

## Zech. 1:7-17 “Four Horsemen”

**For the Children:** If you were fighting against an enemy that was occupying your country, you would not be happy to learn that they were very settled, with little opposition. You would want to hear that things were in upheaval, with lots of rebellion and strife. God’s people in exile in Babylon were not happy to hear that the Persians seemed to be very secure. So the Lord tells them not to worry, for He is in control. He will soon set them free and bless them in their own land. He will even help them rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem.

**Questions:** What does the patrol of angels on horseback mean? How does God free us from our worst enemies today? How does He use angels to help us today?

---

### Introduction:

#### First Point: The Angelic Patrol

- 1) **The Important Details:** The colour of the horses, the trees and the ravine are not identified as significant. The key detail is that angels are riding the horses on patrol of the earth (v. 10). This is a military picture, that implies that the Lord knows all that transpires on the earth, as He is everywhere present; and controls it all by His Sovereign might.
- 2) **A Comparison with Revelation:** This is similar to the point in Rev. 6. There, the colour of the horses is somewhat different – it is a minor detail; the riders are not said to be angels; and the report is of war, famine, pestilence and death – not peace. But the message in both John’s vision and Zechariah’s, is sent to comfort God’s afflicted people.
- 3) **An Unquiet Peace:** In Zechariah’s vision, however, the peace and quiet are not seen as positive. They refer to the peace Darius had obtained by force, after quelling 2 years of rebellion. Though the 70 years of exile were coming to an end (Jer. 25:11-12), independence for God’s people seemed farther off again. But the point is that the Persian Empire is completely under God’s control.

#### Second Point: The Angelic Intercession

- 1) **How Long?:** The Angel of the Lord understands that this peace looks like bad news for Judah. So he asks the Lord how long He will withhold compassion and remain indignant with His people. This is rather like the “How long?” of the martyrs in John’s vision of Rev. 6:10. If elect angels can ask such questions, based on a love of God’s glory, His people and His promises, then so can we. The Lord does not discourage us from bringing such burdens to Him in prayer!
- 2) **He Sends Angels to Help:** Remember, the Angel of the Lord has been sent as God’s messenger, to minister to His people and help protect them (Ps. 91:11-12; Rev. 1:20; Rev. 2-3). If he asks this question to intercede for Judah, it is because the Lord *wants* prayer/intercession and help for His people; because He *wants* to answer this question for them. It is designed to *comfort* the exiles.

#### Third Point: The Lord’s Assurance

- 1) **Comforting Words:** The Lord therefore answers the angel with gracious, comforting words. He also tells Zechariah to make this the burden of his proclamation to Judah (v. 14). The Lord’s compassion had never left Him, but now it would be clearly demonstrated again. God had chosen His people in eternity, but now that election would be demonstrated more clearly (v. 17). In His grace, He would return to Judah, to enable them to return to Him. He would measure the city with His line, rebuild the Temple (v. 10), and bring prosperity and comfort (v. 17; see also Is. 40:1-5). This points to an even greater restoration and comfort in Christ, who is a better Intercessor than the angels (Heb. 7:25; 2 Cor. 1).
- 2) **Comforting Jealousy:** The people can also take comfort from God’s jealous nature. His jealousy is His zeal to defend what belongs to Him. It is His protective love, fighting to prevent other nations from taking His people from Him. Though He was angry - in a Fatherly way - with Judah for being unfaithful to Him, He was more angry with the nations like Babylon, which went too far in trying to oppose God’s people (v. 15). He would therefore punish these nations and free His people. His jealousy also causes Him to destroy the works of the devil and free us through His Son

### Conclusion:

