

Zechariah 1:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What be these?
And he answered me, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.

Analysis

And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What be these? And he answered me, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. Zechariah's question "**What be these?**" models appropriate response to puzzling visions—ask for divine interpretation rather than relying solely on human speculation. The interpreting angel provides the answer: "**These are the horns which have scattered**" (eleh ha-qarnayim asher zetu, זרעו). The verb zaru (זרע, "scattered") means to winnow, disperse, or scatter—used of grain tossed in the wind, emphasizing violent dispersal.

The targets of scattering are listed comprehensively: "**Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.**" "Judah" represents the Southern Kingdom and its tribal territory. "Israel" can refer to the Northern Kingdom (ten tribes exiled by Assyria in 722 BC) or to the covenant people collectively. "Jerusalem" specifically names the holy city, capital of David's kingdom and location of God's temple. Together, these terms encompass God's entire covenant nation—all were scattered by hostile powers.

The scattering fulfills covenant curses for disobedience (Leviticus 26:33; Deuteronomy 28:64-65). Yet Deuteronomy also promises eventual regathering (Deuteronomy 30:3-5). The prophets elaborate: Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel prophesy both scattering in judgment and regathering in restoration. Jesus prophesied further scattering after Jerusalem's AD 70 destruction (Luke 21:24), yet promised to gather His elect from the four winds (Matthew 24:31). The pattern

culminates in Revelation's vision of the redeemed gathered from every nation (Revelation 7:9).

Historical Context

The scattering occurred in waves. Assyria's conquest (722 BC) scattered the Northern Kingdom's ten tribes, who largely disappeared from history (the "lost tribes"). Babylon's campaigns (605-586 BC) deported Judah's population in three stages, culminating in Jerusalem's destruction. Small remnants remained in the land, living among foreign settlers. Edom exploited Judah's weakness, occupying southern territories.

Cyrus's decree (538 BC) allowed return, but only a minority returned—most Jews remained scattered throughout the Persian Empire. By Zechariah's time (520 BC), diaspora Jews far outnumbered those in Judah. This pattern intensified: after AD 70 and 135, Jews scattered globally for nearly two millennia. Modern Israel's 1948 establishment and subsequent immigrations represent partial regathering, but full restoration awaits Messiah's return (Romans 11:25-27).

The church experiences analogous scattering and gathering. Persecution scattered early Christians (Acts 8:1, 4), yet this spread the gospel. Believers face opposition from multiple "horns"—false teaching, persecution, cultural pressure—yet God gathers His elect from all nations into one body (John 10:16; Ephesians 2:11-22).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does understanding the comprehensive scattering of "Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem" help us grasp the totality of covenant judgment?

2. What does the pattern of scattering followed by gathering teach about God's judgment serving ultimately redemptive purposes?
3. How does Jesus's promise to gather His scattered sheep (John 10:16) fulfill and transcend ethnic Israel's restoration?

Interlinear Text

וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל־מֶלֶךְ־הַמְּלָא־בָּרְךָ־מֶה־בָּרְךָ־לְהָמְרָא אָמָר
And I said H413 **unto the angel** H4397 **that talked** H1696 **And I said** H559

וְאֵלֶיךָ אָמָר אֶל־מֶלֶךְ־הַמְּלָא־בָּרְךָ־מֶה־בָּרְךָ־לְהָמְרָא אָמָר
 H559 H413 H4397 H1696 H559

אֲשֶׁר־בְּקָרְבָּנוֹתָךְ אֲלֵיכָם אֲלֵיכָם אֲשֶׁר־בְּקָרְבָּנוֹתָךְ אֲלֵיכָם
 H834 H7161 H2219 H853

יְהוָה־יְהוָה אֲלֵיכָם יְהוָה־יְהוָה אֲלֵיכָם יְהוָה־יְהוָה אֲלֵיכָם
me These are the horns H3063 **and Jerusalem** H3478 **which have scattered** H3389

יְהוָה־יְהוָה אֲלֵיכָם יְהוָה־יְהוָה אֲלֵיכָם יְהוָה־יְהוָה אֲלֵיכָם
Judah H853 **Israel** H3478 **and Jerusalem** H3389

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 2:2 (References Jerusalem): Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof.

Zechariah 8:14 (Parallel theme): For thus saith the LORD of hosts; As I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the LORD of hosts, and I repented not:

Zechariah 1:21 (Parallel theme): Then said I, What come these to do? And he spake, saying, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no man did lift up his head: but these are come to fray them, to cast out the horns of the Gentiles, which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it.

Zechariah 1:9 (Parallel theme): Then said I, O my lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will shew thee what these be.

Ezra 4:4 (Parallel theme): Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building,

Ezra 4:1 (References Israel): Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the LORD God of Israel;

Ezra 4:7 (Parallel theme): And in the days of Artaxerxes wrote Bishlam, Mithredath, Tabeel, and the rest of their companions, unto Artaxerxes king of Persia; and the writing of the letter was written in the Syrian tongue, and interpreted in the Syrian tongue.

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