

# ZECHARIAH

## Zechariah's commission

**1**<sup>1</sup>IN THE EIGHTH MONTH of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah, son of Iddo: **2**The LORD was very angry with your forefathers. **3**Say to the people, These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Come back to me, and I will come back to you, says the LORD of Hosts. **4**Do not be like your forefathers. They heard the prophets of old proclaim, 'These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Turn back from your evil ways and your evil deeds.' But they did not listen or pay heed to me, says the LORD. **5**And where are your forefathers now? And the prophets, do they live for ever? **6**But the warnings and the decrees with which I charged my servants the prophets – did not these overtake your forefathers? Did they not then repent and say, 'The LORD of Hosts has treated us as he purposed; as our lives and as our deeds deserved, so has he treated us'?

## Eight visions with their interpretations

**7**ON THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY of the eleventh month, the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah, son of Iddo.

**8**Last night I had a vision. I saw a man on a bay horse standing among the myrtles in a hollow; and behind him were other horses, black, dappled, and white. **9**'What are these, sir?' I asked, and the angel who talked with me answered, 'I will show you what they are.' **10**Then the man standing among the myrtles said, 'They are those whom the LORD has sent to range through the world.' **11**They reported to the angel of the LORD as he stood among the myrtles: 'We have ranged through the world; the whole world is still and at peace.' **12**Thereupon the angel of the LORD said, 'How long, O LORD of Hosts, wilt thou withhold thy compassion from Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, upon whom thou hast vented thy wrath these seventy years?' **13**Then the LORD spoke kind and comforting words to the angel who talked with me, **14**and the angel said to me, Proclaim, These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: I am very jealous for Jerusalem and Zion. **15**I am full of anger against the nations that enjoy their case, because, while my anger was but mild, they heaped evil on evil. **16**Therefore these are the words of the LORD: I have come back to Jerusalem with compassion, and my house shall be rebuilt in her, says the LORD of Hosts, and the measuring-line shall be stretched over Jerusalem. **17**Proclaim once more, These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: My cities shall again overflow with good things; once again the LORD will comfort Zion, once again he will make Jerusalem the city of his choice.

**18**I lifted my eyes and there I saw four horns. **19**I asked the angel who talked with me what they were, and he answered, 'These are the horns which scattered Judah [*prob. rdg, Heb adds Israel*] and Jerusalem.' **20**Then the LORD showed me four smiths. **21**I

asked what they were coming to do, and he said, 'Those horns scattered Judah and Jerusalem so completely that no man could lift his head. But these smiths have come to reunite them and to throw down the horns of the nations which had raised them against the land of Judah and scattered its people.'

**2**<sup>1</sup>I lifted my eyes and there I saw a man carrying a measuring-line. <sup>2</sup>I asked him where he was going, and he said, 'To measure Jerusalem and see what should be its breadth and length.' <sup>3</sup>Then, as the angel who talked with me was going away, another angel came out to meet him <sup>4</sup>and said to him, Run to the young man there and tell him that Jerusalem shall be a city without wall, so numerous shall be the men and cattle within it. <sup>5</sup>I will be a wall of fire round her, says the LORD, and a glory in the midst of her.

<sup>6</sup>Away, away; flee from the land of the north, says the LORD, for I will make you spread your wings like the four winds of heaven, says the LORD. <sup>7</sup>Away, escape, you people of Zion who live in Babylon.

<sup>8</sup>For these are the words of the LORD of Hosts, spoken when he sent me on a glorious mission [on a glorious mission: *prob. rdg, Heb* after glory] to the nations who have plundered you, for whoever touches you touches the apple of his eye: <sup>9</sup>I raise [*Or wave*] my hand against them; they shall be plunder for their own slaves. So you shall know that the LORD of Hosts has sent me. <sup>10</sup>Shout aloud and rejoice, daughter of Zion; I am coming, I will make my dwelling among you, says the LORD. <sup>11</sup>Many nations shall come over to the LORD on that day and become his people, and he will make his dwelling with you. Then you shall know that the LORD of Hosts has sent me to you. <sup>12</sup>The LORD will once again claim Judah as his own possession in the holy land, and make Jerusalem the city of his choice.

<sup>13</sup>Silence, all mankind, in the presence of the LORD! For he has bestirred himself out of his holy dwelling-place.

