

The Third Vision: The City Without Walls

Jeff Rogers / Lamplighter Bible Study

Zechariah 2:1-5

Philippians 1:6, *He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*

It is February 519 BC. Zechariah is seeing eight visions in a single night. The first two visions answer two fears of the returning exiles. One is: Does God see us? (The Horsemen – yes, he patrols; presence) Second: Does He care what the nations have done? (The horns and craftsmen – yes, there is an answer to every threat). Now the third vision. Will this city ever amount to anything?

Jerusalem has no wall, no defense. A city without a wall is not a city. It is a sitting duck to enemy attack. At that moment, a man walks into the vision holding a measuring line — the very thing God promised in the first vision (1:16). The rebuilding is real. But God is about to tell him Jerusalem will outgrow any wall he could draw, because her future is not measured by the walls she builds, but by the God who promises to be her wall and her glory.

I. What the Surveyor Cannot Measure (Zechariah 2:1-5)

- A. **The line is a promise.** God said in the first vision, "*the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem*" (1:16). Someone is surveying a city God said He would rebuild. That's good news.
- B. **The measuring line is not wrong; it is just early.** Measure a two-year-old. You can. But you've only measured a moment in time, because he isn't finished growing.
 - 1. This is not "dream bigger" or "believe God for more." God tells us what He will do.
- C. **Jerusalem will outgrow any wall:** "*villages without walls, because of the multitude of people and livestock.*" (Zech 2:4)
 - 1. Let's be honest about this promise: this does not happen in their lifetime. Seventy-Four years later, Nehemiah is still standing in the rubble of a broken wall.
 - 2. The promise has not failed. It is in partial fulfillment. The trajectory is partial now, fuller when Christ reigns on earth, and final in the city John saw in **Rev 21:22-25**. Zechariah's man was standing five hundred years ahead of the Messiah, and further still from the city John finally saw. (We will see an installment already paid on this promise in a moment III.B.1.)
- D. **A city too big to wall — so God becomes the wall Himself.** How do you live in a city with no wall? You don't. Unless the wall is God. (Zech 2:5)
 - 1. "*I will be to her a wall of fire all around.*" This is Exodus language: the pillar of fire that stood between Israel and Egypt at the sea (**Ex 14:19-24**). A stone wall marks where your property ends. A wall of fire stops what's coming by consuming it.
 - 2. And God says: "*I will be the glory in her midst.*" The exiles were not short on supplies to build; they were short on God. He does not promise to send glory; He says, "*I will be the glory!*" See **Ezekiel 11:22-23** – Ezekiel had told them the glory was gone roughly 73 years prior to this night.
- E. The man came out with a question about size. God sent him back with an answer about Himself.

II. Why Are You Still in Babylon? (Zechariah 2:6-9)

- A. Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians in 539 BC, and Cyrus opened the door for the Exiles to return almost 20 years ago. However, a large population of the Jewish exiles never left. (Zech 2:6)
 - 1. God had told them how to settle for 70 years in Babylon (**Jeremiah 29:4-9**)
 - 2. God had promised blessing after the captivity (**Jeremiah 29:10-11, 12-14**)
- B. Now, the exile was over (for 20 years it had been over). But the exiles stayed in Babylon. That's the hardest kind of captivity to break – the kind that doesn't hurt and is comfortable (Zech 2:7).
 - 1. God compares Israel to the "pupil" of His eye (Zech 2:8). God explains His judgment on the land of Babylon.
 - 2. God's reason for "flee" is not that Babylon is boring. It's **verse 9** — *I will shake my hand over them*. He is about to settle accounts with that city. Get out, because judgment is coming to the place you've made yourself at home in. (Zech 2:9)
 - 3. Six centuries later John hears the same command, and 2,500 years on, it still stands. '*Come out of her, my people*' (**Jer 51:6,45; Rev 18:4**). Same name. Same command.

III. What is all the Singing about? (Zechariah 2:10-12)

- A. There is One sent in response to the attack (**Zech 2:8,9,11**). One who is God, sent by God. These statements fully fit together when God, in the fullness of time, sends His Son.
- B. *"I come and I will dwell in your midst"* – dwell is tabernacle language (**Zech 2:10**).
 - 1. John reaches for it in **John 1:14**: *"the Word became flesh and pitched His tent among us,"* and *"we beheld His glory."*
- C. *"Many nations shall join themselves to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people."* Covenant formula at work – you shall be my people, and I will be your God. And it is to "many nations" or to the Gentiles. (**Zech 2:11**)
 - 1. See **2 Corinthians 6:14-18**
 - 2. See **Zechariah 2:12** -the promise for Israel,

IV. Why the Command to Be Silent? (Zechariah 2:13)

- A. The "Hush" – Be silent. It is the sound you make when someone important has just walked in.
- B. God is on the move and "roused" himself.
 - 1. Israel spent 70 years wondering if God was asleep.
 - 2. We can't assume God's discipline is the end of relationship or action on God's part.

V. Light for our Path

- A. Come out of Babylon (**Zech 2:7**)
 - 1. The door had been open for twenty years, and they stayed because they were comfortable there.
 - 2. Where has God opened the door, and I've stayed because it's comfortable?
- B. Measure with Paul's line (**Eph 3:18-21**)
 - 1. Paul measures too: breadth, length, height, depth. He measures the love of Christ, not our plans.
 - 2. Paul ends where this vision centered: God's Glory (**Zech 2:5**)
- C. He finishes what He starts (**Phil 1:6**)
 - 1. The surveyor measured one moment, like measuring a two-year-old. Today is also just one moment in your life.
 - 2. *He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*