

Visions in the Night, Part 1:  
God's Unwavering Compassion for Israel  
Zechariah 1.7-3.10

Does God care about you? Does it really matter how you live your life? If there is a God, why doesn't he fix this world's problems? You may have wondered this. The Jews in Zechariah's day did, too. Mysterious visions in the night revealed truth we still need to apply today.

Visions in the Night

- Riders among myrtle trees (1.7-17): God is jealous for Israel  
*Short term:*  
*Long term:*
- Four horns and craftsmen (1.18-21): He will defeat her enemies  
*Short term:*  
*Long term:*
- The surveyor (2.1-13): He will dwell with her, the apple of His eye  
*Short term:*  
*Long term:*
- Cleansing of Joshua (3.1-10): God will remove Israel's sin  
*Short term:*  
*Long term:*

Timeless Applications for God's People

- God did not forget Israel; He has not forgotten us.
- God punishes evil and rewards good – in His time.
- God sees the heart; His people should pursue holiness.

1. In February of 519 B.C. (using our calendar), God gave Zechariah eight visions in one night. It was three months since Zechariah had his first message from God (1.1-6), and two months following the last recorded message from the prophet Haggai (see Haggai 2.20). The key to understanding these visions is not any hidden meaning in the images, but the explanation given within the dialogue of the visions. Read the first vision (Zech. 1.8-17). What issue is raised in the dialogue in vv9-13? What is the *moral of the story* in vv14-17? How would this have affected the settlers in Jerusalem? What does it tell us about the character of God?
2. The second vision is short (1.18-21). What does Zechariah see in this vision? What does a 'horn' symbolize in prophecy (see Micah 4.13; Dan. 7.24)? What is God symbolically telling Israel He will do for them?
3. The third vision (chapter 2) is amazing. The event Zechariah sees is a man with a 'measuring tape' in his hand, measuring Jerusalem. The settlers were building a rudimentary wall, but it wouldn't be finished for decades (about 444 B.C.; see Neh. 6.15-16). But God's revelation goes beyond just the building of this wall; it talks about a time when Jerusalem will outgrow its walls, and won't even need a wall because God will protect it! It talks about a time when Jews will return – not only from Babylon, but from the whole world, to live in their homeland! And it says more! Are we seeing any of this prophecy fulfilled in our day? What remains to be fulfilled?
4. The fourth vision (chapter 3) focuses on Joshua, the high priest. As the spiritual leader of the people, he represents their spiritual lives. What does Satan standing next to Joshua signify? What does Satan always do to God's people (see Rev. 12.9-10)? What do Joshua's filthy garments represent? What do the clean garments represent? How could Joshua and the people of Israel maintain this condition? In 4.8-10, Zechariah is told this vision is symbolic of a future time when "My servant the Branch" will come. Who is this person? What still-future time is this referring to?