**4**<sup>1</sup>[*vv3.1-10 transposed to follow 4.14*]The angel who talked with me came back and roused me as a man is roused from sleep. <sup>2</sup>He asked me what I saw, and I answered, 'A lampstand all of gold with a bowl on it; it holds seven lamps, and there are seven pipes for the lamps on top of it, <sup>3</sup>with two olive-trees standing by it, one on the right of the bowl and another on the left.' <sup>11</sup>[*vv4.4-10 transposed to follow 3.10*]I asked him, 'What are these two olive-trees, the one on the right and the other on the left of the lampstand?' <sup>12</sup>I asked also another question, 'What are the two sprays of olive beside the golden pipes which discharge the golden oil from their bowls?' <sup>13</sup>He said, 'Do you not know what these mean?' 'No, sir', I answered. <sup>14</sup>'These two', he said, 'are the two consecrated with oil who attend the Lord of all the earth.'

**3**<sup>1</sup>Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, with the Adversary [*Heb* the Satan] standing at his right hand to accuse him. <sup>2</sup>The LORD said to the Adversary, 'The LORD rebuke you, Satan, the LORD rebuke you who are venting your spite on Jerusalem [the LORD ... Jerusalem: *or* the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you]. Is not this man a brand snatched from the fire?' <sup>3</sup>Now Joshua was wearing filthy clothes as he stood before the angel; <sup>4</sup>and the angel turned and said

to those in attendance on him, 'Take off his filthy clothes.' Then he turned to him and said, 'See how I have taken away your guilt from you; I will clothe you in fine vestments'; <sup>5</sup>and he added, 'Let a clean turban be put on his head.' So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him in clean garments, while the angel of the LORD stood by. <sup>6</sup>Then the angel of the LORD gave Joshua this solemn charge: <sup>7</sup>These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: If you will conform to my ways and carry out your duties, you shall administer my house and be in control of my courts, and I grant you the right to come and go amongst these in attendance here. <sup>8</sup>Listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your colleagues seated here before you, all you who are an omen of things to come: I will now bring my servant, the Branch. <sup>9-10</sup>In one day I will wipe away the guilt of the land. On that day, says the LORD of Hosts, you shall all of you invite one another to come and sit each under his vine and his fig-tree.

Here is the stone that I set before Joshua, a stone in which are seven eyes. I will reveal its meaning to you, says the LORD of Hosts. **4**<sup>4</sup>[See note on 4.11 above] Then I asked the angel of the LORD who talked with me, 'Sir, what are these?' <sup>5</sup>And he answered, 'Do you not know what these mean?' 'No, sir', I answered. 'These seven', he said, 'are the eyes of the LORD ranging over the whole earth [These seven ... earth: *transposed from v10*].'

<sup>6</sup>Then he turned and said to me, This is the word of the LORD concerning Zerubbabel: Neither by force of arms nor by brute strength, but by my spirit! says the LORD of Hosts. <sup>7</sup>How does a mountain, the greatest mountain, compare with Zerubbabel? It is no higher than a plain. He shall bring out the stone called Possession [*cp Lev. 20.24-26*] while men acclaim its beauty. <sup>8</sup>This word came to me from the LORD: <sup>9</sup>Zerubbabel with his own hands laid the foundation of this house and with his own hands he shall finish it. So shall you know that the LORD of Hosts has sent me to you. <sup>10</sup>Who has despised the day of small things? He shall rejoice when he sees Zerubbabel holding the stone called Separation [*cp Lev. 20.24-26*]

**5**<sup>1</sup>I looked up again and saw a flying scroll. <sup>2</sup>He asked me what I saw, and I answered, 'A flying scroll, twenty cubits long and ten cubits wide.' <sup>3</sup>This, he told me, is the curse which goes out over the whole land; for by the writing on one side every thief shall be swept clean away, and by the writing on the other every perjurer shall be swept clean away. <sup>4</sup>I have sent it out, the LORD of Hosts has said, and it shall enter the house of the thief and the house of the man who has perjured himself in my name; it shall stay inside that house and demolish it, timbers and stones and all.

<sup>5</sup>The angel who talked with me came out and said to me, 'Raise your eyes and look at this thing that comes forth.' <sup>6</sup>I asked what it was, and he said, 'It is a great barrel coming forth,' and he added, 'so great is their guilt in all the land.' <sup>7</sup>Then a round slab of lead was lifted, and a woman was sitting there inside the barrel. <sup>8</sup>He said, 'This is Wickedness', and he thrust her down into the barrel and rammed the leaden weight upon its mouth. <sup>9</sup>I looked up again and saw two women coming forth with the wind in their wings (for they had wings like a stork's), and they carried the barrel between earth and sky. <sup>10</sup>I asked the angel who talked with me where they were taking the barrel, <sup>11</sup>and he answered, 'To build a house for it [*Or her*] in the land of Shinar; when the

house is ready, it [*Or she*] shall be set on the place prepared for it [*Or her*] there.'

