**ZECHARIAH 1:7-17 VISION 1 THE RED HORSE**

The first six verses show that God comforts the people that turn away from sin. You remember verse 4 said that, verse 3 said it. "Turn to me. Turn from your evil ways and your evil deeds or doings." So that there is a basic prerequisite to receiving God's comforting blessing and that is turning away from evil. It's only the people who repent of sin. It's only the people who turn away from it that receive the wonderful blessing of God. So having laid down that prerequisite, we begin in verse 7, to hear the catalog of all the marvelous comforting blessing that God has for His people. The first section is the "Call to Repentance," in the first six verses, 1:1-1:6." The second section begins in 1:7 and I call it "Comfort through Visions." You have a call to repentance, and then you have comfort through visions. God begins to comfort His people and He does so through a series of visions.  Eight visions. Now each of them is distinct, and yet basically they all say the same thing. But they come at it from different angles. In fact, as I looked at them, it's very clear that the first one is almost a summarization of the other seven, and the other seven put out the details. But these eight visions were designed to comfort God's people.

**1. THE PICTURE OF A MAN RIDING A RED HORSE 1:7-8**

the second year of the reign of Darius the Mede who was the ruler of the Medo-Persian empire, the empire that really had the political control of Palestine, and this was the times of the Gentiles, it had already begun. It's still going on today where Gentile power has sway in land originally given to Israel. Even though Israel today controls its own Palestine, and its own city, do you realize that they were given by God everything from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates? And all the way down to the Nile and everything else, and they don't have all of that yet. And so it's still the times of the Gentiles and so their association then as a prophet is in the reign of Darius who was a Gentile king.

a vision is not the same as s dream. A vision is given when somebody is awake; a dream is given when somebody is asleep. basically a vision is an awareness of reality beyond the senses. You might want to call it a sixth sense, only it's more than just a premonition. It is the ability to see beyond the human senses. It is the ability to go beyond what the human senses can perceive. It is extra-physical sight. For example, the prophet will see something that cannot be seen by anyone else. To the naked eye it is totally invisible, but to this additional sense, God makes it revealed and clear.

Vision No.1 encompasses the divine plan for Jerusalem

 A. THE ANGEL OF THE LORD

"I was given a revelation from God and the first thing I saw was a man." And that's all it says. His identity is not explained, but immediately we get the feeling that he's a super-human man. Something different about him. In fact, he is an angel in the appearance of a man. And the man that he sees is riding on a red horse. Genesis chapter 16, verse 13, Verse 7, "And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness." Angel of the Lord. Verse 9,  Exodus chapter 3, verse 2, "And the angel of the Lord appeared to him

 B. HORSES

 SYMBOL OF RED HORSE----WAR AND BATTLE

we know what horses represented in visionary situations in the Old Testament. A horse normally represented war. Horses appear as useful in war, and that's precisely what they were used for, and of course, they appear that way symbolically. But the best passage may be, and the closest one, is in [Zechariah 9:10](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Zech%209.10), "I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem and the battle bow shall be cut off."  red is also a symbol in the Bible and it's a symbol of blood and judgment and vengeance. Where you have red, for example in Revelation chapter 6, a rider on a red horse, there is war, and there is bloodshed, and there is death, because red speaks of blood and judgment and vengeance So what we have here then is a war horse, prepared for battle, prepared for judgment, prepared for vengeance. And astride this is a ride.

 WHITE HORSE---VICTORY

When a Roman conquer conquered a city, he rode back into his own city riding a white horse, the sign of victory. When Christ comes, He comes on a white horse.

 SORREL HORSE—MIXTURE

You know what a sorrel is? It's a mixture of what? Red and white. So you've got the red horse, the white horse, and the combination.

