

VII. Zechariah in Biblical Perspective
The Gospel According to Zechariah
“Vision #3: The Man and His Measuring Line”
Zechariah 2:1–13
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We’re in Zechariah 2. If you know someone who doesn’t know Jesus show them this study for Zechariah has something for them. These studies are designed to help God’s people, who are hungry for God’s Word and to go deeper in His Word through the exposition of it. When we are doing evangelism we are going to those who are faithless in Christ, who are sinners and enemies of Him and we are saying to them, the unfaithful, ‘Come to Him.’ Once you become saved, we are called to faithfulness and praise God with life, lips, deeds, and all that is there. I love the way the Bible puts these blessings that we receive by faith in justification and adoption. We’re forgiven, cleansed, clothes with His righteousness and brought into the family of God all through the finished work of Christ which is indelibly and inseparably tied to discipleship in sanctification whereby we begin to kill sin and pursue obedience out of love to Christ, who has made us right with God – justification and adoption. We can also see how regeneration and justification go together when we see how God breaks the power (you’re born again) of cancelled sin – justification. Many hymns that are sung in church have these messages all through them. We don’t go to save the faithful but the unfaithful – so come all ye unfaithful for Christ died for you to have eternal life. Then we call them to faithfulness – o come all ye faithful, to give glory and praise to God.

Let’s now get into our study. Zechariah has begun his ministry in the second year of Darius, two month after Haggai. These are two Prophets God has sent to His people to awaken them from their slumber because when they came back in 538 B.C. they started the building of the temple, doing the altar and the foundations but then for 17 years they lie dormant. Haggai, Zerubbabel the governor, buttressed by Joshua the High Priest and Ezra the teacher, are calling them back to rebuilding the Lord’s House. Then Zechariah at the beginning of his ministry in one night is given eight visions. We have already walked through two of those visions – the vision of the four horsemen and the vision of the horseman and the craftsman.

Now we come to the third vision. First, we will look at the vision, then the vision explained and then the vision as it is applied. As I have prepared for this I was greatly blessed by my Old Testament professor’s publications and teachings in the minor Prophets in general in which Zechariah is one and then I was particularly blessed to sit through a series of sermons years ago on these eight visions. These did so much for me to see how these visions brought first to the Gospel and then to the book of Revelation. You can see how these vision trajectories move forward. I thank the Lord for John Blanchard and his book on the minor Prophets as well. Let’s look in the text and see the vision as it is given to us.

Zechariah 2:1-2 says [1] *And I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand!* [2] *Then 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.”*

Here is likely an angelic appearance of a man but it’s not the angel of the Lord but He is still there and we’ll get to Him. This man comes with a measuring line and the best description I can give for you to grasp this is that he is the building city inspector. He has come with these tools to do his job and he has come with passion to measure the breadth and length of Jerusalem

in anticipation of the walls of Jerusalem. Remember, the condition of Jerusalem is that the gates, walls and foundation are down. In fact, it is described as a mountain heap of trash. Now, I have been through sections of towns where that's exactly what things look like – derelict buildings, graffiti, trash piled up on the streets, broken windows. Then here comes the zoning inspector, the building inspector to see what the condition is and ask questions like 'how do we dress it up, clean it up and ensure its appearance and its inhabitability? That's the way I believe you look at this man that appears in the dream.

Then what happens? This vision gets explained. This man with the measuring line to come and inspect the city in its present derelict condition, has stopped and how is he stopped? Here we will see the angel of the Lord who is still in their midst. Let's continue in the text. Zechariah 2:3-5 says [3] *And behold, the angel who talked with me came forward, and another angel came forward to meet him [4] and said to him, "Run, say to that young man, 'Jerusalem shall be inhabited as villages without walls, because of the multitude of people and livestock in it. [5] And I will be to her a wall of fire all around, declares the LORD, and I will be the glory in her midst.'"*

