaphor that speaks of the spirit as if it were like clay that a potter shapes. Alternate translation: "creates the human spirit"

#### Zechariah 12:2

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

Yahweh using Jerusalem to punish the surrounding peoples is spoken of as if Yahweh would make Jerusalem a cup full of an alcoholic drink that will cause the surrounding peoples to get drunk and stagger. Alternate translation: "Soon it will be like I make Jerusalem into a cup ... to stagger about"

##### into a cup

Here "cup" represents the cup and the contents within the cup. Alternate translation: "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. It was common in Hebrew to speak of a city or country as if it were a woman.

#### Zechariah 12:3

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

Yahweh using Jerusalem to punish the surrounding peoples is spoken of as if he would make Jerusalem a very heavy stone. Alternate translation: "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

##### General Information:

These verses continue telling about the coming attack against Jerusalem and how God will rescue the city.

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

Opening eyes over someone here is a metaphor for wanting to do good things for that person. Alternate translation: "I will do good things for the house of Judah" or "I will protect the house of Judah"

##### the house of Judah

Here "house" represents people. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah"

#### Zechariah 12:5

##### say in their hearts

Here "hearts" represents a person's mind. Alternate translation: "think to themselves" or "say to themselves"

##### are our strength

The abstract noun "strength" can be stated as "strong" or "encourage." Alternate translation: "make us strong" or "encourage us"

##### Yahweh of hosts, their God

"Yahweh of hosts, the God they worship"

#### Zechariah 12:6

##### General Information:

This verse continues telling about the coming attack against Jerusalem and how God will rescue the city.

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

This simile means Yahweh will enable the leaders of Judah to be strong and able to lead the people to defeat their enemies. Alternate translation: "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

Completely destroying the peoples is spoken of as if the people of Judah will "devour" them. Alternate translation: "will destroy the surrounding peoples"

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

Here "right" and "left" represent every direction. Alternate translation: "in every direction"

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

Here "Jerusalem" represents the people who live there. Alternate translation: "The people of Jerusalem will again live in their own city"

#### Zechariah 12:7

##### General Information:

These verses continue telling about the coming attack against Jerusalem and how God will rescue the city.

##### the tents of Judah

Here "tents" represents homes, and homes represent the people who live in them. Alternate translation: "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

This simile means those who are weak will be strong. Alternate translation: "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 12:9

##### General Information:

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#### Zechariah 12:10

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

Causing the people to be compassionate and to plead is spoken of as if the spirit were a liquid that Yahweh would pour on them. Alternate translation: "I will cause the house of David and inhabitants of Jerusalem to have mercy on others and to pray to me for mercy"

##### a spirit of compassion and pleading

Here this means to have a characteristic of compassion and pleading.

##### the house of David

Here "house" represents descendants. Alternate translation: "the descendants of David"

##### the one they have pierced

"the one whom they stabbed to death"

##### for an only son

It is understood that the "son" has died. Alternate translation: "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

This represents all the people living in the land of Judah. Alternate translation: "All the people in the land of Judah will mourn"

##### The clan of the house of David ... The clan of the house of Nathan

Here "house" represents descendants. Alternate translation: "The descendants of David ... The descendants of Nathan"

#### Zechariah 12:13

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

Here "house" represents descendants. Alternate translation: "The descendants of Levi"

#### Zechariah 12:14

##### General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

## Chapter 13

# Zechariah 13 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter is written partly in prose and partly in poetry.

Some translations set poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to show that it is poetry. The ULB does this with the poetic song in 13:7-9.

### Special concepts in this chapter

Zechariah often speaks of the last days by using the phrase "that day" or "in that day." When referencing a future "day," the translator should be aware that it is possible that the author is speaking about the last days. (See: lastday)

## Links:

* [Zechariah 13:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### Zechariah 13:1

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

Forgiving the people's sins is spoken of as if a spring of water will wash away their sins. This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "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

Here "house" represents descendants. Alternate translation: "the descendants of David"

#### Zechariah 13:2

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

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:3]

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

Causing the people to no longer mention the names of idols is spoken of as if Yahweh would "cut off the names of the idols from the land." Alternate translation: "I will cause the people to no longer mention the names of the idols"

##### they will no longer be remembered

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "so that they no longer think about the idols"

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

The prophets may refer to "false prophets." The spirit of impurity is spoken of as if it were physically unclean. Alternate translation: "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

It is implied that these are false prophecies. Alternate translation: "to prophesy falsely"

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

The phrase "who bore him" describes "his father and mother" in order to express surprise that someone's own parents would treat him in this way. Alternate translation: "his own father and mother"

##### You will not live

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "You must die"

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

Speaking in the name of someone means speaking with his power and authority, or as his representative. Alternate translation: "you claim to speak for Yahweh but you speak lies"

##### will pierce

"will stab and kill him"

#### Zechariah 13:4

##### each prophet

This implies false prophets. Alternate translation: "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

It is implied that his answer is a lie. Alternate translation: "he will lie to him saying"

#### Zechariah 13:7

##### General Information:

Zechariah often wrote prophecy in the form of poetry. Hebrew poetry uses different kinds of parallelism. Here Yahweh begins speaking.

