
The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah

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Two Visions (Zech 1:8-21)

“I saw by night and behold a Man riding upon a red horse and He stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom and behind Him were there red horses, speckled and white. Then said I, O my Lord, what are these? And the angel that talked with me said unto me, I will show you what these are, And the Man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the Lord has sent to walk to and fro through the earth. And they answered the Angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth and behold, all the earth sits still and is at rest. Then the Angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of Hosts, how long will You not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which You have had indignation these threescore and ten years? And the Lord answered the angel that talked with me with good words and comfortable words. So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry you, saying, Thus says the Lord of Hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. And I am very sorely displeased with the heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased and they helped forward the affliction.

Therefore thus says the Lord; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: My house The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) shall be built in it, says the Lord of Hosts and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. Cry yet, saying, Thus says the Lord of hosts: My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad. And the Lord shall yet comfort Zion and shall yet choose Jerusalem. Then lifted I up my eyes and saw and behold four horns. And I said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these? And he answered me, These are the horns The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) which have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem. And the Lord showed me four carpenters. Then said I, What come these to do? And He spoke, saying, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no man did The Storm and the

Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) lift up his head: but these are come to scatter them, to cast out the horns of the Gentiles, which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it.”

This is a somewhat dark and mysterious passage. And if we should ask many a reader, *The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures)* “Do you understand what you are reading?” he would be compelled to reply as did the Ethiopian eunuch, “How can I, except some man should guide me?” Although there are some portions of the Word of God which are hard to be understood—by far the greater portion of Scriptures which are at first perplexing—will open up if we will carefully peruse them and prayerfully ask the illumination of God’s Holy Spirit.

We should seek to know all of God’s Word which can be known. You will perceive that the Prophet Zechariah himself was not content with beholding the two visions described in this passage, but had to ask, in the ninth verse, “O my Lord, what are these?” And then, again, in the nineteenth verse, “What are these?” Nor did he cease his enquiries! *The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures)* In the twenty-first verse he says, “What come these to do?” If the seer of the vision asked for an interpretation, much more may you and I.

He was not idly curious, but reverently teachable—let us imitate his holy diligence in desiring to learn. Be it remembered that God’s Word is *The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures)* never out of date. It is not like an almanac which is useful this year, but which will be mere waste paper the next. It always stands good. And the promise of God, when once fulfilled, are still valid for another fulfillment. Unlike a check, which being once paid, ceases to be of any force, the promises of God have a perpetual value in them! And if we can lay hold upon them by faith, having once drawn upon the great bank of Divine Mercy, we may go again with the same word and *The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures)* get as much from the liberal hand of God as we did before.

Let us come, then, with reverent attention to this passage hoping that God will instruct us *The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures)* in its meaning and help us to grasp its promises and win a new fulfillment. The two visions before us describe the condition of Israel in Zechariah’s day. But being interpreted in their aspect towards us, they describe the Church of God as we find it just now in the world. You notice that the first vision opens with a view *The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures)* of the Church of God. It is described as a myrtle grove flourishing in a valley.

The Church of God is hidden, unobserved, secreted as in a valley. The careless gazer doesn’t see her. She courts no honor—she comes not with observation. The Church has endured neglect and shame from the time of the Cross until now—her day of glory is to come at the manifestation of the Lord from Heaven, but at present—

“It is no surprising thing

That we should be unknown.

The Jewish The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) world knew not their King, God’s everlasting Son.”

The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures)

When Christ came, despised and rejected of men, His Glory had not broken forth—He was like the sun in a mist. The Church is like her Head—she has a glory, but it is hidden from carnal eyes—persecutions, sins, infirmities and reproaches surround her. The time of her breaking forth in all her glory is not yet come.

She lies in the valley where none but a keen observer can discover her. You must see the towering mountains, but only a careful eye can The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) discover this myrtle grove. Historians write the records of empires, but they take slight notice of the true Church of God. An historian who should pen the tale of English history might, now and then, come across the Church—but it would usually be the political establishment which The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) arrogates that title and not the spiritual and separated host of the faithful in Christ Jesus—for they are not of the world, even as their Lord was not of the world.

