

Two More Visions

Zechariah 2-3

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**BIG BEND
BIBLE
FELLOWSHIP**

Zech 2:1-5 – Vision of the Measuring Line

Then I raised my eyes and looked, and behold, a man with a measuring line in his hand. ² 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.” ³ And there was the angel who talked with me, going out; and another angel was coming out to meet him, ⁴ 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. ⁵ For I,’ says the Lord, ‘will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.’”

Who was the man with a measuring line in his hand?

This was an angelic being and some think it was the Angel of the LORD. Angelic beings never truly become human beings but they can take human form.

What did the measuring angel say he was doing?

Apparently, Jerusalem is being measured to make sure that it is large enough for the multitudes God will bring to it.

What insight do we get here about Zechariah?

He is referred to here as a young man.

Who else did God use when they were young?

Jeremiah...

Jeremiah 1:6-7 – Then said I: “Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a youth.” But the Lord said to me: “Do not say, ‘I am a youth,’ For you shall go to all to whom I send you, And whatever I command you, you shall speak.

Timothy...

1 Timothy 4:12 – Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

What principle can we glean from God using youthful servants?

If God can use the youth, He can use anyone... God does not call the qualified, He qualifies the called.

What was extraordinary about such measurement?

In the time of Zechariah, it seemed strange to worry about Jerusalem being big enough, because there seemed to be too few people for the city.

- It is as if the man with a measuring line went into a huge old cathedral where only a few attended church and started to make sure it was large enough for the crowds God was sure to bring.

Why would Jerusalem be inhabited as towns without walls?

Because the walls would not be able to contain all the people and other blessings God would lavish on them.

- God promises to bring so many people to Jerusalem that the crowds will overflow the walls of the city.

What was extraordinary about Jerusalem being without walls?

At that time, walls were necessary for the security of the people within.

How would the Jerusalem-without-walls be secure?

God will be their protection, not walls...

Psalm 127:1 – Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; Unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

God would be a wall of fire all around Jerusalem.

- This prophecy had a short-term fulfillment in God's protection of the rebuilding, and blessing of the city under Ezra and Nehemiah;
- but clearly, its ultimate fulfillment is rebuilding under the rule of the Messiah

What is the ultimate fulfillment of Jerusalem being without walls because of all the people there?

When God restores Israel to the land going on now. Indeed Ezekiel 38 describes Israel as a land of unwalled villages in the timeframe of the Lord's return.

- 16 out of 17 prophets (Jonah excluded) speaks of the worldwide return of Israel from all the world.

Zech 2:6-13 – Future Joy of Zion and Many Nations

⁶ “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. ⁷ “Up, Zion! Escape, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon.” ⁸ 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.” ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ “Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” says the Lord. ¹¹ “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. ¹² And the Lord will take possession of Judah as His inheritance in the Holy Land, and will again choose Jerusalem. ¹³ Be silent, all flesh, before the Lord, for He is aroused from His holy habitation!”

Why was Israel told to flee from the land of the north?

In Zechariah's day few of those who were carried to captivity in the Babylonian Empire returned to the Promised Land when they were allowed to. Here the LORD exhorts His people to return back to their land.

- Most of the exiles were comfortable in Babylon and refused to build a work of God.

Who was this daughter of Babylon from which Israel was to escape (v 7)?

This has to mean the Persian empire that conquered the Babylon empire. But the Babylonian empire itself was also a daughter of Babylon because the original Babylon was the Tower of Babel where people came together for the purpose of defying God.

How does the admonition to flee from the north relate to God spreading Israel throughout the world?

Throughout the Bible Babylon is used as an idea as well as a city. If Jerusalem carried the idea of "God's city" then Babylon carries the idea of the city of the world.

- Zechariah's call to come out of Babylon is both literal and figurative (Revelation 18:4-5).

What does it mean to touch the apple of God's eye?

The apple of the eye is the pupil... touching it is a painful experience. The phrase "apple of His eye" was used to describe something precious, easily injured and demanding protection.

- The implication here is that Israel is the apple of God's eye and He will not tolerate others messing with them.

What would become of those who touch the apple of God's eye?