<sup>6</sup>I looked up again and saw four chariots coming out between two mountains, and the mountains were made of copper [*Or bronze*]. <sup>2</sup>The first chariot had bay horses, the second black, <sup>3</sup>the third white, and the fourth dappled. <sup>4</sup>I asked the angel who talked with me, 'Sir, what are these?' <sup>5</sup>He answered, 'These are the four winds of heaven which have been attending the Lord of the whole earth, and they are now going forth. <sup>6</sup>The chariot with the black horses is going to the land of the north, that with the white to the far west [*to the far west: prob. rdg, Heb behind them*], that with the dappled to the south, and that with the roan to the land of the east [*to the land of the east: prob. rdg, Heb omitted*].' <sup>7</sup>They were eager to go and range over the whole earth; so he said, 'Go and range over the earth', and the chariots did so. <sup>8</sup>Then he called me to look and said, 'Those going to the land of the north have given my spirit rest in the land of the north.'

<sup>9</sup>The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>10</sup>Take silver and gold from the exiles, from Heldai, Tobiah, Jedaiah, and [*and: prob. rdg, Heb and go on that day yourself and go to the house of*] Josiah son of Zephaniah, who have come back from Babylon. <sup>11</sup>Take it and make a crown; put the crown on the head of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest [*Joshua ... priest: possibly an error for Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, cp 3.5; 4.9*], <sup>12</sup>and say to him, These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Here is a man named the Branch; he will shoot up from the ground where he is and will build the temple of the LORD. <sup>13</sup>It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, he who will assume royal dignity, will be seated on his throne and govern, with a priest at his right side, and concord shall prevail between them. <sup>14</sup>The crown shall be in the charge of Heldai, Tobiah, Jedaiah, and Josiah son of Zephaniah, as a memorial in the temple of the LORD.

<sup>15</sup>Men from far away shall come and work on the building of the temple of the LORD; so shall you know that the LORD of Hosts has sent me to you. If only you will obey the LORD your God!

## **Joy and gladness in the coming age**

<sup>7</sup><sup>1</sup>THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME TO ZECHARIAH in the fourth year of the reign of King Darius, on the fourth day of Kislev, the ninth month. <sup>2</sup>Bethel-sharezer sent Regemelech with his men to seek the favour of the LORD. <sup>3</sup>They were to say to the priests in the house of the LORD of Hosts and to the prophets, 'Am I to lament and abstain in the fifth month as I have done for so many years?' <sup>4</sup>Then the word of the LORD of Hosts came to me: <sup>5</sup>Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, When you fasted and lamented in the fifth and seventh months these seventy years, was it indeed in my honour that you fasted? <sup>6</sup>And when you ate and drank, was it not to please yourselves? <sup>7</sup>Was it not this that the LORD proclaimed through the prophets of old, while Jerusalem was populous and peaceful, as were the cities round her, and the Negeb and the Shephelah?

<sup>8</sup>The word of the LORD came to Zechariah: <sup>9</sup>These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Administer true justice, show loyalty and compassion to one another, <sup>10</sup>do not oppress

the orphan and the widow, the alien and the poor, do not contrive any evil one against another. <sup>11</sup>But they refused to listen, they turned their backs on me in defiance, they stopped their ears and would not hear. <sup>12</sup>Their hearts were adamant; they refused to accept instruction and all that the LORD of Hosts had taught them by his spirit through the prophets of old; and they suffered under the anger of the LORD of Hosts. <sup>13</sup>As they did not listen when I [*prob. rdg, Heb he*] called, so I did not listen when they called, says the LORD of Hosts, <sup>14</sup>and I drove them out among all the nations to whom they were strangers, leaving their land a waste behind them, so that no one came and went. Thus they made their pleasant land a waste.

