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v92

Zechariah

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Zechariah

1 I am Zechariah, a prophet, the son of Berechiah and grandson of Iddo. When Darius had been the emperor of Persia for almost two years, in the eighth month of that year, Yahweh gave me this message:

[2] "Yahweh was very angry with your ancestors. [3] So tell the people this: 'Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, says, "Come back to me"—this is what Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, solemnly declares—"and I will help you again, says Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies. [4] Do not be like your ancestors. The prophets who lived before you continually told your ancestors that Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, said, 'Stop doing the evil things that you are doing!' However, they refused to listen to me or pay attention to me," solemnly declares Yahweh. [5] "Your ancestors have all died. The prophets also did not live forever. [6] However, the warnings and decrees that I commanded my servants the prophets to tell your ancestors did come true.

So your ancestors repented and said, 'Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, has punished us for the way we behaved and for the things we did, just as he said he would do.'"

[7] Three months later, on the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, when Darius had been emperor for almost two years, Yahweh gave another message to me, Zechariah the son of Berechiah the son of Iddo, the prophet. [8] During the night I had a vision. In the vision I saw a man riding a red horse. He stood among the myrtle trees in a deep valley, and behind him other riders sat on red, reddish-brown, and white horses. [9] I asked the angel who had been talking to me, "Sir, who are those riders?" The angel replied, "I will show you who they are." [10] Then the man who stood among the myrtle trees explained. He said, "Yahweh sent these riders to patrol throughout the earth."

[11] Then those riders reported to an angel representing Yahweh, who stood among the myrtle trees. They said, "We have patrolled throughout the earth, and everywhere the nations are living peacefully and undisturbed."

[12] Then the angel representing Yahweh pleaded, "Yahweh, commander of the heavenly armies, how long will you continue to not show mercy to the people of Jerusalem and the people of the other cities of Judah? You have been angry with them for 70 years!" [13] So Yahweh spoke kind and encouraging words to the angel who had been talking to me. [14] Then the angel who had been talking to me said to me, "Proclaim this message: 'Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, says, "I care very deeply about the people of Jerusalem and of Zion. [15] I am extremely angry with the nations that feel so secure. I was only a little angry with my people, but those nations made things much worse by harming them so much."

[16] Therefore, this is what Yahweh says, "I have once again chosen to show mercy to the people of Jerusalem. They will rebuild my temple there," solemnly declares Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, "and workers will stretch out a measuring line to rebuild Jerusalem." [17] Therefore, this is what Yahweh says, "I have once again chosen to show mercy to the people of Jerusalem. They will rebuild my temple there," solemnly declares Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, "and workers will stretch out a measuring line to rebuild Jerusalem."

[18] Then I looked up and in front of me I saw four horns. [19] I asked the angel who had been talking to me, "What are those?" He replied, "Those horns represent the powerful nations that used their military power to scatter the people of Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem." [20] Then Yahweh showed me four craftsmen. [21] I asked, "What are these craftsmen coming to do?" He replied, "Those horns represent the powerful nations that scattered the people of Judah so badly that no one could resist them. These craftsmen have come to terrify those nations and to crush the military power that those nations used against the people of Judah to scatter them."

2 Then I looked up and saw a man who was holding a measuring line. [2] I asked him, "Where are you going?" He replied, "I am going to measure Jerusalem to find out how wide it is and how long it is."

[3] Then the angel who had been talking to me went out, and another angel came out to meet him. [4] The second angel said to him, "Run and tell that young man this: 'Someday so many people and animals will live in Jerusalem that they will not all fit inside the city walls. Many of them will live outside the walls. [5] Yahweh says that he himself will protect the city all around, just as a wall of fire would protect it, and he will show everyone how great he is by living among his people in the city.'"

[6] Yahweh declares, "Pay attention! You must flee from Babylonia, because I scattered you in every direction."

[7] Yahweh says, "You people of Jerusalem who are still living in Babylon, escape from there! [8] This is what Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, says. In order to honor his people, he sent me to rebuke the nations that took away your valuable possessions. He says, 'Anyone who harms you harms what is most precious to me. [9] I am about to use my power against those nations, and the people who used to serve them will take back their possessions from them.'" When that happens, you will know that Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, sent me.