God promises that those who enslaved the people of God will become spoil for them – the enslavers will become enslaved. This will be ultimately fulfilled in the Tribulation and end when Jesus returns.

v10 – Why should Israel sing and rejoice?

God Himself is coming to them and will dwell in the midst of them. This happened when Jesus came and will happen on a permanent basis when He returns.

- God's people should be excited is because He will be among them in a unique and powerful way.

Why do you think God referred to Israel as the daughter of Zion?

They were descendants of Israel and called to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Zion was a reference to Jerusalem because of the mount there named Zion when King David first conquered it (2 Samuel 5:7).

v11 – What is the blessing for the Gentiles here?

God will bring many people from among the nations beyond Israel into His Kingdom.

- God's desire to bless for Israel was never intended to stop with Israel, but to use them as a channel of blessing for many nations.

v12-13 – What is the Holy Land?

This is the only place where the phrase Holy Land is used in the Bible. The land is holy because it is separated unto God in a unique way.

Is it only the people of Israel that is holy to God?

Passages like this show that land itself is holy and precious to God... God has set aside the land of Israel for His holy purpose.

Zech 3:1-5 – Vision of the High Priest

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. ² And the Lord said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?”

³ Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel. ⁴ Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, “Take away the filthy garments from him.” And to him He said, “See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes.” ⁵ And I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put the clothes on him. And the Angel of the Lord stood by.

v1 – Who was Joshua the high priest?

Joshua was the High Priest at the time (Haggai 1:1). In his vision, Zechariah sees the High Priest in the presence of the LORD, and he is clothed with filthy garments.

What did the filthy garments represent?

As a mortal, he like all of us are sinful people.

What is implied by Joshua standing before the Angel of the LORD?

The phrase standing before has the idea of priestly service. Joshua isn't in God's presence just as a spectator but as a ministering priest.

What was Satan's role in this vision?

Opposition and accusation...

Revelation 12:10 – *Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down."*

Satan hates it when God's people come into the presence of and minister unto the LORD.

- Satan must have been pointing to those filthy clothes and declaring that Joshua was unfit to stand before the Lord in this office.
- This is all according to character for Satan. The name "Satan" literally means adversary or opponent.
- Not only does Satan accuse men in the presence of God, he also accuses God in the presence of men.

Who rebukes Satan in this vision?

We see the LORD - either directly, if the Angel of the LORD is Jesus in this place, or indirectly exercising authority through the Angel of the LORD - standing before Satan and preventing his advance. If Satan is our prosecutor, Jesus is our advocate...

1 John 2:1 – *if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

Should we rebuke Satan?

No, binding Satan, casting out Satan and yelling at him is not biblical. We need to leave rebuking Satan to the Lord as did the Archangel Michael in Jude 9.

- What we are to do relative to Satan is to put on the full armor of God and stand against him (Eph 6).

What does Jerusalem have to do with the Lord rebuking Satan?

God reinforces the important standing of Jerusalem in His eyes. As mentioned in Zechariah 2:12 it is His Holy Land.

Why did God refer to Joshua as a brand plucked from the fire?

Joshua the High Priest had a place of high standing - next to the Angel of the LORD and thus protected against Satanic attack. Still, this place of high privilege was not based on Joshua's own goodness or merit; he himself was rescued as a brand plucked from the fire.

- This is even more boldly stated in that Joshua stands clothed in filthy garments. Satan had a lot to accuse Joshua of, but Joshua had an even greater advocate in the Angel of the LORD.
- Joshua represented Israel's surviving remnant.

How are all Christians as a brand plucked from the fire?

Think of a campfire with a charred chunk of wood smoking in the ashes. It isn't worth much at all and will be consumed completely if it isn't plucked from the fire.

- So it is with the child of God. What are we at our best? Till we are taken up to heaven, we are nothing but a brand plucked out of the fire.

v4-5 – What did God do about Joshua's iniquity?

Take away the filthy garments from him: Joshua was guilty of standing before God in filthy garments. Nevertheless, the LORD fixed the problem by cleansing Joshua, taking away the filthy garments and the iniquity they represented.

And I will clothe you with rich robes: Joshua not only enjoys having his iniquity removed, he also is given a positive righteousness - clothed with rich robes.

