

### The Vision of the Surveyor

#### Zechariah 2

Zechariah 2 – *“Then I raised my eyes and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. <sup>2</sup> So I said, ‘Where are you going?’ And he said to me, ‘To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length.’ <sup>3</sup> And there was the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, <sup>4</sup> who said to him, ‘Run, speak to this young man, saying: ‘Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. <sup>5</sup> For I,’ says the Lord, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’” <sup>6</sup> “Up, up! Flee from the land of the north,” says the Lord; “for I have spread you abroad like the four winds of heaven,” says the Lord. <sup>7</sup> “Up, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon.” <sup>8</sup> For thus says the Lord of hosts: “He sent Me after glory, to the nations which plunder you; for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye. <sup>9</sup> For surely I will shake My hand against them, and they shall become spoil for their servants. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me. <sup>10</sup> “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” says the Lord. <sup>11</sup> “Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me to you. <sup>12</sup> And the Lord will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!”*

#### Background Notes

When the Jews returned to Jerusalem from their captivity in Babylon in 538 BC, Zechariah was among them. In the record given in Nehemiah 12, Zechariah is mentioned as one of the priests who returned. Zechariah may have been in his teens or twenties at this point, because the young man in this vision is most likely Zechariah. *“Run, speak to this young man” (v4).*

This vision, like all Zechariah’s visions, was given in the year 520 BC. That’s 18 years after the return from captivity, and Zechariah was still a young man, possibly in his thirties. On the other hand, the prophet Haggai, a contemporary of Zechariah, was an older prophet. He probably spent most of his life in Babylon during the 70-year captivity.

In 586 BC the Babylonian armies under Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed the beautiful Temple of the Lord, built by Solomon. Now, through the ministry of the older prophet, Haggai, and the younger prophet, Zechariah, the Jews who returned from captivity finished re-building the Temple. The two prophets exhorted and encouraged the people to finish the job.

Motivated by these post-exilic prophets, the Jews finally completed the rebuilding of the Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem in 516 BC. Ezra 6:14-15: *“So the elders of the Jews built, and they prospered through the prophesying of Haggai the prophet and Zechariah the son of Iddo. And they built and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel, and according to the command of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes king of Persia. Now the temple was finished on the third day of the month of Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.”*

There’s a lesson for us here. God uses both the older generation and the younger generation to teach, exhort and encourage His people - in all areas of ministry. In your church there are both older brothers and sisters and younger brothers and sisters who are involved in ministry. And **all are necessary** for the well-rounded ministry of a local church! In certain areas of ministry, the older generation can do a better job, but in other areas of ministry, the younger generation can do a better job. But **both are needed!** What a blessing to see older believers and younger believers working together in harmony as they serve the Lord!

God gave all of Zechariah’s visions with the purpose of encouraging His people. We come now to this third prophetic vision.

## Doctrinal Points

### 1. Jerusalem will be a city of peace in the future.

In this third prophetic vision, Zechariah saw a surveyor measuring Jerusalem. Verse 2: *“To measure Jerusalem, to see what is its width and what is its length.”* This meant that Jerusalem would be rebuilt, and it would become much larger than it was before. Zechariah had this vision in 520 BC, but it would be another four years before the Temple was completed, and another 75 years before Nehemiah returned to rebuild the walls of the city.

However, it seems that this prophetic vision was not completely fulfilled even in Nehemiah’s time, because verses 4 and 5 indicate that Jerusalem would become a city of peace, without need of walls for security, and that Lord would be the glory in her midst: *“Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls, because of the multitude of men and livestock in it. For I,’ says the Lord, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.”*

Jerusalem did not become a city of peace when the Jews returned from captivity. In fact, it is one of the ironies of history that Jerusalem, whose name means “city of peace,” has seen so little peace and so much bloodshed down through the centuries. In fact, Jerusalem is still not a city of peace - but some day it will be! When the Lord comes back to set up His kingdom here on earth, Jerusalem will be His headquarters. The Lord will again choose Jerusalem (v12). The Lord Himself will be a wall of fire all around her and the Lord will be the glory in her midst. *“For I,’ says the Lord, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst”* (v5).