This young man who has come to do his job as a city inspector – to clean up the city, make it inhabitable and protected with the right measurements because this city needs a wall but the angel of the Lord with another angel says to the young man, "Stop! Don't bother. This is useless. It's not needed." Then He gives three reasons why he doesn't need to measure, inspect, do a cleanup project and get the walls built. Reason one is because it will be impossible for walls to be built around this expanding city because of the diversity, number, and multiplicity of its inhabitants plus its livestock. The inhabitants of this city are going to be so numerous, so multiplied that walls will be absolutely impossible that I the Lord am establishing. So the first reason Jerusalem doesn't need walls has to do with the Divine blessing of population multiplication and expansion. God is about to unleash such a blessing that the population will expand beyond any need of walls because there will not be walls capable of confining it – that's how large this city will be.

This is obviously looking toward redemption. Remember when God created and He said, "Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth." There is no city to contain you – fill the Earth. Now we go to God's redemption of His people from sin. There are people who in sin gathered in cities and rebelled against Him. This is a city that is easily hemmed in because it even resorts to the lethality of its own children in sins of Molech or in our day the sins of elective abortions. Here is a God who comes with redemption and when He redeems, now that people began to multiply, not only in numbers but diversity as they fill up this city and He unleashes this explosion of population in the city of God in Jerusalem that comes down from heaven.

A second reason why he is not to build walls because of Divine protection. God says, "I will protect her. You don't need to have walls around her for I will be with her and protect her. I will give her the wall of fire that comes with My presence." If you hear this message from Zechariah and you know your Bible, as many of them did, you immediately begin to think of those movements. Let me just take you on a trajectory backwards that gives meaning to this for those who adhere it, of how He will be the wall and He being the wall will protect His people as a wall of fire around them. Here is something that would have immediately come to their mind. Let's look at Exodus 14. This is a great passage on the crossing the Red Sea.

Exodus 14:10-25 says [10] *When Pharaoh drew near, the people of Israel lifted up their eyes, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they feared greatly. And the people of Israel cried out to the LORD. [11] They said to Moses, "Is it because there are no*

graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? [12] Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: 'Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness." [13] And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. [14] The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent."

[15] The LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. [16] Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground. [17] And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. [18] And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen."

[19] Then the angel of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind them, and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, [20] coming between the host of Egypt and the host of Israel. And there was the cloud and the darkness. And it lit up the night without one coming near the other all night.

[21] Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. [22] And the people of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground, the waters being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. [23] The Egyptians pursued and went in after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. [24] And in the morning watch the LORD in the pillar of fire and of cloud looked down on the Egyptian forces and threw the Egyptian forces into a panic, [25] clogging their chariot wheels so that they drove heavily. And the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from before Israel, for the LORD fights for them against the Egyptians."

'The water is being a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.' In other words, they weren't immersed in it. They walked through it and the walls were piled up to protect them as they went in the wall of water. Here was the Lord with the pillar of cloud and fire that became the wall to protect His people. In this Jerusalem we can't have a wall because of its expansion and we don't need a wall because of the presence of the Lord who will be the One who protects His people with the wall of fire.

The third reason, this new Jerusalem, this City of God that is coming down from heaven doesn't need to be cleaned up. Why? Zechariah 2:5 says [5] *And I will be to her a wall of fire all around, declares the LORD, and I will be the glory in her midst.* This is the Shekinah glory – the searing, searching, overwhelming Shekinah glory of the Lord's presence in our midst. God says 'I will purify her as I live within her. I will make her right.' So, to recap the three reasons for no wall, is the divine blessing of population multiplication, Divine protection with the wall of fire from the presence of God and the Divine presence whereby God brings His purifying presence. No longer the presence of God in this Jerusalem will be in the temple, in fact, there won't even be the temple. He will be there in their midst, in the midst of all of them in that day. He will be present throughout the city, His purifying presence.