**8**<sup>1</sup>The word of the LORD of Hosts came to me: <sup>2</sup>These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: I have been very jealous for Zion, fiercely jealous for her. <sup>3</sup>Now, says the LORD, I have come back to Zion and I will dwell in Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the LORD of Hosts shall be called the Holy Mountain. <sup>4</sup>These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Once again shall old men and old women sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each leaning on a stick because of their great age; <sup>5</sup>and the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls, playing in the streets. <sup>6</sup>These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Even if it may seem impossible [*Or wonderful*] to the survivors of this nation on that day, will it also seem impossible to me? [*will ... me?: or it will seem wonderful also to me.*] This is the very word of the LORD of Hosts. <sup>7</sup>These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: See, I will rescue my people from the countries of the east and the west, <sup>8</sup>and bring them back to live in Jerusalem. They shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and justice.

<sup>9</sup>These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Take courage, you who in these days hear, from the prophets who were present when the foundations were laid for the house of the LORD of Hosts, their promise that the temple is to be rebuilt. <sup>10</sup>Till that time there was no hiring either of man or of beast, no one could safely go about his business because of his enemies, and I set all men one against another. <sup>11</sup>But now I am not the same towards the survivors of this people as I was in former days, says the LORD of Hosts. <sup>12</sup>For they shall sow in safety; the vine shall yield its fruit and the soil its produce, the heavens shall give their dew; with all these things I will endow the survivors of this people. <sup>13</sup>You, house of Judah and house of Israel, have been the very symbol of a curse to all the nations; and now I will save you, and you shall become the symbol of a blessing. Courage! Do not be afraid.

<sup>14</sup>For these are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Whereas I resolved to ruin you because your ancestors roused me to anger, says the LORD of Hosts, <sup>15</sup>and I did not relent, so in these days I have once more [*once more: or changed my mind and*] resolved to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; do not be afraid. <sup>16</sup>This is what you shall do: speak the truth to each other, administer true and sound justice in the city gate. <sup>17</sup>Do not contrive any evil one against another, and do not love perjury, for all this I hate. This is the very word of the LORD.

<sup>18</sup>The word of the LORD of Hosts came to me: <sup>19</sup>These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: The fasts of the fourth month and of the fifth, the seventh, and the tenth, shall become festivals of joy and gladness for the house of Judah. Love truth and peace.

<sup>20</sup>These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Nations and dwellers in great cities shall yet come; <sup>21</sup>people of one city shall come to those of another and say, 'Let us go and entreat the favour of the LORD, and resort to the LORD of Hosts; and I will come too.'  
<sup>22</sup>So great nations and mighty peoples shall resort to the LORD of Hosts in Jerusalem and entreat his favour. <sup>23</sup>These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: In those days, when ten men from nations of every language pluck up courage, they shall pluck the robe of a Jew and say, 'We will go with you because we have heard that God is with you.'

## Judah's triumph over her enemies

**9**<sup>1</sup>An oracle: the word of the LORD.

He has come to the land of Hadrach  
and [He has come ... and: *prob. rdg, Heb* In the land of Hadrach he has]  
established himself in Damascus;  
for the capital city [capital city: *or* chief part] of Aram is the LORD's,  
as are all the tribes of Israel.

<sup>2</sup>[*prob. rdg, Heb prefixes* Tyre and] Sidon has closed her frontier against  
Hamath,  
for she is very wary.

<sup>3</sup>Tyre has built herself a rampart,  
she has heaped up silver like dust  
and gold like mud in the streets.

<sup>4</sup>But wait, the Lord will dispossess her  
and strike down the power of her ships,  
and the city itself will be destroyed by fire.

<sup>5</sup>Let Ashkelon see it and be afraid;  
Gaza shall writhe in terror,  
and Ekron's hope shall be extinguished;  
kings shall vanish from Gaza,  
and Ashkelon shall be unpeopled;

<sup>6</sup>half-breeds shall settle in Ashdod,  
and I will uproot the pride of the Philistine.

<sup>7</sup>I will dash the blood of sacrifices from his mouth  
and his loathsome offerings from his teeth;  
and his survivors shall belong [his survivors shall belong: *or* he shall become  
kin] to our God  
and become like a clan in Judah,  
and Ekron like a Jebusite.

<sup>8</sup>And I will post a garrison for my house  
so that no one may pass in or out,  
and no oppressor shall ever overrun them.  
{This I have lived to see with my own eyes.}

<sup>9</sup>Rejoice, rejoice, daughter of Zion,  
shout aloud, daughter of Jerusalem;  
for see, your king is coming to you,

his cause won, his victory gained,  
humble and mounted on an ass,  
on a foal, the young of a she-ass.

