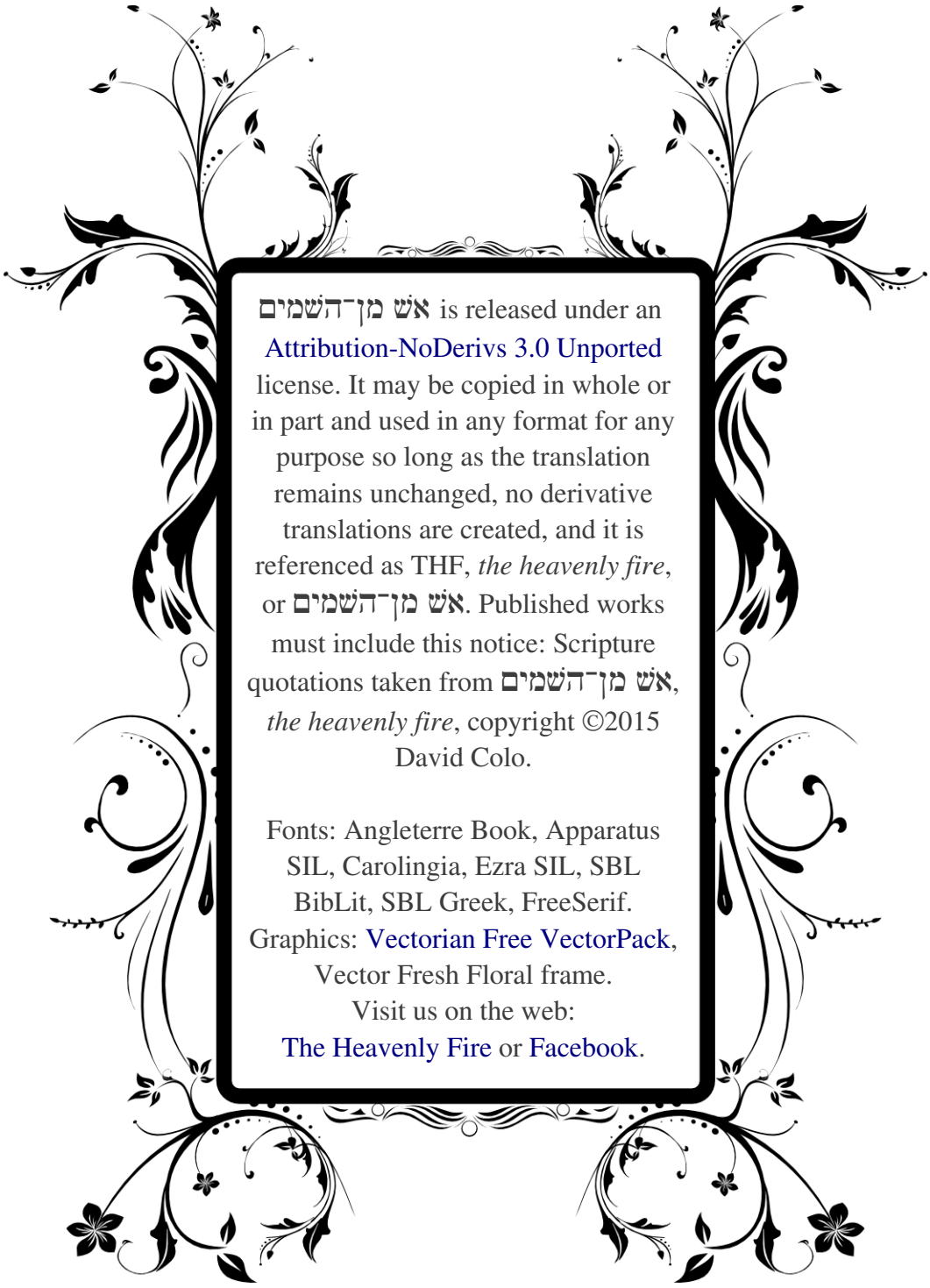


אש מן-השמים
the heavenly fire



David Colo



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Sigla and Abbreviations

√	Verbal root
Ⲛ	Septuagint: Old Greek
Ⲛ ^s	Septuagint: Codex Sinaiticus
Ⲛ ^A	Septuagint: Codex Alexandrinus
Ⲛ ^B	Septuagint: Codex Vaticanus
ⲛ ^A	Masoretic Text: Aleppo Codex
ⲛ ^L	Masoretic Text: Leningrad Codex
ⲥ	Syriac Peshitta
ⲧ	Targum of the Twelve
ⲉ	Vulgate (Stuttgart)
ASV	American Standard Version
ESV	English Standard Version
Fenton	Ferrar Fenton's The Holy Bible In Modern English
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible
ISV	International Standard Version
KJV	King James Version
MSS	Manuscript(s)
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NET	New English Translation (NET Bible)
NJPST	New Jerusalem Publication Society Tanakh
NKJV	New King James Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
Rotherham	Rotherham's The Emphasized Bible
YLT	Young's Literal Translation

