

Zechariah 9:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will encamp about mine house because of the army,
because of him that passeth by, and because of him that
returneth: and no oppressor shall pass through them any
more: for now have I seen with mine eyes.

Analysis

And I will encamp about mine house because of the army, because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth—after pronouncing judgment on surrounding nations, God promises protection for His people. **"I will encamp about mine house"** (ve-chaniti le-veyti mitstsavah, וְחִנִּיתִי לְבֵיתִי מִצָּבָה) uses military imagery—God personally establishes a protective garrison around His temple/people. The verb chanah (חָנָה) means to pitch a tent or encamp, suggesting God's shekinah presence as a defensive perimeter.

"Because of the army" (mitstsavah, מִצָּבָה, from garrison/standing force) clarifies the protection's purpose: defense against military threats. **"Because of him that passeth by, and because of him that returneth"** (mi-over u-mi-shav, מִי־עֹבֵר וּמִי־שׁוֹב) describes armies marching through the region—whether advancing to conquest or returning from campaign. Palestine's strategic location on the land bridge connecting Africa, Asia, and Europe made it a perpetual military corridor. God promises to shield His house from these constant troop movements.

"And no oppressor shall pass through them any more: for now have I seen with mine eyes" (ve-lo ya'avur bahem od noges ki attah ra'iti be-eynay, וְלֹא־יַעְבֹּר בָּהֶם עוֹד נֹגֵשׁ כִּי אַתָּה רָאִיתִי בְעֵינַי). The promise of no more oppressors (noges, נֹגֵשׁ, taskmasters/exactors) finds ultimate fulfillment in Messiah's kingdom. God's declaration **"for now have I seen with mine eyes"** echoes Exodus 3:7 when God

saw Israel's affliction in Egypt and initiated deliverance. Divine observation precedes divine intervention—God sees His people's suffering and acts to defend them.

Historical Context

This prophecy found remarkable fulfillment during Alexander the Great's campaign (332 BC). According to Josephus (Antiquities 11.8.5), when Alexander approached Jerusalem after conquering Tyre and Gaza, the Jews feared destruction. The high priest Jaddua went out in procession to meet Alexander, wearing his priestly garments. Alexander, reportedly shown Daniel's prophecy about a Greek conqueror (Daniel 8:5-8, 21), spared Jerusalem and granted Jews religious freedom. Whether this account is historically precise or legendary, the fact remains: Alexander devastated surrounding cities but left Jerusalem intact—armies "passed by" without harming God's house.

The ultimate fulfillment awaits Christ's return when "no oppressor shall pass through them any more." Historically, Jerusalem has suffered repeated conquests: Babylon (586 BC), Rome (AD 70, 135), Crusaders (1099), various Islamic dynasties, and others. Yet prophecy promises an eventual end to oppression when Messiah reigns from Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:9-11; Isaiah 2:2-4). The present age experiences partial fulfillment—God protects His people (the church, spiritual Jerusalem) from ultimate spiritual harm, though not from temporal suffering (Romans 8:35-39). Complete fulfillment awaits the New Jerusalem where nothing that defiles will enter (Revelation 21:27).

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's promise to "encamp about mine house" assure believers of His personal, active protection against spiritual enemies?
2. What does God's statement "I have seen with mine eyes" reveal about His awareness of and compassion for His people's suffering?
3. How should we reconcile this promise of protection with the historical reality that Jerusalem and the church have faced oppression and persecution?

Interlinear Text

וְאֶנְכֵּן יְתִי	לְבֵיתִי	מִצָּבָה		
And I will encamp	about mine house	because of the army		
H2583	H1004	H4675		
יַעֲבֹר	וּמִשָּׁב	וְלֹא		
because of him that passeth by	and because of him that returneth			
H5674	H7725	H3808		
יַעֲבֹר	עֹד עָלֶיהָ	נֹגֵשׁ	כִּי	עֹתָהּ
because of him that passeth by		and no oppressor		
H5674	H5921	H5750	H3588	H6258
		H5065		
כֹּא יְתִי	בְּעֵינָי			
them any more for now have I seen	with mine eyes			
H7200	H5869			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 54:14 (Parallel theme): In righteousness shalt thou be established: thou shalt be far from oppression; for thou shalt not fear: and from terror; for it shall not come near thee.

Isaiah 60:18 (Parallel theme): Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.

Isaiah 52:1 (Parallel theme): Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.

Jeremiah 31:12 (Parallel theme): Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.

Isaiah 52:12 (Parallel theme): For ye shall not go out with haste, nor go by flight: for the LORD will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward.

Isaiah 31:5 (Parallel theme): As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it; and passing over he will preserve it.

Psalms 34:7 (Parallel theme): The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

Psalms 72:4 (Parallel theme): He shall judge the poor of the people, he shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.

Exodus 3:9 (Parallel theme): Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

Amos 9:15 (Parallel theme): And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God.