

Tuesday, December 24

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Zechariah 6:1 - 7:14

6 1 Then I looked up again and saw four chariots coming from between two bronze mountains. **2** The first chariot was pulled by red horses, the second by black horses, **3** the third by white horses, and the fourth by powerful dappled-gray horses. **4** “And what are these, my lord?” I asked the angel who was talking with me. **5** The angel replied, “These are the four spirits of heaven who stand before the Lord of all the earth. They are going out to do his work. **6** The chariot with black horses is going north, the chariot with white horses is going west, and the chariot with dappled-gray horses is going south.” **7** The powerful horses were eager to set out to patrol the earth. And the LORD said, “Go and patrol the earth!” So they left at once on their patrol. **8** Then the LORD summoned me and said, “Look, those who went north have vented the anger of my Spirit there in the land of the north.” **9** Then I received another message from the LORD : **10** “Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah will bring gifts of silver and gold from the Jews exiled in Babylon. As soon as they arrive, meet them at the home of Josiah son of Zephaniah. **11** Accept their gifts, and make a crown from the silver and gold. Then put the crown on the head of Jeshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. **12** Tell him, ‘This is what the LORD of Heaven’s Armies says: Here is the man called the Branch. He will branch out from where he is and build the Temple of the LORD . **13** Yes, he will build the Temple of the LORD . Then he will receive royal honor and will rule as king from his throne. He will also serve as priest from his throne, and there will be perfect harmony between his two roles.’ **14** “The crown will be a memorial in the Temple of the LORD to honor those who gave it—Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Josiah son of Zephaniah.” **15** People will come from distant lands to rebuild the Temple of the LORD . And when this happens, you will know that my messages have been from the LORD of Heaven’s Armies. All this will happen if you carefully obey what the LORD your God says.

7 1 On December 7 of the fourth year of King Darius’s reign, another message came to Zechariah from the LORD . **2** The people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regemmelech, along with their attendants, to seek the LORD ’s favor. **3** They were to ask this question of the prophets and the priests at the Temple of the LORD of Heaven’s Armies: “Should we continue to mourn and fast each summer on the anniversary of the Temple’s destruction, as we have done for so many years?” **4** The LORD of Heaven’s Armies sent me this message in reply: **5** “Say to

all your people and your priests, ‘During these seventy years of exile, when you fasted and mourned in the summer and in early autumn, was it really for me that you were fasting? **6** And even now in your holy festivals, aren’t you eating and drinking just to please yourselves? **7** Isn’t this the same message the LORD proclaimed through the prophets in years past when Jerusalem and the towns of Judah were bustling with people, and the Negev and the foothills of Judah were well populated?’” **8** Then this message came to Zechariah from the LORD : **9** “This is what the LORD of Heaven’s Armies says: Judge fairly, and show mercy and kindness to one another. **10** Do not oppress widows, orphans, foreigners, and the poor. And do not scheme against each other. **11** “Your ancestors refused to listen to this message. They stubbornly turned away and put their fingers in their ears to keep from hearing. **12** They made their hearts as hard as stone, so they could not hear the instructions or the messages that the LORD of Heaven’s Armies had sent them by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. That is why the LORD of Heaven’s Armies was so angry with them. **13** “Since they refused to listen when I called to them, I would not listen when they called to me, says the LORD of Heaven’s Armies. **14** As with a whirlwind, I scattered them among the distant nations, where they lived as strangers. Their land became so desolate that no one even traveled through it. They turned their pleasant land into a desert.”

Revelation 15:1 - 8

15 1 Then I saw in heaven another marvelous event of great significance. Seven angels were holding the seven last plagues, which would bring God’s wrath to completion. **2** I saw before me what seemed to be a glass sea mixed with fire. And on it stood all the people who had been victorious over the beast and his statue and the number representing his name. They were all holding harps that God had given them. **3** And they were singing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb: “Great and marvelous are your works, O Lord God, the Almighty. Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations. **4** Who will not fear you, Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous deeds have been revealed.” **5** Then I looked and saw that the Temple in heaven, God’s Tabernacle, was thrown wide open. **6** The seven angels who were holding the seven plagues came out of the Temple. They were clothed in spotless white linen with gold sashes across their chests. **7** Then one of the four living beings handed each of the seven angels a gold bowl filled with the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever. **8** The Temple was filled with

smoke from God's glory and power. No one could enter the Temple until the seven angels had completed pouring out the seven plagues.

Psalm 143:1 - 12

143 **1** Hear my prayer, O LORD ; listen to my plea! Answer me because you are faithful and righteous. **2** Don't put your servant on trial, for no one is innocent before you. **3** My enemy has chased me. He has knocked me to the ground and forces me to live in darkness like those in the grave. **4** I am losing all hope; I am paralyzed with fear. **5** I remember the days of old. I ponder all your great works and think about what you have done. **6** I lift my hands to you in prayer. I thirst for you as parched land thirsts for rain. Interlude **7** Come quickly, LORD, and answer me, for my depression deepens. Don't turn away from me, or I will die. **8** Let me hear of your unfailing love each morning, for I am trusting you. Show me where to walk, for I give myself to you. **9** Rescue me from my enemies, LORD ; I run to you to hide me. **10** Teach me to do your will, for you are my God. May your gracious Spirit lead me forward on a firm footing. **11** For the glory of your name, O LORD, preserve my life. Because of your faithfulness, bring me out of this distress. **12** In your unfailing love, silence all my enemies and destroy all my foes, for I am your servant.

Proverbs 30:24 - 28

30 **24** There are four things on earth that are small but unusually wise: **25** Ants—they aren't strong, but they store up food all summer. **26** Hyraxes —they aren't powerful, but they make their homes among the rocks. **27** Locusts—they have no king, but they march in formation. **28** Lizards—they are easy to catch, but they are found even in kings' palaces.