“My kingdom is not of this world,” is still most solemnly true. Perhaps the position of these myrtles in the valley may indicate the gloom which at seasons falls upon the Church—when she is in spiritual darkness, when no present favor is shown her by her God in Providence—when her pastors weep that their flocks are scattered by persecution and her ministers lament that their testimony is neglected. They cry, “Who has believed our report and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?” Then Zion is under a cloud—the myrtle grove is overshadowed and darkened.

But I think there is here the idea of tranquil security—the myrtle grove in the valley is still and calm, while the storm sweeps over the mountain summits. Tempests spend their force upon The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) the craggy peaks of the Alps, but down there, where the stream flows which makes glad the city of God, the myrtles flourish by the still waters, all unshaken by the impetuous wind. How great is the inward tranquility of God’s Church! She may be hunted upon the mountains, but in peace her martyrs possess their souls. She may hide herself in the catacombs of Rome, but the memorials upon the old slabs assure us that in the catacombs men lived in hallowed peace, and died in joy!

God’s Church in the valley has a peace which the world gives not and which, therefore, it cannot take away. It is the peace of God which passes all understanding. It keeps the hearts and minds of God’s people. Is there not also in the metaphor a The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) peaceful, perpetual growth? The myrtle sheds not her leaves, she is always green. And the Church, in her worst time, still has a blessed verdure of Grace about her! No, she has sometimes exhibited most verdure when her

winter has been sharpest. God's Church has prospered most when her adversities have been most severe.

The myrtle was the emblem of peace and a significant token of victory. Were not the brows of conquerors bound with myrtle and with laurel? Is not the Church of God, despite the neglect which she suffers from men and the occasional gloom which she endures through God's Providence, still a victor? May not her saints, as they die, be laid in the grave with the myrtle wreath upon them? Is not every Christian more than a conqueror through Him that loved him? Living in peace, do not the saints fall asleep in triumph?

You can readily picture to yourselves that quiet, calm, yet somewhat somber grove of myrtles. And forget not that in the midst of these myrtles, the Glory of the myrtle grove stands—the Son of Man! Oh, it is ever the Church's Glory that the Savior is The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) present with her. "Where two or three are met together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Here is the Church's strength! Here is her assurance of victory, the terror of her enemies, the confidence of her friends! If the Church is likened to golden candlesticks, John The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) saw one like unto the Son of Man walking in the midst of them. And if she is a myrtle grove, then the Man upon the red horse is never absent from her, but stands in the midst!

He is the wall of fire round about the Church and the Glory in the midst of her evermore. For the comfort of God's people, let us closely view this vision. You say, O son of man, feeble and full of unbelief, that God's Church will become extinct, that Popery will devour her and infidelity will eat her as does a canker. You fear that the banner of the Truth of God will be dashed to the ground and that the enemies of the Lord will win the victory. Cast away your fear! Your God appears unto you this day and in the visions of His servant Zechariah, He reassures you and speaks "good words and comfortable words unto you."

The Lord Jesus engaged as the great defender of His Church

Behold a Man riding upon a red horse. This same Man is called an Angel of the Lord. Christ shows Himself among His people as a Man, since He is the Head of the new race of men. As Adam was the man, the representative man to the whole of fallen humanity, so Jesus stands forth the second Adam, the representative Man of twice-born and blood-bought humanity. Out of love to His people He became one flesh with them and is now most truly called, "The Man Christ Jesus." He is not ashamed to call them Brethren.

Once professors forgot the Godhead of Jesus—we are more likely to overlook His true and real Manhood. Bone of our bone is He—flesh of The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) our flesh. In no respects different from the rest of men, save only that no sin has ever tainted His Nature. He feels as we feel. He thinks as we think—He once suffered and died, even as other men. O Church of God, rejoice! The glorious Man who is "God

over The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) all,” The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) is ever in your midst! He never forgets you! He never forsakes you! He abides with His people after a spiritual sort, forever! And never is this Covenant Head separated from His body the Church.