Let me tell you - when the Lord is the wall and defense of the city, and when the Lord dwells in the midst of that city, you can be sure that Jerusalem will be a city of peace! It's not that way now - but it **will** be that way in the future.

In a few weeks, Lord willing, I'll be in Jerusalem. I always get excited when I stand within the walls of the Old City of Jerusalem! And I'm not just excited about Jerusalem's past history, and the archaeological findings that go all the way back to the time of Jesus Christ, and even further back to the time of King David. No, it's even more exciting to think of Jerusalem's great future!

And Jerusalem's great future is not just wishful thinking - it's a **sure** hope, based on the promises of God! The Lord Jesus will once again literally walk the streets of Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be a city of peace in the future.

## 2. Jerusalem will be a city for all people in the future.

Verses 10-11: *"Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," says the Lord. "Many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and they shall become My people. And I will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the Lord of hosts has sent Me to you."*

If these two verses are taken out of context, they can be used to wrongly teach that this prophecy is about the Church and Christianity. *"Many nations and Gentiles will be joined to the Lord in that day"* could be taught (incorrectly) as the present time, and the Lord *"dwelling in your midst"* could be taught (incorrectly) as a reference to the Church. But such an interpretation is only possible if these verses are ripped out of their context. What is the context of these verses? The context is certainly not the Church or Christianity! The context is **Judah (Israel)** and **Jerusalem** - as we've seen! Verse 12: *"And the Lord will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem."* We have no right to take away this promise that God literally made to Israel - and apply it to the Church!

But some Bible teachers will say, "Well, Israel broke her covenant with the Lord, and therefore this promise no longer applies to Israel." Thus, they say, these Old Testament promises should now be spiritualized and applied to the Church. Folks, the covenant between Israel and God was already broken when this promise was made, because this promise was made **after the captivity!** This promise was made after Israel was judged with destruction and captivity for breaking the covenant. Thus, it means this promise made to Israel is future. When the Lord returns to this earth and sets up His earthly kingdom, Israel will be the center - and Gentiles from many nations will be part of that kingdom.

This kingdom scenario may sound farfetched at the present time, but it will come to pass - make no mistake about it! *"Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!"* (v13). When the Lord is aroused on behalf of His people, Israel, let no one question His ways.

Notice that the land of Israel is called the “Holy Land” (v12). When I talk about the “Holy Land study tours” that I lead, I’m not using a “sales gimmick” – I’m using biblical terminology! Seriously speaking, the name “Holy Land” indicates that the fulfillment of this prophecy is still in the future, because the Holy Land is not holy at the present time. But it will be!

When the Lord Jesus returns to set up His literal kingdom here on this earth, it will be the Holy Land. The Lord Jesus is the “Me” throughout this chapter -- verses 8, 9, and 11. All the believing nations of that day will be part of this glorious kingdom of Christ here on this earth.

There will be no more wars, terrorism or disputes about borders then. Jerusalem will be a city for all people in the future.

## Practical Application

**“He who touches you touches the apple of His eye.”**

Only a fraction of the Jews in Babylon had returned to Jerusalem when Zechariah returned. In verses 6 and 7, the captives who were still in Babylon were urged to leave Babylon and come home while the door was still open.

The Lord promised that He will personally deal in judgment with any nation that goes against His people (v8-9). Look at what happened to Germany in World War 2. Why? Because God’s people, the Jewish people, are “*the apple of His eye.*”

This expression comes right from verse 8. The “apple” of the eye is the pupil - the vulnerable part of the eye that’s so easily injured, and in great need of protection. We all know how quickly we move when our eyes need protection from even the slightest possibility of injury. What a great picture of God’s protective care for His people!

What was true for the nation of Israel is also true for believers today. If you’re a believer, you too are the apple of God’s eye! If anyone or anything tries to hurt you, God is aware, and He will care for you - just as He would care for His own eyes. You are very important and valuable to the Lord!

What a great truth: “***He who touches you touches the apple of His eye!***”