Meaning

Historical Stuff

Form and Genre

Zechariah

Chapter 1

8

¹ In the eighth month, in Darius' second year, the word of YHWH came to Zechariah, son of Berechiah, son of Iddo, the prophet:

² “Rage against your ancestors,
did YHWH, [with] rage!”¹

³ He said to them, “So says YHWH, [God of]² Legions: 'Return to me,' pronounces YHWH, [God of] Legions, 'then I will return to you,' said YHWH, [God of] Legions.

⁴ 'Do not be like your ancestors to whom the former prophets called, saying, “so says YHWH, [God of] Legions,

‘Turn back from your wicked ways.

From your wicked deeds, [retreat,]”³
but they neither listened nor paid attention to me,’ pronounces YHWH.

⁵ 'Your ancestors—
where [are] they [now]?
And your⁴ prophets—
have they continually lived?

⁶ However, my words and my decrees, which I charged my servants, the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers?”

Then they turned back and admitted, “Just as YHWH, [God of] Legions, planned to treat us⁵—according to our ways and according to our deeds—so he treated us.”

⁷ On the twenty-fourth day, in the eleventh month (it [was] the month of Shebat) in Darius' second year, the word of YHWH came to Zechariah, son of Berechiah, son of Iddo, the prophet: ⁸ I looked [out] [during] the night and saw a man mounted on a red horse as⁶ it stood⁷ among the myrtles that [were] in the gulf.⁸ And behind him [were] horses—auburn,⁹ chestnut,¹⁰ and white.

⁹ Then I said, “What [are] those, my lord?”

the heavenly fire

(The messenger, my interlocutor,¹¹ said to me, “I, myself, will show you what those very¹² [things] [are].”) ¹³

¹⁰ The man who stood¹⁴ among the myrtles declared,¹⁵ “Those which YHWH sent to traverse the earth.”

¹¹ They reported¹⁶ [to] YHWH's messenger, who stood between the myrtles, “We traversed the earth, but saw the whole earth calm and quiet.”¹⁷

¹² YHWH's messenger declared, “YHWH, [God of] Legions, how long will you show no compassion to Jerusalem and to Judah's cities, which you cursed these¹⁸ seventy years?”

¹³ YHWH¹⁹ answered the messenger, my interlocutor,²⁰ [with] pleasing words—words of comfort.²¹ ¹⁴ Then the messenger, my interlocutor,²² said to me, “Proclaim this:²³ 'So says YHWH, [God of] Legions,

“I am impassioned for Jerusalem and for Zion
[with] great passion.”²⁴

¹⁵ So [with] great rage, I, myself, will rage²⁵
against the tranquil nations.

When I, myself, was barely enraged,
they encouraged [what was] evil.”

¹⁶ Therefore, so says YHWH, “I have turned back to Jerusalem with compassion. My temple²⁶ will be rebuilt in her,” proclaims YHWH, [God of] Legions, “and a line will be stretched out over Jerusalem.”

¹⁷ Further, proclaim this:²⁷ 'So says YHWH, [God of] Legions, “[Once] again, my cities will gush²⁸ with good [things].”²⁹”

So YHWH will again comfort Zion,
again elect Jerusalem.”

Chapter 2

2

¹ I looked up³⁰ and saw four horns. ² So I said to the messenger, my interlocutor,³¹ “What [are] those?”

He said to me, “Those [are] the horns that dispersed Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.”

³ Then YHWH showed me four metalworkers.

⁴ So I said, “What [are] these coming to do?”

He said this:³² “Those [are] the horns that dispersed Judah to such an extent [that]³³ no person was free,³⁴ but these have come to terrify them—to sunder³⁵ those gentile horns³⁶ who raised [their] horn toward the land of Judah and to disperse them.³⁷

⁵ I looked up³⁸ and saw a man. And in his hand [was] a measuring cord.³⁹ ⁶ So I asked, “Where [are] you going?”

He said to me, “To measure Jerusalem in order to see what its width and what its length [will be].”