[10] Yahweh says, "You people of Jerusalem, shout and be happy, because I am about to come to you and live among you!"

[11] At that time, people from many nations will start worshiping Yahweh and become his people. He will live among all of you. Then you will know that Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, sent me to you. [12] Yahweh will claim the people of Judah as his own special people in the land that he has set apart for himself, and he will once again choose Jerusalem as his city. [13] All people everywhere must be silent before Yahweh, because he has risen up from heaven, the holy place where he lives, and he is ready to act!

3 Then Yahweh showed me a vision. I saw Joshua, the high priest, standing in the presence of an angel representing Yahweh. The accuser was standing at the place where an accuser stands in a court, ready to bring charges against Joshua. [2] Yahweh said to the accuser, "I, Yahweh, reject your accusations! I am the one who has chosen Jerusalem, and I reject your accusations! I rescued this man just barely, the

way someone pulls a burning stick out of a fire before the fire destroys it." 3 Now Joshua was wearing extremely dirty clothes as he stood near the angel.

4 The angel told the other angels who were standing there, "Take those filthy clothes off of him." Then the angel said to Joshua, "Look at what I have done! I have taken away your sin, and I will dress you in beautiful clothes." 5 Then I said, "Put a clean turban on his head too!" So the angels put a clean turban on his head and dressed him in new clothes while an angel representing Yahweh stood watching.

6 Then an angel representing Yahweh gave Joshua this serious command: 7 "Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, says this to you, 'If you obey me and do what I command you to do, then you will be in charge of my temple and will take care of my temple courtyards. I will also allow you to come into the presence of these angels who stand here. 8 Listen carefully, Joshua the high priest, you and your fellow priests who sit in front of you, because you are all living signs that point to what will happen in the future. I am going to bring my servant, the one who will be like a new branch that sprouts from the stump of David's family. 9 Look at the stone that I have placed in front of Joshua. That single stone has seven facets that represent how I watch over everything. I will engrave an inscription on it. This is what Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, declares. When I do this, I will take away all the sin from this land in a single day.

10 When that day comes, each of you will invite your neighbors to come and enjoy peace and security with you.' This is what Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, declares."

4 Then the angel who had been talking with me came back and woke me up. I had been thinking deeply, as though I had fallen asleep. 2 He asked me, "What do you see?" I replied, "I see a lampstand made completely of gold. It has a small bowl for olive oil at the top, and seven lamps around the bowl, with seven channels going to each of the seven lamps that are on top of it. 3 I also see two olive trees beside it, one olive tree on the right side of the bowl and one olive tree on its left side."

4 I asked the angel who was talking with me, "Sir, what do these things mean?"

5 The angel replied, "You really should know what they mean!" I answered, "No, sir, I do not know."

6 Then the angel said to me, "This is the message that Yahweh has for Zerubbabel, 'You will not accomplish this by being strong or by your own efforts. Instead, my Spirit will accomplish it,' says Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies. 7 Every great difficulty that stands in front of Zerubbabel will disappear! He will set the final stone of the temple in its place, and all the people will shout, 'How beautiful! May God bless it!'

8 Then Yahweh gave me another message. 9 He said, 'Zerubbabel began the work of rebuilding this temple, and he will finish it.' When that happens, you will know that Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, sent me to you people.

10 No one should think that the small beginnings of a big project are unimportant. People will be happy when they see Zerubbabel holding the plumb line as he checks the walls. Those seven lamps represent how Yahweh watches over everything that happens on the whole earth."

11 Then I asked the angel, "What do the two olive trees on each side of the lampstand mean?

12 In particular, what do the two olive branches that are beside the two gold pipes that pour out olive oil mean?" 13 He said to me, "You really should know what these things mean!" I replied, "No, sir, I do not know."

14 So he said, "They represent the two people whom God has anointed to serve the Lord who rules over the whole earth."

5 I looked up again and saw a scroll flying through the air.

2 The angel asked me, "What do you see?" I replied, "I see a scroll flying through the air. It is about 30 feet long and about 15 feet wide."

3 Then he said to me, "This scroll contains the words that Yahweh speaks to punish people throughout the whole land. On one side, the scroll says that Yahweh will remove everyone who steals. On the other side, it says that he will remove everyone who lies when making a solemn promise. 4 Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, declares, 'I will send this scroll to the houses of people who steal and to the houses of people who use my authority to make false promises. The scroll will remain in those houses and will destroy them completely, including all their wooden beams and stones.'"