Inasmuch as He is also called an angel, this may suggest to us the doctrine that Christ is in a sense the Head of angels, as well as men. What if I were to surmise—and it were no new thought of mine, but The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) one which many have indulged— what if I were to suggest, not as a matter of doctrine, but only as a subject for thought—that the same great work which redeemed us who were fallen creatures, may have established the elect angels, so that they can never fall? I know not how it is that the angels have become consolidated in perfection so that they cannot now sin, unless it is through the virtue of the Savior.

Could they have been so created? A moral agent must necessarily have the power to sin—if it had no power to sin, it would need no Law. But for God to create a creature beyond all Law, to say the least, would be unsafe—it were, in fact, to set up The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) other gods—for a creature that knew no Law would be a rival to the Godhead! But so long as a creature is under Law, it may offend and so fall. How, then, came the angels in such a condition that they cannot sin? Is it not that they are now removed by a special act of Grace from under the Law and put into a condition of gracious permanence such as Law could never give them? And was this act of Grace the result of that great transaction upon Calvary?

Is this one part of the Apostle’s meaning when he says, “By Him all things consist”? Was there in the Atonement a virtue which has established the elect angels forever in perfect The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) holiness so that they should never sin? Why is it that other creatures beside men join in the song? (Rev. 5:9, 10). “You are worthy to take the Book and to open the seals thereof: for You were slain and have redeemed US to God by Your blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation. And have made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.”

Why The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) did the cherubic emblems stand upon the Mercy Seat and why were they made part and parcel of it, if not to show that while man bends as a sinner before that Mercy Seat and receives pardon, angels stand as sinless beings, looking down upon that Mercy Seat which is the groundwork of their eternal safety? It seems to me to magnify the greatness of the Atonement that it affected Heaven as well as earth and that throughout all the principalities and powers there would be a reason why they should bow with holy gratitude before Jesus the Lord, seeing that He has redeemed them from future falling by His precious blood.

Whether this is so or not, certainly Jesus is the true Archangel—He is the Head of principalities and powers, as well as the Head of redeemed men. He is called “the Angel of the Covenant,” as God’s messenger sent forth to fulfill God’s will in Covenant purposes to His children. Oh, this is the joy of the Church, that Jesus the Man, Jesus the Angel, is ever in her midst! He is

represented as riding upon a horse. This is to show His swiftness. The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) He flies upon the wings of the wind to defend His people.

An ordinary commander cannot be in The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) two places at once—and while the right wing has victory under his leadership, the left may be broken. But our Savior rides swiftly as the flashes of thought along the whole ranks, cheers them all on, and secures to every warrior the ultimate victory! Riding on the horse is a symbol of His zeal. He comes with all His power and might, flying with all speed so that none of His people should perish. He shows Himself strong on behalf of them that serve Him and is jealous for them with a fervent jealousy.

But why a red horse? Does this describe His Atonement? Does this picture His sufferings? Is it His own blood with which the horse is covered? Or is he bespattered with the blood of his foes slain in battle? “The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) His name.” He comes from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, glorious in His apparel, traveling The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) in the greatness of His strength because He has trod the winepress of wrath and trod His foes in His fury. Does this manifest the terror, the strength, the majesty of Him whose name is “the Lion of the tribe of Judah”?

The day is coming when He will ride on His white horse The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) and go forth conquering and to conquer. The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) But today it is The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) the red horse—for His Church still suffers—still is she stained with the blood of persecution. John says that when he saw the Son of Man, “His feet were like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace,” and so is it still with our Lord—His head is glorious in Heaven, but His feet, we that have fallen upon these The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) evil days, glow still in the furnace! As far as earth is concerned, The Storm and the Shower: Sermons on Zechariah (Spurgeon Through the Scriptures) then, the fitting picture of Christ is the Man upon the red horse in the midst of the myrtle trees. Rejoice, O you people of God, that Jesus is in the midst of His saints with His sword girt upon His thigh!

The Storm And The Shower Sermons On Zechariah Spurgeon Through The Scriptures

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