Now I want you to see the trajectory toward that book of Revelation from Zechariah. To know Revelation you need to know Zechariah. Let's look at Revelation 21. As we come to this day of a new heavens and new earth, a new Jerusalem, in which the light has no need of sun or moon for the Lord, is the light. People always ask me 'Harry, how can you believe in the work of creation when the light and darkness are created in day one, but the sun isn't created until day

four?’ That’s pretty simple, because God is light. The Sun is not the source of light. God is the source of light, and He uses the sun to govern light. He is not dependent upon it for light for so it shall be in that glorious consummate eschatological City of God, Jerusalem. What does this mean for us?

Revelation 21:1-5a, 22-27 says [1] *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. [2] And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. [3] And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. [4] He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.”*

[5] And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.”

[22] And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. [23] And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. [24] By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it (population explosion from all the nations of the world), [25] and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. [26] They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations (the elect from every tribe and nation). [27] But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

This is the sinless city – not only sin less, but no ability to sin as God’s presence and glory, purifies it in His redemptive work coming to consummation. In the Divine presence, the purified presence of the Lord there is no need of a temple, no need of walls and gates. He is the wall. He has populated it, and He is the One who cleanses it. We don’t need zoning ordinances. His presence and His glory gloriously purifies it. With all due respect to those who come to this text and try to say it was fulfilled in the days of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, no. Nehemiah built walls and hung gates, but that Jerusalem was destroyed in 66 to 70 A.D. This isn’t fulfilled in Zerubbabel, this is not a millennial kingdom, a reworking of Jerusalem for a millennial kingdom and millennial Jewish kingdom for this is a Kingdom that is filled with a new Israel that is made from all the nations; people who are circumcised, not in the foreskin of their flesh, but circumcised and their heart. This is the Kingdom of God that comes down when Christ comes again. It is a new Jerusalem, a new heavens, and the new earth.

This is now already been initiated with the coming of Christ. This coming of this Kingdom is assured because the King came over 2,000 years ago. When the King came, here was the temple. John 1:14 says [14] *And the Word became flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.* God is with us, Emmanuel. The glory of the Lord has filled the temple of the Incarnate Christ. We are now temples of the Lord with God’s glory, but God’s dwelling within us is measured, but in Christ, it is unmeasured. Through Christ, the Kingdom will be populated. So this consummate Kingdom that is coming was initiated in the Incarnation. This consummate Kingdom that is coming was secured at the crucifixion. This consummate Kingdom and city of Jerusalem, city of God that is coming down out of heaven, was assured by the resurrection and is gloriously accelerated through the body of Christ, on mission, on message by the power of the Spirit to all the nations, making disciples. And will be perfected, when the King comes, again. This is the city that Zechariah is pointing to. Let’s go back to Zechariah 2.

What are the implications of this and what does this mean to us? Here are the implications. Because of this glorious work of the King and this coming city that is now with us but not yet in its fullness, now here, the embassy of that Kingdom – the down payment of that holy city of God, Christ’s Church, what should we do?

Zechariah 2:6-12 says [6] Up! Up! Flee from the land of the north, declares the LORD. For I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heavens, declares the LORD. [7] Up! Escape to Zion, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon. [8] For thus said the LORD of hosts, after his glory sent me to the nations who plundered you, for he who touches you touches the apple of his eye: [9] “Behold, I will shake my hand over them, and they shall become plunder for those who served them. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me. [10] Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion, for behold, I come and I will dwell in your midst, declares the LORD. [11] And many nations shall join themselves to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people. And I will dwell in your midst, and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. [12] And the LORD will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.”

[13] Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD, for he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.

Here is the New Jerusalem of His choice and election. He has roused Himself from His holy dwelling to come in the Incarnation, to come to the cross and the crucifixion, to come out of the grave, to come back into the heavens with all authority having been given unto Him and to go now into all the nations as He fills this city. He abides with His presence in this city and then in consummation brings this city down, having filled it through His church on mission, on message and in ministry. Here, the angel of the Lord is telling us, “You know, this vision is true because I have come.” God has roused Himself up. He has sent His Son who identifies with His people. Who are His people? They are those who rise up out of Babylon and flee to the Lord at Mount Zion because of what He did at Mount Calvary – that we flee to the Lord.