5 Then the angel who had been talking to me came closer and said, "Look up and see what is coming out."

6 I asked him, "What is it?" He replied, "It is a large measuring basket that is coming out." Then he said, "It represents what the people are doing throughout the whole land."

7 Then I saw someone lifting the heavy lead cover off the basket. There was a woman sitting inside the basket! 8 The angel said, "She represents how wicked the people are." Then the angel threw her back down into the basket and put the heavy lead cover back over the opening.

9 Then I looked up and saw two women coming toward me. The wind was blowing under their wings, and they had large wings like those of a stork. They lifted the basket up high between the ground and the sky.

10 I asked the angel who had been talking to me, "Where are they taking that basket?"

11 He replied, "They are taking it to Babylonia to build a temple for it there. When they finish building the temple, they will place the basket inside on a pedestal."

The vision of four chariots

6 I looked up again, and in the vision I saw four chariots coming toward me from between two bronze mountains. 2 Red horses pulled the first chariot, and black horses pulled the second chariot. 3 White horses pulled the third chariot, and strong, spotted horses pulled the fourth chariot. 4 I asked the angel who had been speaking to me, "Sir, what do those chariots mean?"

5 The angel replied, "These are the four spirits that serve the Lord who rules the entire earth. They go out across the sky in four directions. 6 The chariot with the black horses will go north, the white horses will follow them, and the spotted horses will go south."

7 When those strong horses went out, they were eager to go and patrol the earth. The angel said to them, "Go, patrol the earth!" So they went and patrolled the earth.

8 Then the angel called out to me, “Look, the chariots
that went north have satisfied my anger in the land of the
north.”

Yahweh commands Zechariah to crown Joshua

9 Then Yahweh gave me another message. 10 He said,
“Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah will bring silver and gold from
the people who returned from exile in Babylon. On the day
they arrive, go to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah.
11 Take some of the silver and gold from those men and
make crowns. Then place them on the head of Joshua son of
Jehozadak, the high priest. 12 Tell him, ‘This is what Yahweh,
the commander of the heavenly armies, says, There is a man
whose title is the Branch, because he will grow up like a new
branch from the stump of David’s family. He will emerge
from where he is, and he will build the temple of Yahweh.
13 Yes, he will build Yahweh’s temple.

He will receive great honor,
and he will sit on his throne and rule.
He will also serve as a priest while he sits on his throne,
and there will be peace because he is both
king and priest.’

14 The crowns will remain in the temple of Yahweh to
remind people of what Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen
son of Zephaniah did. 15 People who live far away will come
and help build Yahweh’s temple. When that happens, you
will know that Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly
armies, has sent me to you. This will happen if you truly
obey what Yahweh your God commands.”

7 When Darius had been the emperor for almost four
years, on the fourth day of Kislev (which was the ninth
month in their calendar), Yahweh gave me another message.
2 The people of the city of Bethel sent two men, Sharezer and
Regem-Melech, along with some other men, to consult with
Yahweh 3 by asking the priests at Yahweh’s temple and the
prophets if they should continue their years-long practice of
mourning *the anniversary of the destruction of the temple* by
fasting during the fifth month.

4 Then Yahweh, commander of the angel armies, gave me,
Zechariah, a message. 5 He told me to say this to the priests
and, in fact, to everyone in the whole land: “Tell me whom
you were honoring when you did not eat but went around
in dirty clothing. It was not me you honored in the fifth and
seventh months these 70 years. 6 And when you feasted at
my temple, you did it just to have a good time, not to honor
me. 7 This is exactly what I kept telling the former prophets
to proclaim to the people, when the people in Jerusalem
and the nearby towns were many and prosperous, and when
people also lived in the southern Judean wilderness, and in
the foothills to the west.”

8 Yahweh gave another message to me: 9 “Tell the people
that this is what Yahweh, commander of the angel armies,
said *to your ancestors*: ‘I told them to do what is just, to
act faithfully and mercifully toward each other, in order to
honor my covenant with you. 10 I told them not to oppress
widows or orphans or foreigners or poor people. I told them
not to even think about doing evil to anyone else.’

11 But the people refused to obey Yahweh. They resisted
him. They did not even listen to what he said. 12 He had
given these messages for his Spirit to repeat to the prophets
in earlier times. The prophets were meant to speak these
messages to the people. But the people were very stubborn;
they would not listen to the law of Moses or to any message
from God. So Yahweh, commander of the angel armies,
became very angry with them.

13 In those times, when Yahweh, commander of the angel
armies, called to the people, they refused to listen. So he
said, ‘In exactly the same way, I will refuse to listen when
they call to me. 14 I scattered them among many nations,
nations that they had never been to before just as a storm
scatters leaves. After they were gone, their own land was
empty, with no one living there. No one traveled through it
or came back to it, because they have turned it, their most
pleasant land, into a wilderness.’”

Yahweh promises to bless Jerusalem

8 Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, gave
me another message: 2 This is what I, Yahweh, the
commander of the angel armies, say, “I love the people of
Jerusalem; I love them very much, and I am very angry with
their enemies.”

3 So this is what I, Yahweh, say: “Some day I will return
to Mount Zion and I will live there. At that time, people will
call Jerusalem ‘The City of Faithful People’, and they will
call the mountain that Yahweh, the commander of angel
armies, possesses ‘The Sacred Mountain.’”

4 Yahweh, the commander of the angel armies, also says
this: “Some day old men and old women will again sit along
the streets of Jerusalem, each of them holding a cane because
they are very old. 5 Boys and girls will fill the city streets,
playing there.”

6 Yahweh, the commander of the angel armies, also says
this: “When those things happen, it will seem marvelous to
the people who are still alive, but it certainly will not seem
marvelous to me!”

7 Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, also
says this: “Pay attention! I will rescue my people from
countries in the east and in the west, wherever they are. 8 I
will bring them back, and they will live in Jerusalem. They
will be my people, and I will be their God. I will be faithful
to them and treat them fairly.”

9 Yahweh, the commander of the angel armies, also says
this: “When people laid the foundation for my temple, there
were prophets there who gave messages from me. Some of
you people heard what those prophets said. So be brave
while you are building the temple, in order that you may
finish building it. 10 Before that time, no one could earn any
wages for their work, and no one could hire animals for
work, because there was no money. No one was safe going
about their daily activities because of enemies, since I caused
everyone to fight against one another. 11 But now I will act
differently toward you people who are still alive than I did
previously.” That is what Yahweh, the commander of the
angel armies, says.

12 “Instead, everything will go well for them: planting
time will be peaceful, grapevines will produce grapes, good
crops will grow in the fields, and rain will fall from the sky.
I will give all these things to the people of this nation who
have survived. 13 You people of Judah and Israel, right now,
the people of other nations think of you when they say what
a curse means. But I will rescue you, and I will give you
so many good things that they will think of you when they
say what a blessing means. So be brave; work hard to finish
building the temple.”

14 Yahweh, the commander of the angel armies, also says
this, “When your ancestors caused me to become very angry,
I did not change my mind about that. Instead, I indeed
punished them. 15 But now I will do something different. I
am planning to do good things to the people of Jerusalem
and other towns in Judah again. So do not be afraid. 16 These
are the things that you should do: You should always tell the
truth to each other. In the courts, your judges must make
decisions according to what is correct and fair. 17 Do not plan
to do evil things to others, and do not approve of swearing
false accusations against others. I hate all those things,” says
Yahweh.
18 Yahweh, the commander of the angel armies, said this
to me: 19 “I tell you, the times when you people of Judah
abstain from food during the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth
months of each year will become times when you celebrate
pleasant and joyful festivals instead. But you must want to
speak truthfully and to be peaceful.”
20 Yahweh, the commander of the angel armies, also says
this, “Some day people from many people groups and foreign
cities will come here to Jerusalem. 21 People from one city
will go to the people in another city and say, ‘Quick! Let
us go together to Jerusalem to worship Yahweh and ask
him to bless us; we ourselves are going.’ 22 And people from
many people groups and from powerful nations will come to
Jerusalem to ask Yahweh, the commander of angel armies,
to bless them, and they will worship him.”
23 Yahweh, the commander of the angel armies, also says
this, “At that time, many people from every people group,
speaking their own language, will come and firmly grab the
fringe of robe belonging to a man from Judah’s tribe. They
will say to him, ‘We want to be near you, because we have
heard people say that God is with you.’”