 C. MYRTLE TREES

the myrtle is very common. It's not really a tree at all; it's a bush. And it grows everywhere. It's all over the place. It's just everywhere, very, very common. Not always beautiful but if it's growing along a stream or if it's growing in a hollow or a glen, which would be a low place where there would be much shade and perhaps much water, along a stream you find that these shrubs can grow to the height of eight feet, and they can have very glossy, shiny green leaves and be very lovely. In fact, the ones that really flourish develop a star shaped white flower and they're very beautiful. And when you bruise one of the leaves of a myrtle that is flourishing like that, it gives off its fragrance. But its fragrance is only given off when it is bruised. "myrtle" in Hebrew is "hedasa" and a synonym for it is Ester. The name Ester is actually hedasain the Hebrew, which means myrtle. So that's a name, a beautiful name, to a Jew who would see something very lovely in a myrtle bush. [Isaiah 41:19](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Isa%2041.19) and [Isaiah 55:13](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Isa%2055.13), it says that when the millennium comes, there will be tremendous flourishing of the myrtle. So God even likes it. There's gonna be plenty of it. God liked it enough to put it in Israel once and he likes it enough to fill up the millennium with them. Now myrtle branches also were gathered with palm branches and willow twigs at the Feast of Tabernacles, and myrtle branches were used to make the booths in which the children of Israel celebrated the wanderings in the wilderness.

 D. RAVINE

 KIDRON VALLEY AND VALLEY OF HINNOM

what does it mean when it says they're in the bottom or in the glen or in the hollow or in the ravine?" Well, this is identified most frequently with a low place. That's obviously what it means. And the low place outside of the city of Jerusalem is the Kidron Valley the Kidron Valley proceeds to the south, it makes a bend around Mount Zion, and connects up with another valley, known as the Valley of Henum. And where the Valley of Henum and the Valley of Kidron meet, there is the lowest place outside the city of Jerusalem. It was called "The Hollow" and the spot had always been a garden. In fact, in 2 Kings 24 it says "The King's garden was in the hollow, or the ravine where Kidron and Henum met."

So the scene is a scene of preparedness for war. It's going to be bloody but it's going to be victorious.

"Who are all these riders?" Well, it's clear. Who historically have been the agents of God's judgment? Who have they been? Angels. There are messengers of vengeance and messengers of victory, and the commanding angel is the rider on the red horse.

[Zechariah 1:11](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Zech%201.11), "And they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees." **Who's the angel of the Lord?** Christ. Now do you know who the rider on the red horse is? It's the Lord Jesus Christ, the angel of the Lord. He's the commander in chief of the God Squad, about to embark upon the battle.

what are the myrtles?" Well, listen. Because of the lowliness, because of the commonness, because of the simplicity, because of the beauty, and because of the fragrance when bruised, the only possibility for the myrtle is that the myrtle represents Israel. The commons, they're everywhere in the land, the people of God.

what is the hollow? What is the deep place, the glen? That speaks of the suffering and the lowliness and the degradation and the baseness of their present condition. All the little lovely myrtles are sitting in the valley. They're looking up at their city and wondering if they'll ever rebuild it. And all of the sudden, standing in the midst, is the angelic army, led by the commander in chief, ready for battle. It's gonna be bloody, but it's gonna be victorious. Now that's an exciting scene isn't it? And you can hear all the Jews who were listening to Zechariah's sermon going, "Did you hear that? See? It's coming."

They are loved by the Lord and they are the object of His unchanging purpose and the gifts and callings of God, [Romans 11:29](https://biblia.com/bible/nasb95/Rom%2011.29), are without what? Repentance. And God says "You may have been in captivity for 70 years and you may be in humiliation and degradation now and you may have a broken down wall and a broken down temple and a devastated land and you may be in the hollow, and you may be down here in the valley, but listen. There is a group of armed super-human personalities gathering to fight your war. Be encouraged."