<sup>10</sup>He shall banish chariots from Ephraim  
and war-horses from Jerusalem;  
the warrior's bow shall be banished.  
He shall speak peaceably to every nation,  
and his rule shall extend from sea to sea,  
from the River to the ends of the earth.

<sup>11</sup>And as for you, by your covenant with me sealed in blood  
I release your prisoners from the dungeon [*prob. rdg, Heb adds no water in it*].

<sup>12</sup>(Come back to the stronghold, you prisoners who wait in hope.)  
Now is the day announced  
when I will grant you twofold [*Or equal*] reparation.

<sup>13</sup>For my bow is strung, O Judah;  
I have laid the arrow to it, O Ephraim;  
I have roused your sons, O Zion [*prob. rdg, Heb adds against your sons, O Javan (or Greece)*],  
and made you into the sword of a warrior.

<sup>14</sup>The LORD shall appear above them,  
and his arrow shall flash like lightning;  
the Lord GOD shall blow a blast on the horn  
and march with the storm-winds of the south.

<sup>15</sup>The LORD of Hosts will be their shield;  
they shall prevail, they shall trample on the sling-stones;  
they shall be roaring drunk as if with wine,  
brimful as a bowl, drenched like the corners of the altar.

<sup>16</sup>So on that day the LORD their God  
will save them, his own people, like sheep,  
setting them all about his land,  
like [*like: prob. rdg, Heb for*] jewels set to sparkle in a crown.

<sup>17</sup>What wealth, what beauty, is theirs:  
corn to strengthen young men,  
and new wine for maidens!

**10**<sup>1</sup>Ask of the LORD rain in the autumn,  
ask him for rain in the spring,  
the LORD who makes the storm-clouds,  
and he will give you showers of rain  
and to every man grass in his field;

<sup>2</sup>for the household gods make mischievous promises;  
diviners see false signs,  
they tell lying dreams [*they ... dreams: or dreaming women make empty promises*].

and talk raving nonsense.  
Men wander about like sheep  
in distress for lack of a shepherd.

<sup>3</sup>My anger is turned against the shepherds,  
and I will visit with punishment the leaders of the flock;  
but the LORD of Hosts will visit his flock,  
the house of Judah,  
and make them his royal war-horses.

<sup>4</sup>They shall be corner-stone and tent-peg,  
they shall be the bow ready for battle,  
and from them shall come every commander.

<sup>5</sup>Together they shall be like warriors  
who tramp the muddy ways in battle,  
and they will fight because the LORD is with them;  
they will put horsemen shamefully to rout.

<sup>6</sup>And I will give strength to the house of Judah  
and grant victory to [grant victory to: *or expand*] the house of Joseph;  
I will restore them, for I have pitied them,  
and they shall be as though I had never cast them off;  
for I am the LORD their God and I will answer them.

<sup>7</sup>So Ephraim shall be like warriors,  
glad like men cheerful with wine,  
and their sons shall see and be glad;  
so let their hearts exult in the LORD.

<sup>8</sup>I will whistle to call them in, for I have redeemed them;  
and they shall be as many as once they were.

<sup>9</sup>If I disperse them [*Or scatter them like seed*] among the nations,  
in far-off lands they will remember me  
and will rear their sons and then return.

<sup>10</sup>Then will I fetch them home from Egypt  
and gather them in from Assyria;  
I will lead them into Gilead and Lebanon  
until there is no more room for them.

<sup>11</sup>Dire distress [*Dire distress: or An enemy*] shall come upon the Euphrates  
and shall beat down its turbulent waters;  
all the depths of the Nile shall run dry.

The pride of Assyria shall be brought down,  
and the sceptre of Egypt shall pass away;

<sup>12</sup>but Israel's strength shall be in the LORD,  
and they shall march proudly in his name.  
This is the very word of the LORD.

**11**<sup>1</sup>Throw open your gates, O Lebanon,  
that fire may feed on your cedars.

<sup>2</sup>Howl, every pine-tree; for the cedars have fallen,  
mighty trees are ravaged.

Howl, every oak of Bashan;  
for the impenetrable forest is laid low.

<sup>3</sup>Hark to the howling of the shepherds,  
for their rich pastures are ravaged.  
Hark to the roar of the young lions,  
for Jordan's dense thickets are ravaged.