⁷ Then I saw the messenger, my interlocutor,⁴⁰ go out as another messenger went out to meet him. ⁸ He said to him, “Hop [to it]!⁴¹ Say this⁴² to that young man:

'[In] unfortified places⁴³

will Jerusalem dwell

because of the many⁴⁴ people and animals within her.

⁹ But I, myself, Will Be⁴⁵;

proclaims YHWH,

'her⁴⁶ encircling wall of fire.

Yes,⁴⁷ a triumph⁴⁸ I Will Be⁴⁹

within her.”

¹⁰ “Hey hey!⁵⁰

Flee from the northern land,”

proclaims YHWH,

“[even] though, like the four heavenly winds,⁵¹

I spread you [out],” proclaims YHWH.

¹¹ Hey, Zion,⁵² escape—

[you] who dwell⁵³ [in] Daughter Babel!

¹² For so says YHWH, [God of] Legions, after [The] Glory sent me⁵⁴ to the nations

who plundered you,

“

--Emendation of the Scribes--

13

14

15

16

17

Chapter 3

ג

Chapter 4

ד

Chapter 5

ה

Chapter 6

ו

Chapter 7

ז

Chapter 8

ח

Chapter 9

ט

Chapter 10

י

Chapter 11

יא

Chapter 12

יב

Chapter 13

יג

Chapter 14

יד

The total number of verses
in this book [is] X.

TRANSLATION NOTES



- 1 The verse creates a simple, but elegant *inclusio* for the oracular saying by starting with a verb (קצף) and ending with a cognate accusative noun (קצף). Since the cognate accusative usually follows directly after the verb, there must have been a conscious desire on the part of the scribe to delay it until the end. Few translations are sensitive to this intended design. So YLT (Jehovah was wroth against your fathers—wrath!) and Fenton (The EVER-LIVING was angry with your fathers, angry).
- 2 The title is elided in Zechariah. For the full title, see, for example, 2 Sam 5:10; 1 Kgs 19:10, 14; Ps 89:9; Jer 5:14.
- 3 Typical of Semitic poetry, the second verb that would be parallel with the first is elided.
- 4 Literally, “the.”
- 5 Literally, “to do to us.” The “to us” (לנו) is missing from 4QXII^e and 6^A, but present in the Masoretic MSS and virtually everywhere else (like 7, 8, 9, and 6^B).
- 6 Inverted word order (subject before verb) introduces a circumstantial clause. The *waw* should thus be rendered something like “while” or “as,” not “and.”
- 7 Alternatively, “was standing.” The introduction of a fronted subject (הוא) indicates the switch to a different referent than the “man.” This is clarified by ISV (*the horse* was standing) and NET (a red horse *that* stood), but obscured or misinterpreted by virtually all other translations.
- 8 The precise nuance of this word is uncertain. It could refer to a dark/shady place (from צלל, meaning “to darken” in the Qal or “give shade” in the Hiphil). So Rotherham and YLT (in the shade). That interpretation is supported by 6 and might make sense of the night-time context. Or it could refer to a sunken place or depth—usually of the sea (from צול, meaning “to sink”). Since that seems to be the context for the word virtually everywhere else (Job 41:23; Ps 69:3, 16; Jon 2:4; Mic 7:19; Zech 10:11), we follow it here. So NJPST (in the Deep) and NKJV (in the hollow).
- 9 Or “red.” The color of earth in Israelite conception (*terra rossa*).
- 10 Or “brown.” Representing the shade of a particular grape skin.
- 11 Literally, “the one speaking with me.”
- 12 The Hebrew is not מה הם (what they [are]) or מה אלה (what these [are]), but מה-המה אלה (literally, “what they [are]—those”). We have interpreted it as a more emphatic statement and used “very” for “they.”
- 13 Since the same speaker replies for the first time again in the next verse, is called two different things in both verses, the next verse actually answers the question, and the previous verse ended with what may, perhaps, be a fragment of the original answer (אלה) “those...”, we view this verse as a secondary insertion.
- 14 Now it is the man who is standing and not the horse. A process of conceptual blending has occurred. Since the man is mounted and the horse is standing, the man is perceived as occupying the same stance as the horse.