9 This is another message that Yahweh gave to me:
He pays close attention to all people everywhere,
and especially to all the Israelite tribes.
This message is about the region of Hadrach
and the city of Damascus, where he is staying.
2 Hamath also is a nearby city,
as are the cities of Tyre and Sidon,
whose people think that they are very wise.
3 The people of Tyre have built a strong wall
around their city,
and they have piled up as much silver and gold
as if it were dust and mud in the streets.
4 But look out! The Lord will take away everything
that the people of Tyre own
and destroy their merchant ships out at sea,
and an enemy army will burn their city down.
5 When the people of the city of Ashkelon see that
happen, they will be scared.
The people of the city of Gaza will also
tremble in great anguish,
and the people of the city of Ekron will tremble
too, because they will no longer expect
anything good to happen.
There will no longer be a king ruling in Gaza,
and no one will live in Ashkelon anymore.
6 People of mixed descent will live in the city of Ashdod,
and so I will cause the Philistine people
to no longer be proud.
7 I will no longer allow them to eat meat that
still has blood in it,
and I will no longer allow them to eat the disgusting
food that they offered to their idols.
Then the Philistine people who survive will worship
me and become my people,
like one of the clans in Judah.
The people of the city of Ekron will become
my people, just as the people of
the city of Jebus did.
8 I will protect my temple like an army that guards it,
so that no enemy soldiers can march through
it or come back to attack it.
No one who oppresses my people will ever
invade them again,
because now I am watching over my
people carefully.

9 You people of Jerusalem, rejoice very much!
Shout joyfully, everyone in Jerusalem!
Look! Your king is coming to you.
He does what is right, and God will give him victory.
He is humble, and he will ride into the
city on a donkey,
on a young donkey.
10 I will take away the chariots from the region of Ephraim
and the war horses from the city of Jerusalem,
and I will destroy the bows that soldiers use in war.
Your king will tell the nations that they will
now live peacefully.
He will rule over all the earth,
from one sea to the farthest sea,
and from the Euphrates River to the most
distant places on the earth.
11 As for you people of Jerusalem,
because of the blood of the animals that the
priests killed when I made my covenant
with you, I will set your people free,
the ones who suffer like prisoners stuck in a dry pit.
12 You people who are like prisoners but who still
confidently expect me to help you,
return to your land, where you will be safe.
Today I am telling you that I will give back to
you twice as much as you have lost.
13 I will use the people of Judah to fight for me
as a warrior uses a bow,
and I will use the people of Ephraim like
the arrows in that bow.
People of Jerusalem, I will stir up your young men
to fight against the army of Greece,
and I will make you as powerful as a warrior’s sword.

14 Then Yahweh will appear above his people,
and the arrows that he shoots will flash
like lightning.
Yahweh my Lord will blow a trumpet to
signal the attack,
and he will advance fiercely, like a storm
blowing from the south.
15 Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies,
will protect his people.
His soldiers will completely defeat their enemies
who attack them with slingstones.
Those soldiers will shout in victory and celebrate as
noisily as men who have drunk much wine.

They will be as full of joy as the bowls that
the priests fill with blood and pour out
on the corners of the altar.
16 On that day, Yahweh, the God his people
worship, will rescue them
just as a shepherd rescues his flock of
sheep from danger.
They will be as precious to him as sparkling jewels in
a crown shining over his land.
17 How wonderful and how beautiful everything will be!
The young men will grow strong from
eating plenty of grain,
and the young women will grow strong from
drinking plenty of new wine.

10 Ask Yahweh to send rain in the springtime, because
he is the one who makes the storm clouds. He gives
people showers of rain, and he makes plants grow in their
fields. 2 The household idols that people consult tell them
worthless things, and those who practice divination see false
visions; the dreams they describe are lies, and the comfort
they give is empty. So the people wander about helplessly
and suffer, because they have no leader to guide and protect
them, just as sheep suffer when they have no shepherd.