<sup>4</sup>These were the words of the LORD my God: Fatten the flock for slaughter. <sup>5</sup>Those who buy will slaughter it and incur no guilt; those who sell will say, 'Blessed be the LORD, I am rich!' Its shepherds will have no pity for it. <sup>6</sup>For I will never again pity the inhabitants of the earth, says the LORD. I will put every man in the power of his neighbour and his king, and as each country is crushed I will not rescue him from their hands.

<sup>7</sup>So I fattened the flock for slaughter for the dealers. I took two staves: one I called Favour and the other Union, and so I fattened the flock. <sup>8</sup>In one month I got rid of the three shepherds, for I had lost patience with them and they had come to abhor me. <sup>9</sup>Then I said to the flock, 'I will not fatten you any more. Any that are to die, let them die; any that stray, let them stray; and the rest can devour one another.' <sup>10</sup>I took my staff called Favour and snapped it in two, annulling the covenant which the LORD [the LORD: *prob. rdg, Heb I*] had made with all nations. <sup>11</sup>So it was annulled that day, and the dealers who were watching me knew that all this was the word of the LORD. <sup>12</sup>I said to them, 'If it suits you, give me my wages; otherwise keep them.' Then they weighed out my wages, thirty pieces of silver. <sup>13</sup>The LORD said to me. 'Throw it into the treasury.' I took the thirty pieces of silver – that noble sum at which I was valued and rejected by them! – and threw them into the house of the LORD, into the treasury. <sup>14</sup>Then I snapped in two my second staff called Union, annulling the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

<sup>15</sup>Then the LORD said to me, Equip yourself again as a shepherd, a worthless one; <sup>16</sup>for I am about to install a shepherd in the land who will neither miss any that are lost nor search for those that have gone astray nor heal the injured nor nurse the sickly, but will eat the flesh of the fat beasts and throw away their broken bones.

<sup>17</sup>Alas for the worthless shepherd who abandons the sheep!  
A sword shall fall on his arm and on his right eye;  
his arm shall be shrivelled  
and his right eye blinded.

**13**<sup>7</sup>[*3.7-9 transposed to this point*] This is the very word of the LORD of Hosts:  
O sword, awake against my shepherd  
and against him who works with me.  
Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered,  
and I will turn my hand against the shepherd boys.

<sup>8</sup>This also is the very word of the LORD:  
It shall happen throughout the land  
that two thirds of the people shall be struck down and die,  
while one third of them shall be left there.

<sup>9</sup>Then I will pass this third through the fire  
and I will refine them as silver is refined,  
and assay them as gold is assayed.  
Then they will invoke me by my name,  
and I myself will answer them;  
I will say, 'They are my people',  
and they shall say, 'The LORD is our God.'

## Jerusalem a centre of worship for all men

**12**<sup>1</sup>AN ORACLE. This is the word of the LORD concerning Israel, the very word of the LORD who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth, and who formed the spirit of man within him: <sup>2</sup>I am making the steep approaches to Jerusalem slippery for all the nations pressing round her; and Judah will be caught up in the siege of Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>On that day, when all the nations of the earth will be gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem a rock too heavy for any people to remove, and all who try to lift it shall injure themselves. <sup>4</sup>On that day, says the LORD, I will strike every horse with panic and its rider with madness; I will keep watch over Judah, but I will strike all the horses of the other nations with blindness. <sup>5</sup>Then the clans of Judah shall say to themselves, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem find their strength [The ... strength: *prob. rdg, Heb O* inhabitants of Jerusalem, I am strong] in the LORD of Hosts their God.'

<sup>6</sup>On that day I will make the clans of Judah like a brazier in woodland, like a torch blazing among sheaves of corn. They shall devour all the nations round them, right and left, while the people of Jerusalem remain safe in their city. <sup>7</sup>The LORD will first set free all the families [*Or tents*] of Judah, so that the glory of David's line and of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not surpass that of Judah.

<sup>8</sup>On that day the LORD will shield the inhabitants of Jerusalem; on that day the very weakest of them shall be like David, and the line of David like God, like the angel of the LORD going before them.

<sup>9</sup>On that day I will set about destroying all the nations that come against Jerusalem, <sup>10</sup>but I will pour a spirit of pity and compassion into the line of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Then

They shall look on me, on him whom they have pierced,  
and shall wail over him as over an only child, and shall grieve for him bitterly as for a first-born son.