So here's the scene: a group of people in a state of humiliation, about to be delivered by their glorious protector, defender, interceder, comforter. He stands ready to fight for them. What a scene. The Lord is in the midst of His people, ready to defend, ready to protect, ready to advocate their cause, ready to comfort them in their time of need. He's outside the city, ready to judge the nations and put Israel back in the right place, the place that God intended all along. He's gonna fulfill God's promise

**2. THE PERPLEXITY SOLVED 1:9-11**

A. SIGNIFICANCE

 WHAT ARE THESE?

oh my Lord, what are these." Not who are these. I think he probably knew who was represented. But he was saying, "What is the significance of this? And the angel who talked with me said to me, 'I'll show you what the significance is'." Now, here we meet "the angel who talked with me." After a lot of thinking and reading this, I'm convinced that "the angel that talked with me" is not the same as the angel of the Lord. He's different. He's another angel. Let's call him "Interpreter Angel" okay? Because that's his function. He's a special angel, and his job is to explain things to Zechariah. So Zechariah's having this vision while he's awake, not asleep. He's given a sixth sense, as it were, to perceive things that are beyond the human vision and insight. And in order to understand them, God sends along an interpreter angel who helps him to get things clear. This angel is mentioned 11 times in the book so he's important. "What are these? And the angel that talked with me said 'I'll show thee what these are.'" This says the angel is gonna help him to understand.

 THE DIVINE PATROL

So he looks back and he sees the riders on the red, the white, and the sorrel horses, and he says, "These are the ones that God has sent to walk to and fro through the earth." This is God's reconnaissance crew. This is the divine patrol, if you will. The word occurs in a military sense. The word "walk to and fro through the earth" is used in a military sense, with the idea of reconnoitering or the idea of patrolling, ascertaining the state of the enemy.

 JOB 1:7, 2:2

 B. REPORT 11

squadron of the Lord has been sent out on a world mission and they've come back to report to the angel of the Lord, like the Persian monarchs. This is very fitting in this time, because the Persian monarchs used messengers on swift horses to keep them informed on everything going on in their empire. And so the Lord knew everything about the earth because His angels were moving around it, in this vision.

 THE ANGEL OF THE LORD

 they're reporting in now to the commander in chief, the angel of the Lord, none other than Christ, and they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees, and they said, here's their report,  Verse 11 calls the rider, for the first time, the angel of the Lord. And the angel of the Lord is none other than Jesus Christ, none other than the second person of the Trinity. But every Jew knew the angel of the Lord was his protector and defender. Every Jew who knew anything about his Old Testament, every Jew who knew anything about the history of his people, knew that there was one special angel, one super angel, who was set for the defense of Israel, and it was the angel of the Lord. What is so wonderful is that the angel of the Lord had not appeared for 200 years in the history of Israel. And now all of the sudden the angel of the Lord is back, and all the while of those 200 years while Israel was in wretchedness, and Israel was in sinfulness, their protector and advocate and defender was not around. But when their chastening was done and repentance had taken place, He was back,

 ALL IS AT REST

 RELAXED , PEACEFUL , NOT AT WAR

 INDIFFERENCE JERE 48:11,EZEK 16:49 ZECH 1:15

So the nations were at peace, but it was the peace of indifference. It was the peace of smugness. Here is the question, a question that's really in the mind of the Jews, the myrtle trees and the hollow, is this: "Why do the unrighteous prosper? And why is all the world at peace and so indifferent while we suffer humiliation and we are the people of God?" So you see the contrast of the earth's indifferent peace makes the state of Israel all the more distressing.

**3. THE PLEA 1:12**

A. LORD OF HOSTS (ARMIES)

 B. BELIEVING, SYMPATHY. EXPECTATION

**4. THE PUNISHMENT 1:13-15**

1. THE FIRST PERSON OF THE TRINITY ANSWERS THE PLEA

 2. GRACIOUS WORDS, COMFORTING WORDS

 KEY TO THE BOOK

 3. EXCEEDINGLY JEALOUS

 2 CHRON 6:6

 ISA 31:5

 4. ANGER OF THE LORD

 AT WHAT NATIONS? EDOM, ASSYRIA, BABYLON

 AT EASE PRIDE PS 121:4,

 REVELED IN ISRAEL’S SUFFERING

**5. THE PROMISE SECURED 1:16-17**

 ISA 40:1

 A. RETURN

 B. RESTORATION

 C. RECONSTRUCTION

 D. REASSURANCE