3 Yahweh says, "I am very angry with the leaders of
my people, and I will punish those rulers. I, Yahweh, the
commander of the heavenly armies, care for my people, the
people of Judah, as a shepherd cares for his flock, and I will
make them strong, like a splendid warhorse in battle. 4 All
their rulers will come from the tribe of Judah. Some will
support the people, as a cornerstone supports a building;
some will hold them together, as a tent peg holds up a tent;
and some will lead them in battle, as a warrior holds his bow
in war. Yes, from Judah every ruler will come. 5 Those rulers
and their people will be like mighty warriors who trample
their enemies into the mud of the streets during battle.
They will fight and win, because I, Yahweh, am with them,
and they will completely defeat even their most powerful
enemies.

6 Because I am Yahweh their God and I pity my people,
I will answer them when they pray to me. I will make the
people of Judah strong, and I will rescue the people of Israel.
I will bring them back to their own land. Then it will be like
I had never rejected them. 7 The people of Ephraim will be
strong like warriors, and they will be as happy as people
who have drunk wine. Their children will see it and be glad;
they will celebrate loudly because of what I, Yahweh, have
done.

8 I will whistle to signal my people, and I will gather them
together because I have rescued them, and they will become
as numerous as they were before. 9 Even though I scatter
my people among the nations, they will remember me even
in those distant lands. They and their children will survive,
and they will return to their land. 10 I will bring them back
from Egypt in the south and gather them from Assyria in
the north. I will bring them to the region of Gilead and to
Lebanon, and there will not be enough room for them all.

11 Even though my people's troubles seem like a terrifying
sea, I will bring them safely home. I will subdue those troubles
completely, as if I were striking down the waves of the sea
and drying up the deep waters of the Nile River. I will
humble the proud army of Assyria, and I will take away the
royal power of Egypt. 12 I will make my people strong by my
power, and they will live faithfully, honoring my authority.
That is what I, Yahweh, declare."

11 Open your gates, people living in Lebanon,
because you will not be able to stop the fire
from burning up your cedar trees!
2 The cypress trees will be like people who are wailing
because the mighty cedar trees have fallen; enemies
have destroyed those magnificent trees!
The oak trees in the region of Bashan will
also be like people wailing
because enemies have cut down the trees
of their thick forest!
3 Listen to the shepherds crying
because enemies have ruined the rich pastures
where they fed their flocks!
Listen to the young lions roaring
because enemies have destroyed the thickets along
the Jordan River where they lived!

4 This is what Yahweh my God said to me, "Act as a
shepherd for a flock of sheep that people are about to
slaughter. 5 The people who buy the sheep slaughter them,
and no one punishes those buyers. The people who sell
the sheep say that they praise Yahweh because they are
becoming rich. Not even the shepherds pity the sheep. 6 That
is because I, Yahweh, will no longer pity the people who
live in this land. That is what I, Yahweh, declare. Instead, I
will let everyone's neighbors and their king dominate them.
Those people will devastate this land, and I will not rescue
anyone from their control."

7 So I became like a shepherd of a flock of sheep that
people were about to slaughter. I took good care of the sheep,
especially the weakest ones. Then I took two shepherd's staffs.
I named one staff "Favor" and the other staff, "Union." And
I took care of the sheep. 8 In one month I got rid of the three
other shepherds.

I became impatient with them, and they also hated me.
9 So I said, "I will no longer be your shepherd. Let the sheep
that are dying die, and let the sheep that are perishing perish.
And let those that remain destroy each other."

10 Then I took my staff that I had named "Favor," and I
broke it to signify that Yahweh was canceling the covenant
that he had made with all the peoples. 11 So the covenant
ended on that day. Then the afflicted people of the flock
who were watching me knew that this was truly a message
from Yahweh. 12 I said to them, "If it seems right to you, pay
me my wages; but if not, do not pay me." So they weighed
out my wages: thirty pieces of silver.

13 Then Yahweh said to me, "Throw that money to the
potter! What a pathetic price they decided to pay for me!"
So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them to the
potter at the temple of Yahweh. 14 Then I broke my second
staff, the one that I had named "Union," to signify that the
close family relationship between the people of Judah and
the people of Israel would end.