<sup>11</sup>On that day the mourning in Jerusalem shall be as great as the mourning over Hadad-rimmon in the vale of Megiddo. <sup>12</sup>The land shall wail, each family by itself: the family of David by itself and its women by themselves; the family of Nathan by itself and its women by themselves; <sup>13</sup>the family of Levi by itself and its women by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself and its women by themselves; <sup>14</sup>all the remaining families by themselves and their women by themselves.

**13**<sup>1</sup>On that day a fountain shall be opened for the line of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to remove all sin and impurity.

<sup>2</sup>On that day, says the LORD of Hosts, I will erase the names of the idols from the land, and they shall be remembered no longer; I will also remove the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness from the land. <sup>3</sup>Thereafter, if a man continues to prophesy, his parents, his own father and mother, will say to him, 'You shall live no longer, for you have spoken falsely in the name of the LORD.' His own father and mother will pierce him through because he has prophesied. <sup>4</sup>On that day every prophet shall be ashamed of his

vision when he prophesies, nor shall he wear a robe of coarse hair in order to deceive. <sup>5</sup>He will say, 'I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the soil who has been schooled in lust from boyhood.' <sup>6</sup>'What', someone will ask, 'are these scars on your chest?' And he will answer, 'I got them in the house of my lovers.'<sup>[vv7-9 transposed to follow 11.17]</sup>

**14**<sup>1</sup>A day is coming for the LORD to act, and the plunder taken from you shall be shared out while you stand by. <sup>2</sup>I will gather all the peoples to fight against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses plundered and the women raped. Half the city shall go into exile, but the rest of the nation in the city shall not be wiped out. <sup>3</sup>The LORD will come out and fight against those peoples, as in the days of his prowess on the field of battle. <sup>4</sup>On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is opposite Jerusalem to the east, and the mountain shall be cleft in two by an immense valley running east and west; half the mountain shall move northwards and half southwards. <sup>5</sup>The valley between the hills [*prob. rdg, Heb my hills*] shall be blocked, for the new valley between them will reach as far as Asal. Blocked it shall be as it was blocked by the earthquake in the time of Uzziah king of Judah, and the LORD my God will appear with all the holy ones.

<sup>6</sup>On that day there shall be neither heat nor cold nor frost. <sup>7</sup>It shall be all one day, whose coming is known only to the LORD, without distinction of day or night, and at evening-time there shall be light.

<sup>8</sup>On that day living water shall issue from Jerusalem, half flowing to the eastern sea and half to the western, in summer and winter alike. <sup>9</sup>Then the LORD shall become king over all the earth; on that day the LORD shall be one LORD and his name the one name. <sup>10</sup>The whole land shall be levelled, flat as the Arabah from Geba to Rimmon southwards; but Jerusalem shall stand high in her place, and shall be full of people from the Benjamin Gate {to the point where the former gate stood,} to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine-vats. <sup>11</sup>Men shall live in Jerusalem, and never again shall a solemn ban be laid upon her; men shall live there in peace. <sup>12</sup>The LORD will strike down all the nations who warred against Jerusalem, and the plague shall be this: their flesh shall rot while they stand on their feet, their eyes shall rot in their sockets, and their tongues shall rot in their mouths.

<sup>13</sup>On that day a great panic, sent by the LORD, shall fall on them. At the very moment when a man would encourage his comrade his hand shall be raised to strike him down. <sup>14</sup>Judah too shall join in the fray in Jerusalem, and the wealth of the surrounding nations will be swept away – gold and silver and apparel in great abundance. <sup>15</sup>And slaughter shall be the fate of horse and mule, camel and ass, the fate of every beast in those armies.

<sup>16</sup>All who survive of the nations which attacked Jerusalem shall come up year by year to worship the King, the LORD of Hosts, and to keep the pilgrim-feast of Tabernacles. <sup>17</sup>If any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of Hosts, no rain shall fall upon them. <sup>18</sup>If any family of Egypt does not go up and enter the city, then the same disaster shall overtake it as that which the LORD will inflict on any nation which does not go up to keep the feast. <sup>19</sup>This shall be the punishment of

Egypt and of any nation which does not go up to keep the feast of Tabernacles.

<sup>20</sup>On that day, not a bell on a war-horse but shall be inscribed 'Holy to the LORD', and the pots in the house of the LORD shall be like the bowls before the altar. <sup>21</sup>Every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holy to the LORD of Hosts, and all who sacrifice shall come and shall take some of them and boil the flesh in them. So when that time comes, no trader shall again be seen in the house of the LORD of Hosts.