

Zechariah 1:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem.

Analysis

Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem. The triple repetition of "yet" (od, תִּיּ, "again" or "still") emphasizes certainty despite present circumstances. "**My cities**" indicates God's continued ownership and covenant relationship with Judah's towns, devastated during exile. The phrase "**through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad**" (tephutsenah mi-tov, תפוצתָה מִטוֹב) literally means "shall overflow from goodness"—such abundance that cities expand beyond their boundaries.

The promise "**the LORD shall yet comfort Zion**" assures that present distress isn't final. The verb nacham (comfort) picks up the "comfortable words" theme from verse 13. Finally, "**shall yet choose Jerusalem**" (u-vachar od bi-Yerushalayim) reaffirms God's elective purpose. Though Jerusalem experienced judgment, God's choice remains irrevocable. His election isn't based on Israel's merit but His sovereign purpose (Romans 11:28-29).

This prosperity promise had partial fulfillment in post-exilic restoration, fuller realization during Maccabean and Herodian periods, but ultimate consummation in Messiah's kingdom. The New Testament reveals the mystery: God's elect "Jerusalem" includes all believers—Jew and Gentile united in Christ (Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 21:2). The church experiences overflow blessing, not primarily material but spiritual abundance in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).

Historical Context

When Zechariah prophesied (520 BC), Judah's cities remained largely ruins. Jerusalem's walls were broken, population sparse, and economic conditions dire. The contrast between prophetic promise and present reality required faith. Yet within generations, measurable fulfillment occurred: Jerusalem's population grew, surrounding towns were reoccupied and expanded, and under Persian benevolence, Jewish communities prospered.

The Maccabean period (167-63 BC) saw Jewish independence and expansion. Herod the Great (37-4 BC) massively rebuilt Jerusalem and the temple, making it architecturally magnificent. The city's population swelled to estimates of 80,000-100,000. Yet this prosperity was temporary—Rome destroyed Jerusalem in AD 70, again in AD 135, and Jews faced diaspora until modern times.

The spiritual fulfillment transcends political vicissitudes. Christ came to comfort all who mourn in Zion (Isaiah 61:2-3; Luke 4:18-19). The gospel spread from Jerusalem to all nations (Acts 1:8), fulfilling the "spreading abroad" as the church multiplied globally. God's choice of Jerusalem finds consummation in the New Jerusalem, where the redeemed from every nation dwell with God eternally (Revelation 21-22).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the repeated "yet" challenge despair when current circumstances contradict God's promises?
2. What does God calling them "My cities" teach about His continued covenant commitment despite past judgment?

3. How does the New Testament expand "Jerusalem" to include all believers in Christ, and what comfort does this bring?

Interlinear Text

עַד צָבָא וְתִיְהַ	יְהִי הָמָר	כִּי אָמַר	אָמַר	כִּי אָמַר	קָרְבָּן
H5750	H3068	H559	H559	H3541	H7121
of hosts	and the LORD	Thus saith	Thus saith	Thus saith	Cry

וְתִיְהַ מִתְּפֹאֵץ נָהָ	בְּעָבֵד	מִתְּפֹאֵץ נָהָ	וְתִיְהַ מִתְּפֹאֵץ נָהָ
shall yet be spread abroad	My cities	through prosperity	shall yet comfort
H6327	H5892	H2896	H5162

בִּירוּשָׁלָם:	וְתִיְהַ	עַד	וְתִיְהַ	עַתְּ עִיד	יְהִי הָמָר
Jerusalem	H3389	H5750	H977	H853	H3068
and the LORD	Zion	and shall yet choose	צִיּוֹן	עַתְּ עִיד	Cry

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 51:3 (References Lord): For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

Zechariah 2:12 (References Lord): And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again.

Isaiah 14:1 (References Lord): For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land: and the strangers shall be joined with them, and they shall cleave to the house of Jacob.

Isaiah 66:13 (References Jerusalem): As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.

Isaiah 44:26 (References Jerusalem): That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof:

Nehemiah 11:20 (Parallel theme): And the residue of Israel, of the priests, and the Levites, were in all the cities of Judah, every one in his inheritance.

2 Chronicles 6:6 (References Jerusalem): But I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel.

Obadiah 1:20 (References Jerusalem): And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel shall possess that of the Canaanites, even unto Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the south.

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