15 Then Yahweh said to me, "Take again the tools that
a foolish shepherd uses, 16 because surely I am going to
appoint a shepherd over the people in this land, one who
will not care for them. He will not help the sheep that are
perishing, he will not search for the ones that have strayed,
he will not heal the ones that are injured, and he will not
feed the healthy ones. Instead, he will eat the meat of the
fattest sheep and tear off their hooves.

17 Terrible things will happen to that worthless shepherd
who abandons the flock that he should care for!
Enemies will attack his arm and his right
eye with a sword!
As a result, his arm will lose all its strength
and his right eye will become completely blind!”

12 This is a message that Yahweh gave concerning
Israel. Yahweh, the one who created the sky, who
formed the earth, and who breathed life into humanity,
solemnly declares this:
2 “Listen! I am about to cause the city of Jerusalem to be
like an intoxicating drink that makes all the nations around
it stagger helplessly when their armies besiege Jerusalem
and the region of Judah. 3 Then every nation on earth will
come to attack Jerusalem, but I will make it like a solid rock
that will badly hurt everyone that comes to attack it. 4 This
is what I, Yahweh, declare: On that day I will cause all the
horses of the enemy armies to panic and all their riders to
go insane. I will watch over the people of Judah and protect
them, but I will cause all the horses of those enemy nations
to go blind. 5 Then the leaders of the clans of Judah will
say to themselves that the people who live in Jerusalem
are strong because Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly
armies, is their God. 6 On that day I will make the leaders of
the clans of Judah able to destroy their enemies completely
and quickly. They will defeat all the surrounding peoples
on every side of them, and the people of Jerusalem will live
safely in their own city again.”
7 Yahweh will first rescue the people who live in the
villages of Judah, so that the descendants of King David
and the people who live in Jerusalem will not consider
themselves more important than the rest of the people of
Judah. 8 On that day Yahweh will protect the people who live
in Jerusalem. Then even the weakest person among them
will fight as powerfully as King David*, the great warrior,* once
did. God will give the descendants of King David such great
power that *as they lead the people,* it will seem as though
Yahweh’s own angel is going ahead of them.
9 “At that time, I will set out to destroy all the nations that
come to attack Jerusalem. 10 I will act very kindly toward
the descendants of King David and the people who live
in Jerusalem, and I will cause them to plead with me for
mercy. They will look to me, the one whom they pierced,
and they will mourn for me as strongly as parents mourn
for an only son who has died. They will weep many tears
for me, as many tears as people weep when a firstborn son
dies.” 11 On that day the people in Jerusalem will mourn
very loudly. They will mourn as loudly as the people did at
Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo*, where they grieved
for King Josiah after he died in battle*.
12 All the people in the land will mourn, each clan by
itself. The clan descended from King David will mourn by
itself, and their wives will mourn by themselves. The clan
descended from Nathan, *King David’s son,* will mourn by
itself, and their wives will mourn by themselves. 13 The clan
descended from Levi will mourn by itself, and their wives will
mourn by themselves. The clan descended from Shimei will
mourn by itself, and their wives will mourn by themselves.
14 All the clans that remain will each mourn by itself, and
their wives will mourn by themselves.

13 At that time, Yahweh will continually cleanse the
descendants of King David and the people who
live in Jerusalem; he will forgive the sins that they have
committed and take away everything that has made them
impure. 2 Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies,
declares, “At that time I will destroy all the idols in the land,
so that no one will even speak their names or remember
them anymore. I will also drive out of the land those who
falsely claim to be prophets, along with the impure spirit
that controls them.
3 If anyone still prophesies falsely, his own father and
mother, the ones who gave birth to him, will tell him that
he must die, because he has lied by claiming that he was
speaking with my authority. Then, while he is prophesying,
his own father and mother, who gave birth to him, will stab
him to death.
4 At that time, every one of those prophets will feel
ashamed of the visions that he claimed to see when he
prophesied. None of them will wear the rough garment of
animal hair that prophets wear, because they will no longer
try to deceive people. 5 Instead, each one will say, ‘I am
not a prophet. I am a farmer; a man sold me to this land’s
owner when I was young.’ 6 If someone asks him, ‘Then what
are these wounds on your chest?’ he will answer, ‘Someone
wounded me at the house of my friends.’”

