

# Pentwater Bible Church

## *Zechariah* *Zechariah Message 5* *Zechariah 1:18-21*



Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

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**The Book of Zechariah**  
**Message Five**  
**The Vision of the Horns and Craftsmen**  
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Daniel E. Woodhead



Painting by Sharlene Lindskog-Osorio

## THE VISION OF THE HORNS AND THE SMITHS

Zechariah 1:18-21

*<sup>18</sup>And I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and, behold, four horns. <sup>19</sup>And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these? And he answered me, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. <sup>20</sup>And Jehovah showed me four smiths. <sup>21</sup>Then said I, What come these to do? And he spake, saying, These are the horns which scattered Judah, so that no man did lift up his head; but these are come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations, which lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter it (ASV 1901).*

The red-horse rider vision is a key vision supporting the others visions that follow it. In that vision God makes is quite clear that He is sorely displeased with the Gentile nations because of their treatment of Israel. In the foundational red-horse vision God implied that

a punishment would be coming to them (Zechariah 1:15). Therefore this vision of the horns and smiths should be viewed as a continuation or fulfillment of the events of the first vision. During the entire Time of the Gentiles the Jews have been horribly persecuted. God wants Israel to receive a sense of comfort that He is working behind the scenes to amend the excessive punishment the gentiles have and will continue to apply to Israel. Because the Temple is about to be rebuilt (516 B.C.) and it is this vision which is being given in 520 B.C. that the Lord is implying that that Israel was now free from oppression and could attend to rebuilding the Temple that the Babylonians destroyed in 586 B.C. The Temple is of immense importance to God and the life of the Israelites.

Looking back on a period about two and a half thousand years this small nation of people have been “scattered” and “tossed” about, by the Gentile nations, but always preserved from being destroyed from off the earth, and without losing its national characteristics and identity. The Lord God swore that so long as the sun and the ordinances of the moon and the stars continue to be present in the sky, Israel would continue as a nation.

Jeremiah 31:35-16

*<sup>35</sup>Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, who stirreth up the sea, so that the waves thereof roar; Jehovah of hosts is his name: <sup>36</sup>If these ordinances depart from before me, saith Jehovah, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever (ASV 1901).*

As He says “before Him” and “for ever”, in about 590 B.C. even before the course of the four great Gentile world powers, who would be permitted to scatter Israel, began (Times of the Gentiles). He said this through the prophet Jeremiah just before Nebuchadnezzar sacked Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

Jeremiah 31:11

*<sup>11</sup>For I am with thee, saith Jehovah, to save thee: for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will in no wise leave thee unpunished (ASV 1901).*

The Psalmist later in the life of the nation Israel looking back said:

Psalm 129:1-8

*<sup>1</sup>Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth up, Let Israel now say, <sup>2</sup>Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth up: Yet they have not prevailed against me. <sup>3</sup>The plowers plowed upon my back; They made long their furrows. <sup>4</sup>Jehovah is righteous: He hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked <sup>5</sup>Let them be put to shame and turned backward, All they that hate Zion. <sup>6</sup>Let them be as the grass upon the housetops, Which withereth before it*



*groweth up; <sup>7</sup>Wherewith the reaper filleth not his hand, Nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom. <sup>8</sup>Neither do they that go by say, The blessing of Jehovah be upon you; We bless you in the name of Jehovah (ASV 1901).*

Israel's "national youth", is explained elsewhere in Scripture as their time in Egypt when they developed from a family of 70 people to a nation of 2.2 million. "When Israel was yet a child (the word being the same as "youth" (*neureem*) in the 129th Psalm), I loved him, and from the time that he was in Egypt I called him my son"—that is, from the very beginning of their history, when God began to love Israel, the nations began to hate them; and from the very time when God first called them "His son, His first-born" (Exodus 4:22-23), the nations began "to afflict them" (Exodus 1:12), and to try and exterminate them. With direction from Satan and from the very beginning of their history have the plowers mercilessly "*plowed upon my back; They made long their furrows.*"(Psalm 129:3)

The Jews have been persecuted severely over several millennia. The last stages of these persecutions have come from imperialistic governmental bodies, which are represented by the fourth nondescript beast in Daniel chapter seven. Other persecutions have come as well from ecclesiastical organizations. They can be seen as represented by the woman who rides the beast in Revelation chapter seventeen. This is the same non-descript beast representing the last Gentile world power in Daniel chapter five. The woman is perverse Christianity and world apostate religions who coupled with the governmental powers to persecute the Jews.



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Only the staunchest enemies of the Jews disagree with the fact that the persecutions have taken place. In fact the land on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, now known as the Nation of Israel, was granted to them effective May 14, 1948 as a result of the persecution they received by Nazi Germany from 1933-1945. November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly voted thirty-three to thirteen, with ten abstentions, in favor of a Partition Plan that created the State of Israel. Arab League members Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq immediately declared war and announced their rejection of the United Nations partition decision. Saudi-Arabia and Yemen also sent forces to participate in the invasion. The Arab-Muslim attacks continue to this day and will until Messiah arrives. Many have already recognized this prophetic fulfillment. Benjamin Disraeli, Great Britain's only Jewish Prime Minister in an address to parliament in 1854 said,

“There is no country in which the Hebrew race has been persecuted which has not suffered, whose energies have not withered, whose political power has not decayed, and where there has not been evident proofs that the Divine favour has been withdrawn from the land. The instances of Spain, and Portugal, and Italy are obvious.”<sup>1</sup>