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

"You, sword! Go and attack my shepherd." Here Yahweh speaks to a sword as if it were a person. Here it represents enemies. Alternate translation: "You, enemies! Go and attack my shepherd"

##### my shepherd

This speaks of a servant of Yahweh as if he were a shepherd. Alternate translation: "my servant who is like a shepherd"

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

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Zechariah 1:3]

##### the flock will scatter

The people of God are spoken of as if they were sheep. Alternate translation: "my people will run away like sheep"

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

The idiom "turn my hand against" means to act hostile towards someone. Alternate translation: "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

People being killed is spoken of as if they are cut off like cloth is cut from a garment or a branch is cut from a plant. Alternate translation: "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. This expression serves here as a metaphor for exposing the people to suffering in order that they may become more faithful to God.

##### 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. Both refining and testing are here metaphors for making the people more faithful to God.

##### They will call on my name

Here "name" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "They will call out to me"

## Chapter 14

# Zechariah 14 General Notes

### Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in prose about Jerusalem during the last days. (See: lastday)

### Special concepts in this chapter

#### Last days

Zechariah often speaks of the last days by using the phrase "that day" or "in that day." When referencing a future "day," the translator should be aware that it is possible that the author is speaking about the last days.

## Links:

* [Zechariah 14:1 Notes](./01.md)

#### Zechariah 14:1

##### General Information:

This chapter describes the final war for the city of Jerusalem and how God will save it.

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

A future time is spoken of as if "a day is coming." The phrase "will be divided" can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "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

Here "every nation" is a generalization that means "many nations." Alternate translation: "I will cause many nations to attack Jerusalem"

##### the city will be captured

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your enemies will capture the city"

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "Enemies will plunder the houses and rape the women"

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

Not removing people from the city is spoken of as if the people will not be "cut off." This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "your enemies will allow the remaining people to stay in the city"

#### Zechariah 14:3

##### General Information:

These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save it. In this prophecy, Yahweh is described as a warrior who will come and fight in battle.

##### 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

Here "feet" represents Yahweh. Alternate translation: "he will stand on the Mount of Olives"

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

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "The presences of Yahweh will split the Mount of Olives ... causing there to be a very great valley"

#### Zechariah 14:5

##### General Information:

These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.

##### 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

Here "You will" refers to the people of Jerusalem. But, "you fled" refers to their ancestors since this describes an event that happened many years earlier. Alternate translation: "You will flee just as your ancestors fled"

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

Here "in the days" is an idiom that refers to the time when Uzziah was king. Alternate translation: "when Uzziah was king of Judah"

##### the holy ones

This probably refers to God's angels.

#### Zechariah 14:6

##### General Information:

These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.

##### On that day

"At that time"

##### there will be no light

It is implied that there will be no light from the sun. Alternate translation: "there will be no light from the sun"

#### Zechariah 14:7

##### a day known only to Yahweh

This can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "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

##### General Information:

These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.

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

Here "name" represents Yahweh's reputation or character. Alternate translation: "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

It is implied that this is the land of Judah. Alternate translation: "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

This contrasts Jerusalem, which will remain at a higher elevation, to the surrounding area, which is lower in elevation. The contrast can be indicated by adding the word "but." This can also be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "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

Here "Jerusalem" represents the people. Alternate translation: "The people will live safely in Jerusalem"

#### Zechariah 14:12

##### General Information:

These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.

##### 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

The abstract noun "panic" can be stated as "terrified." Alternate translation: "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

These are idioms that refer to being hostile towards another person. Alternate translation: "Each person will grab someone, and they will fight each other"

#### Zechariah 14:14

##### General Information:

These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.

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

Here "Judah" and "Jerusalem" represent the people that live there. Alternate translation: "Even the other people in Judah will make war against the people of Jerusalem"

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

Some versions of the Bible read, "Judah will also make war at Jerusalem."

##### They will gather the wealth

"They will capture all the valuable possessions"

##### in great abundance

"in great quantities"

#### Zechariah 14:15

##### General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

#### Zechariah 14:16

##### General Information:

These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.

##### that came against Jerusalem

Here "came against" is an idiom. Alternate translation: "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 14:17

##### General Information:

This page has intentionally been left blank.

#### Zechariah 14:18

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

Causing people to suffer from a plague is spoken of as if the plague would attack the people like an army. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause a plague among the people of the nations"

#### Zechariah 14:19

##### General Information:

These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.

#### Zechariah 14:20

##### General Information:

These verses continue the description of the final war for the city of Jerusalem and of how God will save her.

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

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

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

These basins were used for boiling meat in the courtyard of the temple. Alternate translation: "the cooking pots in the courtyard of the temple"

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

It is implied that the basins will be sacred like the bowls used for catching the blood of the sacrifices. Alternate translation: "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

It was the custom for traders to sell the people things they needed in order to make proper sacrifices to Yahweh in the temple. Alternate translation: "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."