

Zechariah 9:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty!
corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the
maids.

Analysis

For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! (כִּי מַה־טוֹבוֹ וְיָפִי) —dual exclamation emphasizes God's *tuv* (goodness, moral excellence) and *yofi* (beauty, aesthetic perfection). Biblical Hebrew rarely uses such extravagant praise, making this verse's double superlative noteworthy. God isn't merely functional (providing salvation); He is supremely desirable in Himself.

Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids—agricultural abundance symbolizes covenant blessing (Deuteronomy 7:13). *Dagan* (grain) and *tiros* (new wine) represent comprehensive provision. The result is joy: young men and women flourishing under God's blessing. This points forward to messianic banquet imagery (Isaiah 25:6, Matthew 26:29) where material and spiritual blessings merge. True prosperity flows from knowing God's goodness and beauty.

Historical Context

Post-exilic Judah struggled economically during initial decades of return. Zechariah promises that faithful temple-rebuilding and covenant-keeping will result in restored agricultural blessing. This counters Haggai's contemporary warnings about failed harvests due to neglecting God's house (Haggai 1:6-11).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How do you cultivate wonder at God's goodness and beauty, not just His usefulness?
2. What is the connection between recognizing God's glory and experiencing joy in His material provision?
3. How does Jesus as the 'bread of life' and 'true vine' fulfill this prophecy's imagery of grain and wine?

Interlinear Text

מַה H3588	טוֹב H4100	וְיָמָה H4100	יָפִי H3308	אֶדְנָי H1715
For how great is his goodness		and how great is his beauty		
בְּחוֹר יָם H970		וְתֵיר וְשֵׁ H8492	יְנוּבִים H5107	בְּתֻלֹת: H1330
shall make the young men		and new wine	cheerful	the maids

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 33:17 (Parallel theme): Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.

Psalms 50:2 (Parallel theme): Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

Psalms 36:7 (Parallel theme): How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.

Psalms 31:19 (Good): Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!

Psalms 145:7 (Good): They shall abundantly utter the memory of thy great goodness, and shall sing of thy righteousness.

Psalms 90:17 (Parallel theme): And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

Psalms 45:2 (Parallel theme): Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

Exodus 15:11 (Parallel theme): Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

Song of Solomon 5:10: My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

Song of Solomon 7:9: And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.