What is He telling us in Zechariah 2:6-8? Flee from the land of the north declares the Lord. I have spread you abroad, calling My people from all the nations. But what do you need to do, declares the Lord – escape to Zion up, leave Babylon. Now, I want to give you a few points in closing. He is basically saying to flee anyplace, any relationship, any organization that promotes, requires or expects you to sin. I didn’t say flee any place that has sinners for I didn’t say flee from sinners. I didn’t say flee from going to work and working in the midst of sinners.

I remember a young man that came to me one time. He said “Pastor, this guy is offered me a job.” I said ‘Great.’ He said “the salary is paltry.” I said ‘Really?’ He said “Yeah, but then he showed me how much money I can make when I overcharge and when I pad my expense account. I don’t think that’s right.” I said ‘Brother, you’re exactly right. You don’t want to work for that man or that organization. Tear up your application now.’ “There is an unbeliever I’m drawn to should I marry them for I just want to be married.” The Bible says not be yoked with unbelievers.

This element of sanctification whereby we flee sin is so important. Let’s take this trajectory back to the book of Revelation. Keep in mind that Babylon is the metaphor for the world of unbelief against the Lord. Revelation 18:1-3 says [1] *After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was made bright with his glory. [2] And he called out with a mighty voice, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast. [3] For all nations have drunk the wine of*

the passion of her sexual immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have grown rich from the power of her luxurious living.”

What do you do with that system of rebellion against God, when it shows up in an organization, when it's there in a relationship that promotes your sin, that requires you to sin, that expects you to sin? You flee it. Psalm 1:1-2 says [1] Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; [2] but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law he meditates day and night. Flee the counsel of Babylon. Flee temptation, don't court temptation. Don't sign on to temptation. Don't resist temptation. Flee temptation. Run from it to Mount Zion – the means of grace and the Embassy of the Kingdom of God, the body of Christ, His church as you flee to Jesus.

Let's now look at II Corinthians 6:14-18 which says [14] *Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? [15] What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? [16] What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, “I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. [17] Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, [18] and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”*

Do you work around sinners? Absolutely. We don't want isolation but don't get into a relationship where you have to, are required to, expected to and are called to sin. Don't enter into those relationship. Here we see the intimacy as you flee to the family of God and make not your dwelling of partnership with that relationship, organization, or engagement that would require you, promote you, and make you participate in sin. You will be His sons and daughters and there's where the intimacy will be – with God the Father. I am not saying go live in a corner and a commune. We are in the world, but we're not of the world and one of the ways you're not of the world is you don't enter into residential living and partnership with that which is designed to rebel against God – Babylon, the haunting place of demons, where you are required to participate in its unrighteousness. You have to say 'no' to that and flee temptation. That is what He is calling us to do as an implication of this vision. Let's go back to Zechariah 2.

Zechariah 2:8 says [8] *For thus said the LORD of hosts, after his glory sent me to the nations who plundered you, for he who touches you touches the apple of his eye. Don't put down the roots of your life in those places that require you to sin, promote sin and whereby you have to partner with sin, but put yourself in the City of God for it is there that you are not only identified with Christ but Christ identifies with you. You are the apple of His eye. Do you remember what Jesus said to Saul of the road to Damascus? He said “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” As Saul persecuted Mount Zion, as Paul persecuted the testimony of Christ Church.*

Jesus says in Matthew 25:35-40 concerning the Judgment Seat, [35] *For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, [36] I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. [37] Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? [38] And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? [39] And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ [40] And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to Me.’*

He is speaking of His people that when you came against My people, you came against Me. So here the Lord identifies with His people. He not only identifies with His people, but He says, "I will protect you." Can you see the shaking fist? I have a picture in my study of my daddy in the years that he was umpiring in the Southern league. I have a picture of him with Pete Rose and in this picture my dad is throwing Pete Rose out of the game. My dad has two fingers pointing right at his face about one inch from his nose. People say to me, "look at your daddy with those two fingers, right in Pete Rose's face." Then I say, "Would you like to know how many times I saw those two fingers right in my face?" When they came, I knew what might be next.