#### THE VISION OF THE HORNS

The Hebrew word for behold which follows this awareness that Zechariah experienced is *heenay* and it is a command to pay attention to what will follow. Zechariah still in his vision state lifts up his mind's eyes and sees four horns. Keeping in mind that an angel who speaks to Zechariah's mind is living outside of time and space in the spiritual world and he speaks to Zechariah's spirit. It is therefore fitting to view these visions as having a sense of completeness in the future as well as the past. The Hebrew *perfect tense* means completed action regardless of whether the event occurred in the past, present or will occur in the future. It is important to this discussion that this is understood because the next vision discusses the completion of some events that are yet future to the time of Zechariah and our time (2013) as well. Without considering this Hebrew grammatical concept it becomes difficult to identify the horns and the smiths of this vision. One is then left with resorting to guessing to identify them. Therefore, Zechariah seeing the four horns and smiths together, in the perfect tense of prophetic vision everything appears to occur simultaneously. In the same way the prophets, for instance, described the sufferings and death of Messiah—the perfect Servant of Jehovah who was to appear centuries after their day—as already past, and speak of the future glory of Israel as already come to pass. In English grammar we can view this as the future perfect tense. And thus, also, these four horns, though successive in time, are shown to Zechariah at once, and their antagonism and cruelty to the Nation Israel as already past and gone. He sees the horns and simply says to the communicating angel (the *malakh haddobher bi*) “*What are these?*” Then Zechariah continued, “*And he answered me, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.*” In other words he is referring

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<sup>1</sup> Makovsky, Michael, *Churchill's Promised Land-Zionism and Statecraft*. New Haven, CT: Yale

to the four Gentile Empires, which were given to us in Daniel chapters two and seven. Horns were used as a symbol of military strength and power in the Old Testament (c.f. Deuteronomy 33:17; 1 Kings 22:11; Psalm 75:10; Ezekiel 29:21; Micah 4:13). Here, as the next verse shows, they stand for the four powerful nations who displaced the Jews and captured as well as occupied Jerusalem. Zechariah knowing two of them must realize that there are more to follow the two that he has experienced in his lifetime, Babylon and Media-Persia. The four horns also known as world empires, which subjugated the Jews, are:

1. Babylon
2. Media-Persia
3. Greece
4. Rome (Imperialism)

#### THE SMITHS

Immediately following the vision of the horns is the vision of the smiths or craftsmen. Apart from the final and total overthrow of allied Gentile world-power at the last stage of the Campaign of Armageddon, the prophet is allowed to see what we may describe as the incremental process of the decay and overthrow of the four great empires in turn.

#### Zechariah 1:20-21

*<sup>20</sup>And Jehovah showed me four smiths. <sup>21</sup>Then said I, What come these to do? And he spake, saying, These are the horns which scattered Judah, so that no man did lift up his head; but these are come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations, which lifted up their horn against the land of Judah to scatter it (ASV 1901).*

The smiths are skilled artisans, which in the Hebrew is *charasheem*. These are literally, “workmen,” or “craftsmen,” as some versions render the word. The pattern of the Hebrew text in chiasmic order suggests a *mashcheet* or a destroyer. The Bible writers used chiasmus to give meaning to their writings or to highlight details of particular importance. For example a reversal in the order of words in two parallel phrases, as in “He went in, out went she” provides emphasis and additional information. It is the job of the *mashcheet* to bring to ruin. So then the smith are the devastators. We see this in Isaiah 54:16 and Ezekiel 21:36 which are translated as workers of destruction. So as the horns scattered Judah and frightened the Jews the smiths represent those individuals who come to terrify and cast down the nations that subjugated Israel. For the time is coming when the nation Israel will no longer be under the yoke of any Gentile nations. In order for this to happen they must all confess belief in Jesus their Messiah.

Deuteronomy 28:13-14

*<sup>13</sup>And Jehovah will make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if thou shalt hearken unto the commandments of Jehovah thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them, <sup>14</sup>and shalt not turn aside from any of the words which I command you this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them (ASV 1901).*

This verse sums up the final status of Israel after the Times of the Gentiles are complete. The persecutions will be complete and the Jews will have prominent positions in the world's government under King Jesus in the Millennial Theocratic Kingdom. Incrementally though the four smith represent each of the people and groups running coterminous to the nations that conquered the Jews from Nebuchadnezzar all the way to the Antichrist and his world government. These people were each used by God to overthrow the previous world empire. They are the smiths.

1. Cyrus the Great of the Medes and Persians conquered Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon. The actual event is recorded in the sixth chapter of the book of Daniel wherein Darius the Mede conquered Babylon and Belshazzar the successor king of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was killed. Herodotus follows with an account of the siege of the city, and its subsequent fall in 539 BC to the Persian king Cyrus (same Darius as kings took more than one name). Besides the Bible and Herodotus, one other source confirms this story. That is the famous "Cyrus Cylinder" found at Babylon and now housed at the British Museum.
2. Alexander the Great of the Greeks conquered the Medes and the Persians. He conquered Jerusalem in 332 B.C. and invaded Media in the summer of 330 B.C. and took control of the Media Persian Empire.
3. Pompey the Great of the Roman Imperialistic Republic took the city of Jerusalem in 63 B.C. and appointed Hyrcanus II as High Priest and Antipater the Idumaeen who is killed by his sons Phasael and Herod the Great. Some day Antichrist the last of the imperial dictators will assume power over the entire world.
4. King Jesus will have the Antichrist and the False Prophet thrown in to the eternal Lake of Fire ending the Times of the Gentiles and ushering in the Messianic Kingdom.

NEXT WEEK: ZECHARIAH'S THIRD PROPHECY

**Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments**

[Info@pentwaterbiblechurch.com](mailto:Info@pentwaterbiblechurch.com) Toll Free 877-706-2479