- 15 Literally, “answered and said.” This is a common idiom meaning, simply, to speak up. It does not require replying to a previous speaker. See, for instance, v. 11 or Job 3:2.
- 16 Literally, “answered and said.” This is a common idiom meaning, simply, to speak up. It does not require replying to a previous speaker. See, for instance, v. 10 or Job 3:2.
- 17 Attempting to capture the literary assonance of **ישבת ושקטת**.
- 18 Literally, “this.” By reading “this” with “seventy years,” we are following the Masoretic accentuation.
- 19 **ש**, **ש**^A, and **ש**^B read “[God of] Legions” (*παντοκρατωρ*) here.
- 20 Literally, “the one speaking with me.”
- 21 Literally, “words, consolations.”
- 22 Literally, “the one speaking with me.”
- 23 Literally, “saying.” Combined with the command “proclaim,” it functions to introduce the oracular saying.
- 24 Like v. 2, this verse creates a simple, but elegant *inclusio* for the oracular saying by starting with a verb (**קנא־תי**) and ending with a cognate accusative noun (**קנאה**)—though, in this case, modified by an adjective. Since the cognate accusative usually follows directly after the verb, there must have been a conscious desire on the part of the scribe to delay it until the end. Translations are generally more sensitive to that design here than in v. 2. So KJV and ASV (with a great jealousy), YLT and NKJV (with great zeal), ISV (a great concern).
- 25 The participle is functioning as an inflected verb to express that currently calm and quiet world will be upturned.
- 26 Literally, “house.”
- 27 Literally, “saying.” Combined with the command “proclaim,” it functions to introduce the oracular saying.
- 28 Literally, “scatter/spread out.” The verb is used with this same sense in Prov 5:16.
- 29 Literally, “[what is] good.”
- 30 Literally, “I lifted my eyes and saw.”
- 31 Literally, “the one speaking with me.”
- 32 Literally, “saying.” It often functions simply to introduce a spoken utterance.
- 33 Literally, “according to the mouth.” An idiom meaning “according to,” “the like of which,” or “so much so.”
- 34 Literally, “a man could not lift his head.” An idiom referring to the restricted movement of captivity.
- 35 Hebrew verb uncertain. It appears only once more in the Piel (Lam 3:53) with uncertain meaning. The Qal form (Jer 50:14) must refer to the shooting of arrows. Some take it from **√ידה** (to throw/cast). So NASB (to throw down), KJV (to cast out), Rotherham (to cast down). Unless there is an error, however, it must come from **√ידה**. Since smiths or metalworkers are the agents of action, many believe that it refers to something like cutting or

severing. So NJPST (to hew down), HCSB (to cut off), and our translation above. Others limit their translation to a generalized statement of destruction. So NRSV (to strike down) and ISV (tearing them down).

36 Literally, “those horns of the nations.”

37 Literally, “it.”

38 Literally, “I lifted my eyes and saw.”

39 Literally, “cord of measurement.”

40 Literally, “the one speaking with me.”

41 Literally, “Run!”

42 Literally, “saying.” It often functions simply to introduce a spoken utterance.

43 Or “unwalled settlements.”

44 Literally, “abundance of.”

45 The name of YHWH as revealed in Exod 3:14 is **אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה** (I Will Be Who I Will Be) or simply **אֶהְיֶה** (I Will Be). There, the deity's Name is linked with his promise of redemption from Egyptian slavery. Here, it is linked with the promise of prosperity and safety for Jerusalem's inhabitants. For another interesting word-play with the divine name, see Hos 1:9.

46 Literally, “for her.”

47 Literally, “and.” Alternatively, an epexegetical *waw*, meaning “in other words,” or “that is,”.

48 Literally, “glory/beauty/splendor.”

49 A word-play with the divine name. See note 44.

50 This interjection occurs nowhere else. Its purpose is to excitedly draw attention to the words that follow. So NASB (ho there!) and NET (You there!).

51 Literally, “the four winds of heaven.”

52 Along with numerous other translations, we interpret “Zion” as a vocative. Some, however, take it as an accusative of direction. So ESV and NRSV (Escape to Zion). That interpretation is based on **ז**: **εἰς σιων** (into Zion).

53 Literally, “she who dwells.”

54 Like in v. 9, where YHWH describes himself as becoming “glory,” we interpret “glory” here as a hypostasis or title for YHWH (and, therefore, as the subject of the verb). This is in agreement with the next verse, which makes YHWH the subject of the same verb. So NRSV (after his glory sent me) and NIV (after the Glorious One has sent me). Most translations, however, take it as a fronted accusative object (as though the speaker/prophet was sent to get glory for YHWH). Unfortunately, **אַחֲרַי** (after) is rarely, if ever, used in such a manner.