7 Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, says
this: “I command that someone kill with a
sword the leader who cares for my people,
the man who is my close associate.
When someone strikes that leader down,
the people whom he led will scatter in
every direction,
and I myself will attack even the lowliest
people among them.”
8 Yahweh declares, “Throughout the whole land, two
out of every three people will certainly die,
and only one third of the people will remain alive.
9 I will cause that remaining third to suffer greatly
in order to purify them,
just as a person refines silver and tests gold
by heating them in a fire.
Then they will call out to me for help,
and I will answer them.
I will tell them that they are my people,
and they will declare that I, Yahweh, am their God.”

14 Pay attention! Yahweh has appointed a time when
enemies will plunder the city of Jerusalem, deciding
who will take what valuables while they are still in the city
where you have to watch them. 2 Yahweh will gather the
armies of all the nations to come and fight against Jerusalem.
Those armies will capture the city, ransack the houses, and
rape the women. Half of the people who live there they will
take away to other lands as captives, but they will not remove
the rest of the people from the city. 3 Then Yahweh will go
out and fight against those nations, just as he fought his
enemies in battles long ago. 4 On that day, Yahweh himself
will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is east of Jerusalem.
He will split the Mount of Olives in two from east to west,
and a very large valley will open up between the two parts.
Half of the mountain will move away toward the north, and
half of it will move away toward the south. 5 You people will
escape through that valley between the mountains, because
the valley will reach all the way to Azal. You will run away
just as your ancestors ran away because of the earthquake

that happened when Uzziah was the king of Judah. Then
Yahweh my God will come, and all his holy angels will
come with him. 6 At that time, there will be no daylight; the
bright lights in the sky will grow dim. 7 That will be a unique
day, and only Yahweh knows when it will happen. It will
not follow the normal cycle of day and night. Even in the
evening, when it is usually dark, there will still be light. 8 At
that time, fresh water will flow out from Jerusalem. Half of
it will flow east to the Salt Sea, and half of it will flow west
to the Great Sea. The water will keep flowing throughout
the whole year.

9 Then Yahweh will rule as king over the whole earth. At
that time, people everywhere will worship Yahweh alone,
and they will honor him alone as God. 10 The whole land
from Geba in the north to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem, will
become a flat plain. But Jerusalem will rise up high and will
remain where it has always stood. The city will stretch from
the Gate of Benjamin to the place of the First Gate, on to
the Gate of the Corners, and from the Tower of Hananel to
the king's winepresses. 11 People will live in Jerusalem, and
enemies will never again completely destroy it. The people
who live in Jerusalem will always be safe.

12 Yahweh will cause all the nations who fought against
Jerusalem to have these terrible diseases. Their flesh will
rot away while they are still alive and standing. Their eyes
will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their
mouths. 13 At that time, Yahweh will cause those people to
panic completely. They will grab one another by the hand,
and they will attack each other. 14 The people of Judah will
also fight with Jerusalem. They will gather the wealth of
all the surrounding nations— huge amounts of gold, silver,
and clothing. 15 The horses, mules, camels, donkeys, and all
the other animals in the camps of those enemies will suffer
from that same disease.

16 Then everyone who survives from all the nations that
attacked Jerusalem will go up to Jerusalem every year to
worship the King, Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly
armies, and to celebrate the Festival of Shelters, when the
people live in temporary shelters. 17 If any of the people
groups on the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the
King, Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies, then
Yahweh will not send any rain on their land*, and their crops
will fail*. 18 If the people of Egypt do not go up to Jerusalem
to worship there, Yahweh will not judge them the same way.
*Since they depend on the Nile River rather than on rain, Yahweh
will* cause them to have the same diseases experienced by all
the other nations that do not go up to celebrate the Festival
of Shelters. 19 That is how Yahweh will punish the people
of Egypt and the people of every other nation that does not
go up to celebrate the Festival of Shelters. 20 At that time,
someone will engrave the words "Sacred to Yahweh" on
the bells that hang on the horses. People will consider the
cooking pots in the temple of Yahweh to be just as sacred as
the bowls that the priests use in front of the altar. 21 Every
cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be sacred to
Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies. Everyone
who comes to offer sacrifices will take some of those pots
and boil the meat of their sacrifices in them. At that time,
there will no longer be any merchant selling goods in the
temple of Yahweh, the commander of the heavenly armies.