- The thought of being clothed by God in righteousness runs from Genesis (Genesis 3:7 and 3:21) to Revelation (Revelation 7:13-14).

Let them put a clean turban on his head: The turban was part of the High Priest's garments and on the front it had a gold plate inscribed with the phrase HOLINESS TO THE LORD (Exodus 28:36-38).

- The vision of Joshua is representative of what God will do for Israel.

Zech 3:6-10 – The Coming Branch

⁶ *Then the Angel of the Lord admonished Joshua, saying,* ⁷ *"Thus says the Lord of hosts:*

*'If you will walk in My ways,
And if you will keep My command,
Then you shall also judge My house,
And likewise have charge of My courts;
I will give you places to walk
Among these who stand here.*

⁸ *Hear, O Joshua, the high priest,
You and your companions who sit before you,
For they are a wondrous sign;*

For behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH.

⁹ *For behold, the stone*

That I have laid before Joshua:

Upon the stone are seven eyes.

Behold, I will engrave its inscription, '

Says the Lord of hosts,

'And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.

¹⁰ *In that day, ' says the Lord of hosts,*

'Everyone will invite his neighbor

Under his vine and under his fig tree.' "

v6-7 – How did the Lord admonish Joshua?

Joshua in Zechariah's day was admonished much the same way that the first Joshua was admonished...

Joshua 1:7 – *Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.*

How would Joshua be blessed if was obedient?

Then you shall also judge My house, and likewise have charge of My courts: God promised Joshua that he would indeed continue to serve as High Priest as he was diligent to stay obedient to God.

I will give you places to walk among these who stand here:

God promised Joshua privileged access into the presence of God. This isn't a surprising promise for a High Priest, but we have the same promise:

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:16)

v8 – What does the BRANCH represent?

The term "BRANCH" is used several times as a title for the Messiah (Isaiah 4:2, 11:1, Jeremiah 23:5 and 33:15).

Isaiah 11:1 – *There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.*

The BRANCH is associated with fruitfulness and life along with His role of suffering servant:

Mark 10:45 – *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*

Jesus used the same image when He said that He was the vine and we are the branches (John 15:5).

v9 – What is this stone with the seven eyes?

If a branch seems "weak," then God gives us another picture - a stone, having seven eyes.

- In the thinking of the ancient world eyes represented knowledge because we learn more through our eyes than any other way.

- The seven eyes speak of the perfection and fullness of the knowledge and wisdom of the Messiah.

Where else is the Messiah represented by a stone?

- When the Messiah appeared, He proved to be a *stone* over which the Jews *stumbled* and an *offensive rock* to them that they *rejected* (Ps 118:22-23, Isa 8:13-15, Matt 21:42, 1 Peter 2:7-8).
- Presently He is the *foundation stone*, the *chief cornerstone* of the church (Ps 118:22, Eph 2:19-22)
- In the future, He will be the *great stone* that *smites the nations* (Daniel 2:35, 45)

What engraving might be on this stone?

The engraving on the stone could be the scars of Jesus' wounds since it is in the context of God removing iniquity in one day.

How would God remove the iniquity of that land [of Israel] in one day?

This refers to the future revival of Israel when they suddenly in mass realize that Jesus is the Messiah.

Isaiah 66:8 – *Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once?*

This is a rhetorical question because God is going to do it... the prophetic fulfillment of the Day of Atonement.

v10 – What does the picture of fellowship under one's own vine and fig tree represent?

This is reference to the prosperity and peace of the Millennial Kingdom (1 Kings 4:25, 2 Kings 18:31)...

Micah 4:4 – *everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid*

What does this show what God thinks of socialism?

Socialism is a human system of economics that far from God's vision for humanity where private property is an essential element of God's economy.

- Free market Capitalism is the closest human economic system to God's economy.
- Socialism is the economic system of the Antichrist (thus, of the devil) ...history reveals it always fails.

What applications do we see from our discussion today?

- God does not call the qualified, He qualifies the called.
- As we see the stage being set for God to fulfill His promises to Israel, we need to get on with what He is calling us to do since our time is limited.
- God's children are holy... set aside for a purpose.
- Jesus is our Advocate, He will fight our Enemy for us.
- Socialism is of the devil and should be resisted.