God says, "I'm shaking My fist at the nations of Babylon. I will shake My hand over them and they'll let you go. They will become plunder. For I will secure My elect. I will shake My people from them, from all of these nations. I identify with My people, I protect My people and I will bring My people and then from the same nations, I will plunder them with resources for My people." Do you think something might have gone through the minds of those who were hearing this? Did they have to run out of Egypt? No, they walked out for God delivered them. God protected them. Jesus was with them – the angel of the Lord from the pillar of fire and cloud. Then He shook Egypt and they just threw the gold and silver in the carts to the people of Israel – they plundered the Egyptians. So God says His people can live confidently because He will resource by people. That doesn't mean you live irresponsibly. It means you live dependent upon not what you do – you do, what you do, to and for the Lord, but you depend upon the Lord who will never leave you nor forsake you.

Let's look at a text from Isaiah 52. Here is what He is referring to which we'll get a feel for it from this prophecy of Isaiah. Isaiah 52:11-13 says *[10] The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. [11] Depart, depart, go out from there; touch no unclean thing; go out from the midst of her; purify yourselves, you who bear the vessels of the LORD. [12] For you shall not go out in haste, (no need to run) and you shall not go in flight (no need to be fearful), for the LORD will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard. [13] Behold, my servant shall act wisely; he shall be high and lifted up, and shall be exalted.*

This Lord is the Lord who will bring His people out, protect them, identify with them, rescue them and resource them, and they need not be fearful for He is identified with them. Where do you see that gloriously? Colossians 2:13-15 says *[13] And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, [14] by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross. [15] He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Him.*

In Christ He redeemed you. He is the Victor and the Triumph and the elect will be shaken out from the nations and God brings judgments upon the nations. I remember something Dr Robertson said about this that I have never forgotten. Do you know why God brought judgment upon the nations of Sodom and Gomorrah and the kings and kingdoms? Do you know why Lot's wife turned into a pillar of salt? She looked back, okay, do you know why she looked back? It is because that is where her heart was. Our hearts are not in Babylon. Our hearts are in Mount Zion. We put our roots down in the body of Christ, in the means of grace among His people to be fed and nourished as we flee temptation and pursue Christ while being in the world to bring people to Christ, but not of the world. This Jesus went to the cross and won the victory. He has disarmed Satan. He has bound the strong man. Now we, in anticipation of this city

coming down, we are bringing the population to it in the power of the Spirit. He has cast down the strong man now go and plunder his house.

God will bring His people from every nation unto Himself. Here is how we live in Zion, not in Babylon. Here is how we live for the new Israel, awaiting the city with no walls, no sun, no moon for the Lord is in the midst of us. How do we live? Did you hear what the text said? Go to Mount Zion. This burdens my heart as I see God's people not understanding the importance of gathered worship and life worship because this text says, when you flee Babylon and you come to Mount Zion, you rise up and sing praises of joy to God. There is victory – a worshiping people, to the glory of God who flee sin, pursue Him and go on mission, on message and in ministry awaiting and anticipating the glorious coming of God. His presence is with us and in that day will be with Him. His protection is upon us and in that day, He will surround us. His glory is purifying us as He brings us from the nations to Himself. Who He brings? The culture and lifestyle of those who are redeemed and their families are rooted in the grace of God, fed by the means of grace that they may worship the God of glory and grace and bring others from the nations into His royal nation to be the inhabitants innumerable of the City of God.

Prayer:

God, thank You for the time we could be together in Your Word. I just love you so much, Lord, and I love Your Word. I'm fully aware of inadequacies in preaching it and I'm so grateful for a people who are here tonight who want to hear it and love it. Now would You bring that to them? May they rise up and flee Babylon as they pursue the One who has saved them in Mount Zion. O God, in this now blessing but not yet fullness of the City of God that comes down, keep us, identify with us, protect us, purify us, sanctify us, seal us, and send us into this war, but not to be of the world, but to plunder it for Jesus. In His Name, I pray, Amen.